



Complaints Procedure

1. Mission Statement

“Achieving excellence in all we do.”

2. Introduction

The College aspires to offer services of a standard that reflect its mission statement. Its complaints procedure is designed to reflect those high aspirations and ensure that any learner or client has an opportunity to make his or her views known to college managers if s/he believes that the college has failed to provide this high level of service.

Inevitably, not all decisions made by the college and its staff at any level concerning the extent and delivery of services will be welcomed by all stakeholders but, in general, there is broad understanding and agreement regarding the actions of the college and its officers.

Nevertheless, from time to time, there are occasions where there is a perception by an individual that a service has been inadequately delivered or that the College or one or more of its staff have acted inappropriately in dealing with a particular issue.

The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to ensure that these perceptions can be reported formally and, where appropriate, can be resolved quickly and fairly for all concerned and result in an improved service in the future. The procedure does not replace the regular questionnaires that are used to monitor overall perceptions of the College but is a channel through which to deal with individual issues of specific concern

All formal complaints made through this procedure will be recorded and monitored so as to provide information to the college concerning areas of common concern and to take action to prevent a recurrence of inadequate service provision. Clearly, such monitoring will also involve judgements about the validity and significance of matters raised under this procedure.

3. Scope

This Procedure is intended to be used primarily to deal with complaints in respect of a student's experience at the College including the teaching and learning process, administration, accommodation, catering or any other college service.

It is also available to anyone who uses, wishes to use or has used, the College's services or facilities as a trainee, parent, employer or visitor.

A person may make a complaint on behalf of someone else provided that this is with their consent. This may be particularly relevant to those who have learning difficulties and may wish to have an advocate to represent their interests. It is the intention that the procedure should be accessible to all that believe that they have a legitimate cause of complaint.

Complaints concerning other agencies that provide services linked with the College such as the County Council (home-to-college transport) or Awarding Bodies (who award external qualifications) will be recorded but it may be necessary to refer the complainant to the procedures of the organisation concerned for their resolution.

In any case, this Procedure does not cover representations by students or others about the outcome of college examination panels or other academic appeals. There are separate procedures that exist for these purposes.

Complaints that involve allegations of illegal behaviour by others may not follow all the stages of this Procedure since it may be necessary to involve the police or other professional services at an early stage. This Procedure does not replace the right of any individual to contact the police over any allegation of illegal action. The College works closely with the police and welcomes their involvement in any investigation where this is justified.

3 Procedures

3.1 Principles

In the interests of all concerned, the process should be simple and comprehensive but commensurate with the issue under consideration.

Complaints should be recorded and investigated in such a way as to maintain confidentiality from those not involved. Nevertheless, in investigating any complaint about an individual, the College will be fair both to the complainant and the individual by providing full information about the complaint and providing the opportunity to respond prior to taking any further action.

Complaints should be resolved as rapidly as is possible, consistent with need for fairness and completeness.

3.2 Informal Stage

In the case of any cause of complaint, as a first step, the complainant should seek to resolve it with a relevant member of college staff, usually the course tutor, head of faculty or departmental manager responsible for the course or other service provided. In many cases that person can best respond to the complaint and ensure that it is dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Those individuals resolving complaints will record them on the college complaints record located on T/Departments/Global/Complaints/Complaint reporting 2010_2011 and report them as part of the course or service Quality Assurance procedure where appropriate. They will be used to initiate action that will improve the service provided.

If a complaint cannot be resolved by this informal approach, then the complainant has the right to use the formal procedures below.

3.3 First Formal Stage

A complaint under the first formal stage of the Procedure must be made in writing and directed to the Head of Division responsible for the delivery of the course or programme. There are two Divisions, one for North Powys based at Newtown and one for South Powys based at Llandrindod Wells and Brecon. Provision made at other centres in the community is the responsibility of the Division at the nearest main campus.

Complaints forms are available from the Student Services officers on each campus and either they or course tutors will provide assistance, if required, in completing the document to initiate the process.

The Head of Division will determine whether a middle manager or senior college officer should be consulted or informed of the complaint at this stage and will undertake an investigation. This may include holding interviews with the complainant or others. The Head of Division will maintain a record of all proceedings and ensure that the central recording system located at T/Departments/Global/Complaints/Complaint reporting 2010_2011 is updated.

If the complaint is against the Head of Division, the complaint should be directed to the Principal who will consider the matter.

A response to the complaint should be received within 10 working days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, then the complaint may then be referred to Stage 2.

Copies of all complaint forms and the responses will be passed to the Assistant Principal (Quality Improvement and Student Services) who will maintain a record and report regularly to the SMT.

3.4 Second Formal Stage

If the matter has not been settled by the above stages, the complainant may refer the complaint to the Principal. There is no need to complete a further Complaint form since this will have been done at the first formal stage and a record of the investigation and other relevant factors will be available.

The Principal may delegate a senior member of staff to conduct a further investigation and will consider the findings of this. A response to the complaint under this process should be received within 10 working days of its referral to the Principal.

In general, the outcome of the second formal stage will be final since the Principal is responsible for all matters concerning the operation, administration and management of the college. Exceptionally, if the matter raised is of strategic importance to the college, it may, subject to the agreement of the Principal, be referred to a Committee of the Board of Governors.

4 External Organisations

No external organisation has any authority to alter decisions properly taken within the College. Nevertheless, it may be noted that the College receives a substantial proportion of its funding from the National Assembly for Wales through the agency of the National Council for Education and Training for Wales. These organisations provide a further channel through which an individual may raise matters of concern about the services offered by the college once the above stages have been exhausted.

5. Impact Assessment

The policy and procedure has been impact assessed

Area	Assessment	Impact
Men/women	The complaints procedure impacts equally on all college staff, students and other stakeholders	Low
Different racial groups	The complaints procedure impacts equally on all college staff, students and other stakeholders	Low
Disabled people	The complaints procedure impacts equally on all college staff, students and other stakeholders	Low
Welsh speakers or use of Welsh in communities	The complaints procedure impacts equally on all college staff, students and other stakeholders	Low
Others (different sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs)	The complaints procedure impacts equally on all college staff, students and other stakeholders	Low

6. Related Policies and procedures

- Grievance procedure for staff
- Grievance procedure for holders of senior posts
- Equal opportunities policy and procedure
- Harassment and bullying at work policy

