



COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

COLLEGE POLICY ON COMPLAINTS

Introduction

The College policy on complaints is based on a commitment to ensuring the high quality of its provision and the satisfaction of all those who use the College or who are members of its wider community. Concerns and complaints are welcomed as a means to ensure this commitment is met. The Principal takes a personal interest in the resolution of every formal complaint.

The College aims to:

- have a clear, easily accessible complaints procedure which is understood and accepted as a code of practice by all members of the College community, and which operates consistently across the organisation;
- deal with formal complaints fairly and efficiently, with an acknowledgement and an initial response made within a maximum period of ten working days of receiving the complaint;
- maintain confidentiality wherever reasonable;
- compile a recording system for all formal complaints which is reliable and comprehensive.

The College defines

- **concerns** as issues where a person wishes to register unease about a situation without, at least initially, proceeding to make a formal complaint. Concerns will normally be raised with, or passed to the Assistant Principal, Learners
- **complaints** as issues which are formally documented, with a written record of the complaint and a written or telephone response to the complainant. All complaints are reported to the Principal or a member of the Executive team.

Sources of complaints

Complaints may be made by any member of the College, public or visitors.

Dealing with complaints

Details of how complaints and concerns may be submitted are included in the College Complaints and Concerns Procedure.

The College ensures that, for every complaint,

- the complaint is logged;
- initial responses are made within ten working days;
- under normal circumstances, the complaint is fully investigated and resolved within four working weeks of the receipt of the complaint;

- all correspondence, summarising action taken and response made, together with any other appropriate documentation, is retained in the Senior Leadership Team's Personal Assistant's office. This may be a hard, or electronic, copy. This will be kept for reporting and monitoring purposes.

Further referral

Complainants who are not satisfied by the College's response can complain to The Chair of Governors via the Clerk to the Governors.

Whistleblowing Policy

Staff who suspect fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff Code of Conduct, criminal activities, or failing to comply with a legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment, should follow the College's Whistleblowing Policy.

Copies are available from the Clerk to the Governors and on the College website.

Complaints about the Principal or Corporation

Complaints about the Principal or the Chair of Governors should be made via the Clerk to the Governors, c/o the College. Complaints about governors should also be made via the Clerk to the Governors, c/o the College. Complaints about the Clerk to the Governors should be made to the Chair of Governors.

Related policies

[Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy](#)

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS PROCEDURES

Introduction

Concern or complaint, how do you choose?

1. Whenever you have a problem, you should first see the member of staff in charge of that area informally and discuss the problem with them.
2. If you are still not happy with the response given, or the situation worsens, you should see the Assistant Principal, Learners, who will decide whether the issue is a concern or a complaint. If it is a concern, you will be directed to produce either a written summary of the concern, or the Assistant Principal Learners will produce notes from your initial discussion. If it is a complaint, you will be directed to the complaints procedure.

A concern is a minor issue or, unease about a situation e.g. state of toilets, canteen provision

These will be passed on to the appropriate staff, who will look at and be available to talk to you about your concern. A 'Summary of Action Taken' will be communicated to you promptly, whenever possible.

3. If you do not feel your concern has been treated appropriately, or the response you received did not satisfy your initial concern, or the situation has got worse, you should register a complaint via the Senior Leadership Team's PA.

A complaint is a significant problem with College services provided, e.g. perceived unfair treatment by members of staff, problems limiting academic performance, or a problem endangering students' and staff's health and safety.

This is the first step in a formal procedure. A member of the Executive Team (ET) will deal with the complaint and will provide an initial acknowledgement within ten working days. Your complaint should be fully investigated within 4 working weeks. All members of ET take a personal interest in complaints and will, where possible, keep matters confidential.

Procedures

1. Concerns

- a. Those wishing to raise concerns may do so directly to the managers responsible or simply by contacting the Assistant Principal, Learners, who will ensure that the concern is passed to the appropriate manager.
- b. In general, students with concerns about their study programme should contact their Head of School.
- c. All other areas of concern should be passed to area appropriate manager (HoD/ HoS etc)(see Annex A), completing the concern form if necessary, (see Appendix 2).

- d. In every case, the concern will be treated seriously and, wherever possible, to the satisfaction of the person concerned. Where a situation cannot be resolved, the manager involved will suggest the matter is passed to a more senior manager, usually the Assistant Principal Learners. A person raising a concern may at any time choose to change that 'concern' to a 'complaint'.
- e. Once the matter has been resolved, feedback will be given. Any written feedback will be kept on file.

2. Complaints (other than those against the Corporation or Principal)

- a. On receipt of a complaint, a 'Complaint Form' is completed (Appendix 1) and passed to the SLT's PA within 24 hours or the complaint may be logged via email.
- b. The Principal will ask the Assistant Principal Learners/ Assistant Principal TLA to investigate the complaint (unless the complaint is against the either/ both Assistant Principals).
- c. The appropriate AP will investigate the complaint and report back initial findings and any action taken to SLT and/ or SLT's PA, within five working days, using the appropriate section of the Complaint Form, or via email.
- d. The complaint will be responded to with initial findings within ten working days. The complaint outcome is to be notified to the SLT's PA.
- e. If the complaint is not resolved, a member of SLT will conduct a more detailed investigation and report back to the complainant within four working weeks of the original complaint, copying in the SLT's PA. Most complaints are resolved by this stage. If necessary, dialogue will continue until resolution.
- f. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the member of ET, they may lodge an appeal, in writing, to the Clerk to the Governors for the Chair of Governors.

An annual report on 'Complaints' received is provided to the Board of Governors.

The College has a Whistleblowing Policy for use by employees who suspect serious malpractice, fraud or similar. Copies are available from the Clerk to the Governors and the policy is published on the College website.

3. Complaints against the Corporation, including the Principal as a member of the Corporation

- a. A complaint against the Governing Body, a member of the Governors, the Principal or the Clerk to the Governors may be made by an individual or an organisation. However, complaints by members of staff are dealt with in accordance with the College Grievance Procedure and by students in accordance with the College Complaints Procedure.
- b. Complaints against the Governing Body, Principal or a member of the Governors should be made in writing and addressed to the following:

The Clerk to the Governors
Gateway College
Colin Grundy Drive
Leicester
LE5 1GA

- c. The complainant will be expected to state clearly the exact nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, provide copies of any related documentation.
- d. The Clerk to the Governors will:
 - acknowledge receipt of the complaint without delay
 - investigate the complaint
 - endeavour to provide a response to the complaint within ten working days and, if this is not possible, provide the complainant with an interim statement
 - maintain a log of events concerning the complaint.
- e. The written response of the Clerk to the Governors will include details of any arrangements for pursuing the matter either internally or with an independent body.
- f. The Clerk to the Governors will keep the Chair informed of the situation, and will provide the Governing Body with a written statement of the nature of the complaint and the response at the next meeting. Such a statement may be a 'confidential item' for Board minutes. A report will be circulated to members within ten working days of the response of the Clerk to the complaint, so that members are aware of the situation.
- g. When carrying out an investigation on a complaint against the Governing Body, the Principal or an individual member of the Governors, the Clerk to the Governors will have the authority to refer issues to the Governing Body's legal advisors, auditors, internal and/or external, or other appropriate advisors.
- h. A complaint against the Clerk to the Governors should be forwarded to the Chair of the Governors for investigation and response. Letters for the attention of the Chair of the Governors should be marked 'Strictly Private and Confidential' and addressed to:

The Chair of the Governors
Gateway College
Colin Grundy Drive
Leicester
LE5 1GA

- i. The Clerk to the Governors will maintain a record of all complaints made to or about the Governing Body, including the Principal as a Governing Body member, and their outcome. The Clerk will report annually to the Governing Body on the nature and disposal of such complaints.

Complaints structure

Complaint subject	'Middle Manager' link	'Senior Manager' link
Curriculum, Study Programme, learning, teaching or assessment	Head of Department/ Head of School	Assistant Principal, Learners / Assistant Principal TLA
Examinations, assessments	MIS & Exams Manager	Vice Principal, Resources
Health & Safety (H&S)	College H & S Officer, Head of Estates	Vice Principal, Resources
Student behaviour	Head of Department/ Head of School	Assistant Principal, Learners / Assistant Principal TLA
Building & Estates issues	Head of Estates	Vice Principal, Resources
Conduct of staff	Line Manager	Vice Principal, Resources / Safeguarding issue specific Assistant Principal Learners (DSL)

APPENDIX 1 (Parts A&B)

COMPLAINTS FORM

Instructions on completing the form:

1. The complainant to complete Parts A and B. (If complaint is received by post or telephone, it can be logged by email. . The name of the person recording the details must be listed with the date and time of the message.
2. The form/email should be forwarded to the SLT's PA.
3. If appropriate, the Principal will forward the complaint to the relevant manager to investigate the issues raised.
4. The manager will complete Parts C, D and E (see below), or log the actions via email.
5. The form will be filed in the SLT's PA's office, or the email will be stored electronically.

PART A: Complainant's details

Name of person making complaint: _____

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

If a current student, name of Progress Coach or Tutor: _____

Student's name (if different): _____

PART B: Nature of complaint (attach letter and photocopy if necessary)

For completion by College:

Date received: _____ By: _____

Date forwarded to SLT's PA: _____

Complaint to be investigated by _____ (manager)

Forwarded on _____ (date)

APPENDIX 1 (Parts C&D)

PART C: Initial action taken:

Signed:

Date:

PART D: Further action taken:

Further information requested on _____ from _____

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX 1 (Part E)

PART E: Complaint Resolution

Summary of resolution:

Signed: _____

Date:

Other staff involved: _____

Complainant informed by:

E-mail

Telephone

Letter (attach copy)

Date: _____

Concern Form (Part A)

Name: (please print): _____

Student number: _____

Name of Learner Performance Tutor or Tutor: (if applicable): _____

Area of Concern: _____

Summary of Concern: (please give exact details such as dates and times)

Signed:

Date:

E-mail address:

Received by _____: Date: _____

Signed: _____

Forwarded to: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____

Summary of Action Taken Form (Part B)

Feedback to person concerned:

Date sent: _____ Signed: _____

Summary of action taken: