



BILBOROUGH
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Complaint Procedure for students and parents

Update: March 2023
Review: 2 years
Lead Responsible: Principal



STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

Our College is large and complex and no organisation is perfect. It is only by listening to members of the College, taking on board their criticisms or suggestions that we can hope to improve. Everyone has the right to express their views as long as the equal rights of others are respected. If you feel a sense of injustice or dissatisfaction or have a concern about any aspect of your course or College life then you have the right to raise an issue.

The College policy exists to ensure all concerns and grievances are dealt with in a fair, positive and constructive way. We aim to deal with concerns and grievances as quickly and efficiently as possible within a week but if difficulties are experienced in meeting this time scale, then all parties will be informed of the position and the time limits modified as necessary.

This policy is used by students and/or parents.

2. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN OR GRIEVANCE

A concern is any worry or anxiety which a student may have regarding an aspect of their course, a situation in college or regarding their relationships with staff or other students.

A student has the right to share any concern with an appropriate member of staff either orally or in writing. We will always try to resolve concerns initially by following **informal procedures**.

If informal procedures are not successful, then the concern becomes a grievance or formal complaint. A grievance is defined as an **unresolved concern** regarding an aspect of your course, a situation in college or relationships with staff or other students.

3. INFORMAL PROCEDURE

3.1 Stage 1

If appropriate, discuss the concern with the person directly involved. If not appropriate or if there is no satisfactory outcome proceed to Stage 2.

3.2 Stage 2

Raise the concern with a member of staff you feel confident with. This will often be your Personal Tutor or Subject Teacher. You could also see the Head of Student Support, Head of Faculty or a member of staff in the student support area. They will do all they can to help and support you in dealing with the concern/complaint.

3.3 Stage 3

If necessary, the concern may be referred on to Michelle Harvey, Director of Student Support Services for pastoral issues or to Jill Hay, Director of Student Engagement and Progress, for curriculum issues. Arrangements may then be made for an informal discussion between the parties involved to be held within 5 college days of the concern being raised.

We hope that most concerns/ complaints can be resolved in this way. If the concern/complaint remains unresolved, or there is no agreed action, then you should follow the more formal procedure outlined below.

4. FORMAL PROCEDURE

4.1 Stage 1

Write a letter or email giving full details of your complaint to Jill Hay if the complaint is regarding a curriculum issue and Michelle Harvey if the issue is of a pastoral nature. The complaint should also be copied to Claire Bailey (see email addresses below). The complaint will either be dealt with by them directly or an Investigating Officer. The Investigating Officer will be somebody totally unconnected with the case so they are able to be impartial in collecting and collating the information surrounding the complaint.

jill.hay@bilborough.ac.uk - Director Student Engagement and Progress
michelle.harvey@bilborough.ac.uk - Director of Student Support Services
claire.bailey@bilborough.ac.uk - Clerk of the Local Governing Body

If you would like help with the writing down of the concern/ complaint, then feel free to ask a member of staff in the student support area and they will either help you or refer you to a member of staff in the area who will help you write it down.

4.2 Stage 2

The Investigating Officer will investigate the formal complaint. If necessary, this might involve obtaining further written, signed statements from members of staff, other students and witnesses as appropriate. This will be completed as quickly as possible – but will rarely take more than 10 working days.

4.3 Stage 3

The Investigating Officer will produce a written report of the findings. Within 5 college days of producing the report, the Investigating Officer will meet with the relevant parties (either separately or together) to share the findings of the report and seek to resolve the grievance. Following this meeting a formal response will be communicated in writing.

4.4 Vexatious, malicious or unfounded complaints

If a complaint is made which is considered to be unfounded, deliberately malicious or vexatious, the Investigating Officer will communicate this to the complainant. The complainant will be invited to submit further evidence to substantiate their grievance or the complaint will be dropped.

5. APPEAL

Students always have the right to appeal against the outcome.

5.1 Stage 1

Appeals should be made in writing to the Principal within 10 college days, setting out the grounds for the appeal. The Principal will consider all the evidence and then meet all involved parties (either separately or together) to resolve the grievance. The Principal will make the final decision and communicate the outcome in writing to all involved parties within 30 college days of receiving the appeal.

5.2 Stage 2

If you remain dissatisfied, you have a right of appeal to the Chair of Governors. The appeal must be made in writing within 10 college days, setting out the grounds for the appeal.

5.3 All appeals will be subject to a thorough examination of the facts of the issue, and the student and parents/guardians (depending on whether the student is 18 or over) will be provided with an opportunity to put their case, with 7 working days' notice of the time and venue of any hearing.

5.4 The outcome of any appeal hearing will include a decision with reasons and be issued within five working days of hearing the case.

5.5 The decision of the Governing Board is final.