

## Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

<b>OWNED BY:</b>	<b>VP Student Experience and External Relations</b>					
<b>DATE OF LAST REVIEW</b>	<b>December 2019</b>					
<b>PLANNED NEXT REVIEW:</b>	<b>December 2022</b>					
<b>APPROVAL:</b>	<b>SLT</b>					
<b>APPLIES TO:</b>	Staff	✓	Student	✓	Public	✓

Cirencester College welcomes all feedback whether compliments, complaints or suggestions. They help us to continuously develop the service we provide and appropriately recognise our team.

This policy also provides a frame work for compliments and complaints from students, parents/guardians or other stakeholders and outlines the way(s) in which we will respond to any feedback as necessary, and the likely timescale. Please help us to address your issues by following our procedure. If you are not happy with the response you receive then please use the next stage.

Please note that there is a separate policy for complaints regarding examinations and coursework

All members of College staff have a responsibility to deal with customer feedback but in the case of complaints a designated person will 'own' the complaint to ensure that it is investigated and where necessary, addressed.

Complaints that are not in line with these procedures will not be processed.

### How we deal with customer feedback.

In order for us to ensure that feedback is properly addressed we need to log relevant information to ensure that it gets to the right person and that, where necessary, it is tracked and a response made to you.

### Compliments and Suggestions

The College welcome suggestions, these can be either sent to the College, placed in suggestion boxes, sent via the feedback button on CCO or emailed to [bev.parker@cirencester.ac.uk](mailto:bev.parker@cirencester.ac.uk) . The Quality Officer will record these and ensure that they are passed to the person with responsibility for the area concerned, who will, where appropriate, feed your suggestion into their development plans.

In the case of a compliment, the Quality Officer will forwarded it to the line manager of the person(s) you are complimenting and the member of staff will be given the appropriate recognition for their good service.

### Raising an issue or making a complaint:

#### If you are a student,

in the first instance, please try to talk to the person directly. If you do not feel able to this, please go to either your tutor, the Head of Faculty or a member of the Pastoral Team. They will discuss the issue,

record it and where necessary, ensure that it is addressed. You may choose to be anonymous at this stage. However, dependent upon the severity of the complaint, your anonymity may not be possible.

### **If you are a parent or guardian,**

where the issue(s) relate to your son or daughter's lecturers or tutors you may wish to contact them directly. Email is the best way to do this to ensure that they receive your message and can deal with it promptly. Where you do not receive a response or do not receive a satisfactory response, please contact the Quality Officer ([bev.parker@cirencester.ac.uk](mailto:bev.parker@cirencester.ac.uk)) who will ensure that it is raised with the appropriate line manager. We reserve the right to treat issues raised as formal complaints if the manager judges them to be serious or part of a pattern that disadvantages students. Please note, under GDPR, if your son/daughter is 18 years or over, they need to give us their express permission to discuss their data and concerns with you.

### **Making a formal complaint**

#### **Students, parents and guardians**

If these steps do not result in a satisfactory response then as a student or parent/guardian you will need to lodge a formal complaint by telephone, email or in writing (to the Quality Officer) or contact reception (where complaint forms are available) and provide full details including your email address.

#### **If you are a member of the public or an external stakeholder**

you should alert us to an issue by telephone, email or in writing or contact reception and provide them with full details including your email address. Emails and letters should be addressed to the Quality Officer ([bev.parker@cirencester.ac.uk](mailto:bev.parker@cirencester.ac.uk)) and provide as many details as possible so that the matter can be investigated. Please note we cannot accept complaints on behalf of third parties.

Please note that we will only investigate public complaints that are in writing (including email). Only telephone or 'in-person' complaints relating to serious issues (e.g. safeguarding concerns) will be referred through to other staff.

#### **Process for dealing with a complaint**

Once a formal complaint has been made, the Quality Officer will log it and pass it to the relevant manager for investigation and, where necessary, resolution. You should receive an acknowledgement of any formal complaint within 5 working days. The Quality Officer will continue to monitor the progress of the complaint to ensure that it is properly addressed and that you receive a final response in a timely way.

#### **A number of outcomes to formal complaints are possible**

- a. The relevant line manager investigates and finds that there is no issue or it is one that can be easily addressed. They will email you to let you know.
- b. The relevant line manager investigates and finds that the issue is complex. They may contact you to arrange a phone conversation or a meeting to discuss and, if possible, reach a resolution.
- c. The relevant line manager investigates and finds that the issue is serious. They will escalate the issue to a senior manager for resolution.

In each of the above cases, you should normally expect to hear back from the College within 10 working days of acknowledgement during term-time so that you know what is happening. Timeframes for resolving issues may be longer, particularly if they include College holiday periods or staff or students who are involved are absent. We aim to complete most investigations within 20 working days. In the case of b or c (above), the Quality Officer will contact you at the end of the process to check that the issue has been resolved for you. External complainants will be notified of outcomes at the end of any investigation and review period.

### **Appeals**

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you can appeal the decision on one or more of the 3 grounds below. To do so you will need to put your reasons in writing making it clear whether your appeal is about:

- Process - if you feel we have not followed the process outlined in the document
- Fairness - if you think we have not treated you fairly
- Significant new information has come to light which we were not aware of

Your appeal will be acknowledged by the Quality Officer and passed to a manager unconnected with the original complaint. They will review the issue and may interview you or others concerned as part of their investigation although this will not happen in all cases. Reviews can take longer than original investigations but we will endeavour to complete them within 20 working days during term-time.

They will respond to you in writing giving brief reasons as to why they have upheld your complaint or denied it. If they have upheld your complaint the manager will try to ensure that the issue is resolved. This appeal is final.

For members of the public, no further internal appeals are possible.

However, if as a parent and/or student you are unhappy about the process through which the College has dealt with your complaint, you can write to The Principal, Cirencester College. If the Principal is the subject of the complaint or has been involved in the process already, then you should write to The Chair of Governors, Cirencester College.

### **Oversight**

A member of the senior team (Currently the Vice Principal -Student Experience and External Relations) will monitor all concerns/complaints, which will be recorded centrally and confidentially.

The complaints log is regularly analysed by senior staff to identify patterns and an annual report of all compliments and complaints is produced for the Senior Management Teams and College Governors (Corporation) by the Quality Officer.

### **Exceptions or extensions to our complaints policy.**

On some of our courses (e.g. HE level) there are alternate or extended complaints routes which you will be advised about. Where complaints are about services provided by contractors we will deal with the complaint as well as passing complaints on to their processes.

Where complaints are about the organisations we work with, we will attempt to pass on your complaint to them but we will not investigate it ourselves.

Complaints to supervisory bodies

If, after exhausting our internal process, you wish to complain about the quality of the education service provided by the College, you can complain to the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency).

### **Repeated complaints**

Where repeated complaints are made about any issue which is outside our control (e.g. a civil or police matter) we may issue a standard acknowledgement and log the complaint but we will not investigate or correspond further on the matter.

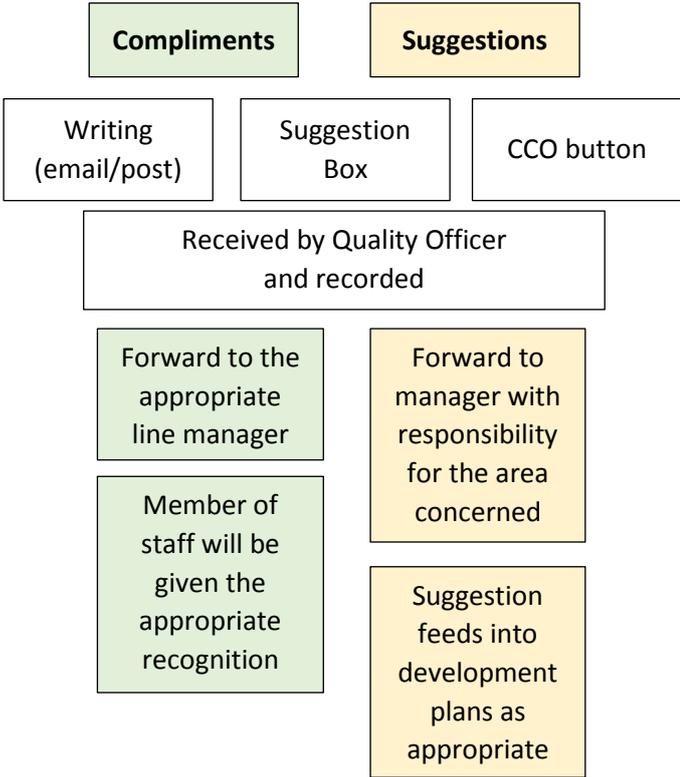
### **Data Protection**

When managing a student's personal data information it will be collected in accordance with the College's data protection policy. Data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purpose of information relating to this policy. Inappropriate access or disclosure of student data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy

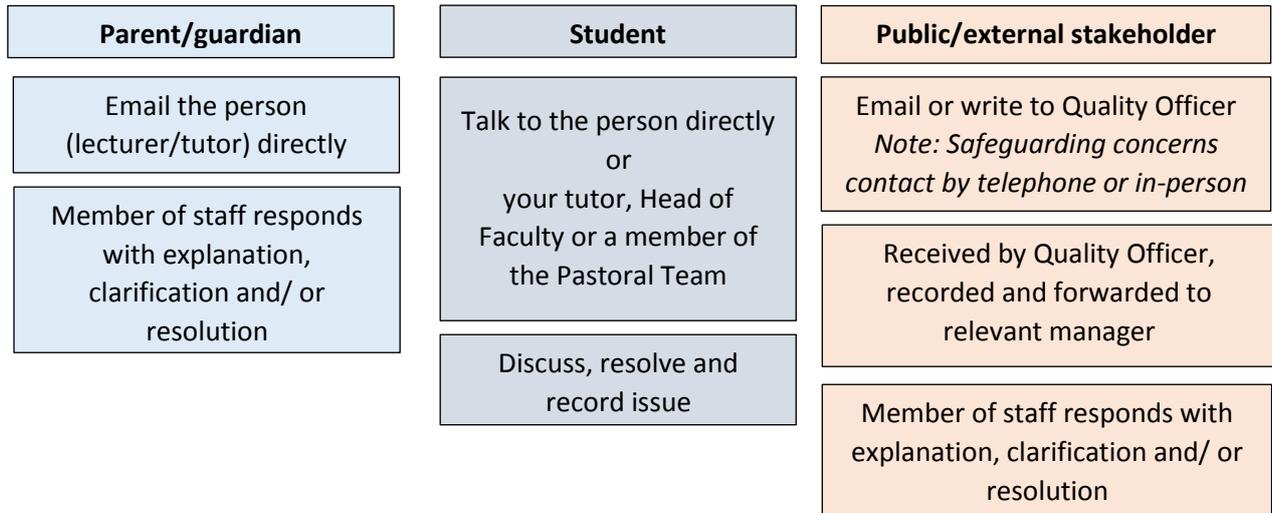
immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedure.

**Equality**

As with all College policies and procedures, due care has been taken to ensure that this policy is appropriate to all students regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion/faith. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently whilst upholding the College's commitment to providing equality for all.



## Complaints



Unsatisfactory response? > Formal complaint

Contact the Quality Officer by email

Contact the Quality Officer by email or CCO button

Contact the Quality Officer by email

Quality Officer acknowledges complaint forwards to appropriate area/line manager or escalates for investigation and monitors progress

Outcome communicated to complainant by manager in a timely way (see policy detail)

**Appeals** – for Students and Parents/guardians - can be made on the grounds of Process, Fairness or Significant new information

Appeals are not available for public complaints

Write to the Principal

Where the Principal is the subject of the complaint, write to The Chair of Governors

Complaint investigated and outcome communicated to complainant by Principal/Chair in a timely way

Still unsatisfied? You can write to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) about the quality of the education service provided by the College