

How Are We Doing?

Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions

(This procedure does not apply for students on Higher Education Programmes, including all students on programmes at Level 4 or above)

Introduction

We aim to provide you with the best possible services and to put you first whether you are an applicant, a student, an ex-student, an apprenticeship employer, a parent or a member of the public using college services or visiting college premises.

If you are dissatisfied about anything we have done or if there is anything you feel we should have done but failed to do, please tell us. Unless you let us know we will not be able to put it right.

Because we care about your experience, we aim to investigate effectively and fairly any complaint we receive. We will do our best to put right any mistakes we find and we will always tell you the result of our investigation.

When you contact us, please indicate clearly how you hope to see the matter resolved and the outcome you would like. Keep a note of discussions you have at each stage with anyone involved and the dates on which they take place. Also, keep copies of relevant documents.

Note: A member of the Helpzone can act as an advocate on behalf of students. If you need help in preparing your complaint or support during the process, do not hesitate to contact a member of the Helpzone team.

How Are We Doing? – Complaints

If you have a complaint, please make it in the following way:

Informal Route:

1. Discuss the matter with the person directly involved if you feel you can do so. It is always best to resolve matters informally if possible. It is important that you seek resolution as soon as is reasonably practicable, and normally within 20 working days of the occurrence of the problem. This increases the possibility of sorting out the problem quickly.
2. If it is not possible to do this, or if you are not satisfied with the outcome, then contact one of the following at the college who will do their utmost to help you resolve the problem:
 - your course/personal tutor (for students)
 - your Head of Curriculum (for students)
 - your Assistant Principal (for students or members of the public)
 - Student Support Team at Helpzone (for students or members of the public)
 - Head of FE Quality and Learning Resources (for FE students or members of the public)
 - Head of Apprenticeship and Employer Engagement (for apprentices or apprenticeship employers)

Formal Route:

1. If you are still dissatisfied, then you can lodge a formal written complaint. You can complete our 'How Are We Doing?' form. In the interests of sustainability we request that, where possible, you use our [online version of the form](#).
2. Alternatively, a paper-based version can be requested from Reception, Helpzone and Department Offices. If you need help in filling this form out, then contact a member of the Helpzone team. Return your completed form to any of the named places or send by post to the FE Quality Office (address listed on the form).
3. A complaint can be raised by the individual concerned or by someone acting on their behalf with their express written consent, or by a group of individuals.

Complaints cannot be anonymous, but we will always treat them with appropriate sensitivity; information will only be disclosed to those who need to see it for the purposes of dealing with your complaint.

4. On receipt, the FE Quality office or the Senior Leader involved will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days. An appropriate member of staff will act as the Investigating Officer and will endeavour to report back in writing within 10 working days. *Please note that working days do not include weekends or outside of term time.*
5. Normally, consideration of your complaint will be by correspondence and written evidence only, however in some circumstances you may be asked to provide further information or to meet with the Investigating Officer to discuss your concerns.
6. If a full response is not possible within the timeframe outlined, you will be told how your complaint is being handled.

Appeal Stage:

7. If you would like to appeal the decision or are not satisfied with the outcome of the Formal Complaint stage, please write clearly stating the reason you are not satisfied with your outcome within 5 working days directly to the Vice Principal stated within the response letter provided.
8. The Vice Principal will review your appeal and will endeavour to provide a response within 10 working days. As with the Formal Complaints stage, the Vice Principal in some circumstances may ask you to provide further information or request a meeting to discuss the appeal with you in more detail.
9. If you are still dissatisfied, you may appeal directly to the Principal. You will need to do this in writing following the outcome of the appeal response.
10. After fully exhausting the FE College Complaints Procedure, if a student complainant is still dissatisfied they can appeal to their Awarding Organisation or the Education and Skill Funding Agency (ESFA).

Monitoring of Complaints

11. Heads will receive an update each term from FE Quality identifying any outstanding complaints, or subsequent actions. The Head of FE Quality will produce analysis of all feedback received which will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team and College Governors on a regular basis.

How Are We Doing? – Compliments and Suggestions

1. Compliments or suggestions can be made on the official 'How Are We Doing?' form. In the interests of sustainability we request that, where possible, you use our [online version of the form](#).
2. Alternatively, a paper-based version can be requested from Reception, Helpzone and Department Offices. If you need help in filling out this form, then contact a member of the Helpzone team. Return your completed form to any of the named places or send by post to the FE Quality Office (address listed on the form).
3. Compliments and suggestions will be logged for reference, with your feedback circulated to relevant staff and Heads to review. The feedback you provide will be used to inform the identification and acknowledgment of compliments and suggestions within the College's self-assessment and quality improvement process. Any best practice identified because of your feedback will be recognised, celebrated, and shared wider cross college via a variety of communication methods, including staff emails and training and development events.
4. All compliments and suggestions will be categorised and reported to the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis.
5. Compliments and suggestions received on an ad hoc basis via email, text message or verbal will be logged, analysed and disseminated in the same way.