



Suffolk  
New  
College

# Compliments and Complaints Policy

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Compliments, Comments & Complaints Policy
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<b>Author(s):</b>	Deputy Principal
<b>Approved by:</b>	SMT
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<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures:</b>	UoS Student Complaints Procedure Internal Appeals Policy Grievance Procedure Learner Involvement Strategy

# Equality Impact Assessment Tool

## Compliments, Comments & Complaints Policy

		Yes/No	Comments
1	<b>Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:</b>		
	Race or ethnicity	No	
	Disability	No	
	Gender	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation	No	
	Age	No	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	
	Maternity and Pregnancy	No	
	Gender Reassignment	No	
2	<b>Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?</b>	No	
3	<b>If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?</b>	N/A	
4	<b>Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?</b>	No	
5	<b>If so, can the impact be avoided?</b>	N/A	
6	<b>What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?</b>	N/A	
7	<b>Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?</b>	N/A	



## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The College is committed to providing a quality service for all its users and stakeholders. It strives to improve the service by listening and responding to the views of the College community, including students, apprentices and staff, parents and carers, visitors, local businesses and community groups.
- 1.2 The College's Compliments, & Complaints Policy supports positive feedback, informal concerns and formal complaints.
- 1.3 The Policy aims to ensure that making a Compliment, or Complaint is as easy as possible and that responses are timely and appropriate.

## **2 DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1 Users – a user is a person who participates in education or training including study programme students, apprentices, student on advanced learner loans and adult students, employers; hires College facilities; or is a customer of college services such as Chefs' Whites restaurant, Suffolk Rural commercial services and The Zone salons.
- 2.2 Stakeholders – stakeholders are groups or individuals that are affected by and/or have an interest in the operations and objectives of the College.
- 2.3 A complaint is a clear expression of dissatisfaction.
- 2.4 A compliment is an expression of satisfaction.

## **3 EXCLUSIONS**

- 3.1 Complaints from Higher Education students: these are dealt with under the University of Suffolk Student Complaints Procedure.
- 3.2 Complaints around assessment feedback or exam marking; these are dealt with through the Internal Appeals Policy or the Awarding Body's published information on complaints.
- 3.3 Employment issues: these are covered by the Grievance Procedure.
- 3.4 Any matter subject to legal action.
- 3.5 Any complaint deemed malicious or vexatious following an investigation.
- 3.6 Anonymous complaints cannot be responded to which impacts on whether an investigation can be carried out. This influences weight given to the complaint and any possible actions as a result, however any important points to note will be taken into consideration.

## 4 AIMS

The College aims to: -

- 4.1 Encourage the complainant (person raising the issue of concern or dissatisfaction) to resolve their issue through informal procedures in the first instance. For complainants aged 16-18 the College will respond to concerns and complaints raised by parents/carers; for those aged 19 years and older the College will seek permission to respond from the student and apprentice if a complaint is received on their behalf.
- 4.2 Any apprentices, or their employer, should raise their complaint in the first instance with the Head of Apprenticeships who will immediately look into the issues raised. If the complaint is not resolved then it should be progressed to the Director of Apprenticeships and Business Development.
- 4.3 Provide a clear procedure for customers and stakeholders to raise their Compliments, or Complaints in a straightforward and open manner without fear of reprisal or recrimination.
- 4.4 Ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and a response given in a timely manner. Where a complex complaint is raised, the College aims to keep the complainant informed of progress.
- 4.5 Provide a more senior level of manager to look at the complaint if dissatisfaction continues.
- 4.6 Offer guidance and support for students to make complaints if sought.
- 4.7 Ensure staff dealing with complaints have necessary guidance and support to handle complaints efficiently and effectively.
- 4.8 Analyse complaints and use findings to support quality improvements of all aspects of its service.
- 4.9 Make managers aware of any compliments received, and disseminate as appropriate to inform embedding of good practice.

## 5 MAKING A COMPLIMENT OR COMPLAINT

All complaints from enrolled students/apprentices or their parent/guardian/carer where under 18 years old will be referred to their curriculum area. All other complaints will be referred to the department or curriculum area to which the complaint applies. Please see appendix 1 for flowchart outlining the process below.

**Cause for concern** – requires Head of Curriculum area response.

**Serious** – requires Director of Curriculum area/Business Support Heads' response (could be from parent or employer; user of Chefs' Whites, Suffolk Rural Commercial Services or The Zone; member of community; hirer of facilities; may be a cause for concern that has escalated from Head and now a complaint);

Any complaints that are under "Serious" should be submitted in writing to the Director of Curriculum area/Business Support Heads.

**Most Serious** – requires Executive response (may be a complaint not resolved at curriculum area or departmental level). The Executive Team comprises of the Deputy Principal and Deputy CEO, whereby the relevant Executive member will investigate the issues raised in the complaint.

Any complaints that are under “Most Serious” should be submitted in writing to the Executive team [executiveteam@suffolk.ac.uk](mailto:executiveteam@suffolk.ac.uk)

## **6 RECORDING CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

All concerns and complaints will be considered genuine, but if found to be unfounded they will not be classified or recorded.

Wherever a concern or complaint is received, it will be logged by the Curriculum Administrators (see Appendix 2 for details). The Executive EAs will log all complaints they receive at Executive Level.

**If the person receiving the complaint is not the individual to deal with it then they are responsible for ensuring the complaint is received by the correct person and this information is logged on the form.**

## **7 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

All “cause for concerns’ should normally be resolved within five working days and the outcome communicated appropriately.

All ‘serious’ and ‘most serious’ complaints should normally be resolved (or an update provided to complainant) within ten working days of receipt and the outcome communicated.

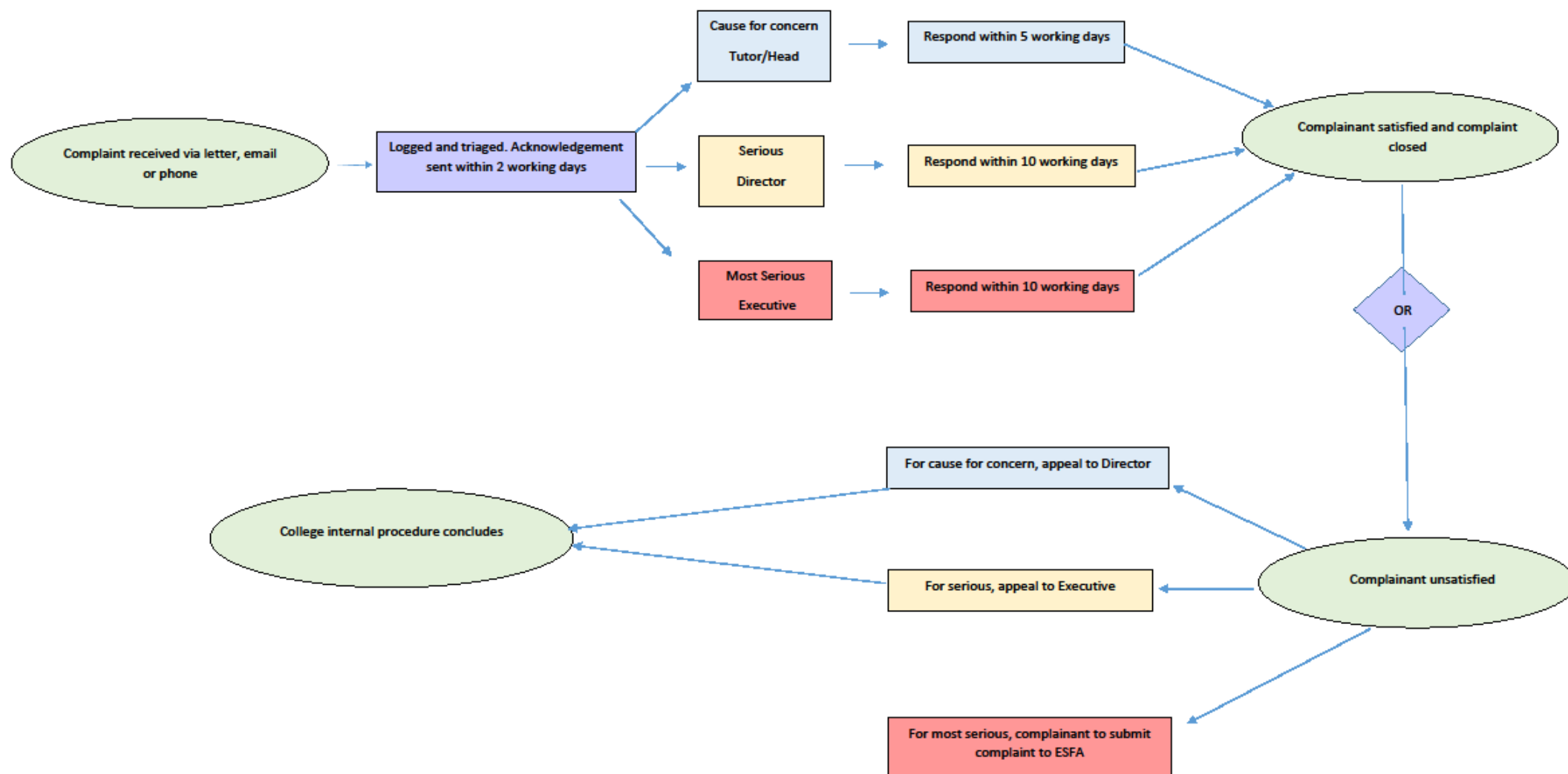
All ‘cause for concern’ and ‘serious’ complaints may be escalated to the next level if the complainant remains dissatisfied. The Executive response is final (see Section 8 for taking your complaints further).

The College treats all complaints seriously, however in circumstances where a complaint has been responded to but continues to be made in a malicious or vexatious way, the College reserves the right to refuse to respond in any further way.

## **8 TAKING COMPLAINTS FURTHER**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied once the Executive has responded, the complainant may write to the Education & Skills Funding Agency. A link to their guidance can found in Appendix 3.

# Complaint's Procedure Flowchart



## APPENDIX 2

Suffolk New College

### Complaints Analysis

Academic Year: .....

Curriculum Area / Department: .....

Date Rec'd:	Date Ack:	Complainant and student/apprentice name if relevant		Gender if student	Ethnicity if student	Age if student	Specific Nature of complaint (e.g. teaching, pre-entry information / advice, staff attitude, facilities)	Classification Head/Director /Executive	Responded within Number of Working Days	Summary of Outcome
		First Name	Surname							

## APPENDIX 3

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-post-16-education-and-training-provision-funded-by-esfa>