

## **Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy**

Version No	Purpose/Change	Lead	Review Date
1.0	Introduction of revised policy	CAP	Jul 21
2.0	Reviewed and updated	CAP	Jul 22
2.1	Reviewed with minor text updates	CAP	May 25

### **1. Purpose**

Wilberforce Sixth Form College aims to provide a high-quality service in all aspects of its work with students and the wider community.

Feedback from our stakeholders about any service that we provide, as well as suggestions about how the College can improve its services, are always welcomed by the Principal as part of our drive for continuous improvement.

### **2. Scope of this policy**

Compliments, concerns and complaints are not limited to parents or carers of students that are enrolled at the College. Any person, including members of the public, may give feedback about any provision of facilities or services that we provide.

This policy does not cover some complaints that are dealt with under statutory procedures, including the following:

- Child protection/safeguarding – Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policies and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
- Whistleblowing – We have an internal whistleblowing procedure (Confidential Reporting Code) for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.
- Staff grievances – Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the college's internal grievance procedures.
- Staff conduct – Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the college's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.

### **3. Compliments**

The College welcomes positive feedback from its stakeholders. You are welcome to speak to the relevant member of staff on the telephone (01482 711688) or if you would prefer to put it in writing you can do so by posting/delivering to the College (Wilberforce Sixth Form College, Saltshouse Road, Hull, HU8 9HD) or emailing ([enquiries@wilberforce.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@wilberforce.ac.uk)).

### **4. Concerns and complaints**

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of

the complaints procedure. Wilberforce College takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as reasonably possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Principal, will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Wilberforce Sixth Form College will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

### **Stage 1: Informal complaints**

If you are not satisfied with the service we are providing you can contact us informally by:

- Talking to a member of staff, e.g. the subject teacher, Faculty Head or Student Services
- Providing feedback via student or parents' questionnaires, focus groups etc.

If your concern is satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, there will be no formal record kept of your concern. We will, however, keep a record of the nature of the concern in order to identify any common themes that may arise, which we can try to eliminate through positive action.

### **Stage 2: Formal complaints**

Formal complaints should be put in writing and sent to the Principal who will then designate a senior leader to investigate (the investigating manager).

- You can use the Complaints Form (Appendix A), which is also available from the main reception or the College website. This should be completed and posted or delivered in a sealed envelope to the Principal, Wilberforce Sixth Form College, Saltshouse Road, Hull, HU8 9HD.
- Written complaints can also be emailed to the College at the following address: [enquiries@wilberforce.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@wilberforce.ac.uk)

### **The complaints procedure**

- Where a complaint is fully or partially upheld, the College will take positive action to put things right, make every effort to prevent the same thing from happening again and will ensure the complainant is kept informed throughout. If a complaint is not upheld, the complainant will be advised accordingly.
- Once a complaint has been received, the College endeavours to acknowledge receipt of that complaint within five working days.
- The College will appoint an appropriate manager to conduct an investigation. The manager will then contact the complainant to discuss the situation and work towards achieving an acceptable solution.
- If you need help in making a complaint, then you can ask for support to assist you. We will also consider making reasonable adjustments to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure, if required.
- The College will ensure that your complaint is dealt with impartially and confidentially.

## Outcome of the investigation

On completion of the investigation, the complaint will be classified in one of three ways:

- **Upheld** – the complaint was fully justified and will result in the College taking corrective action, e.g. an amendment of management/service procedures, staff training, improved communications.
- **Partially upheld** – certain aspects of the complaint were considered justified and will result in the College conducting some follow-up action.
- **Not upheld** – the complaint was not justified.

## Concluding action

On completion of the investigation, the investigating manager will:

- Ensure the Principal or his delegated representative is in possession of all necessary information and paperwork to officially record and log the process.
- Inform any members of staff who have been involved in the complaint of the outcome and any follow-up action.
- Ensure the complainant has been informed that an investigation has taken place and whether their complaint has been upheld or not. Please note that due to GDPR restrictions, the College cannot provide detailed feedback about the outcome of any investigation or any action that is taken as a result.
- Ensure, if the complaint is about equality and diversity, safeguarding or disability that the appropriate College manager has been notified.

## Stage 3: Appeals

- If you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint, you can request a review of the matter, which will be undertaken by the Principal or designated senior leader.
- A further investigation will be undertaken to try to reach a solution acceptable to both the complainant and the College.
- If the above mechanisms fail to produce an acceptable solution to any complaint, you may appeal further by writing to the Chair of the Corporation, c/o the Clerk to the Corporation, Wilberforce Sixth Form College, Saltshouse Road, Hull, HU8 9HD within 30 days of receiving the College response. Depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint, the Chair or Vice Chair of the Governing Body will aim to respond within 7 working days. If a complaint hasn't followed all the aforementioned stages, it will be referred back as appropriate.

## 5. Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

The time periods set out in this procedure are for guidance and under some circumstances may be subject to extension. Where any such extensions are made, the complainant will be notified in writing.

## **6. Anonymous complaints**

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Principal or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

## **7. Complaints received outside of term time**

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first college day after the holiday period.

## **8. Serial and vexatious complainants**

A serial and/or vexatious complainant is someone who acts in an unreasonable manner, is unreasonably persistent in the manner in which they raise their complaint, for example, shifting goal posts, not accepting what is being said. The College has a duty of care for its employees; when dealing with a serial and/or vexatious complainant we reserve the right to refuse to investigate a complaint and may, if appropriate, refer the matter to the College's legal representatives.

## **9. Record keeping**

The College will maintain a record of all formal complaints.

## **10. Access to the Policy**

The policy will be available via Wilberforce College's SharePoint site and Teams, and also published on the College's website.

## **11. Quality and assurance monitoring**

The content and operation of this policy will be formally reviewed every three years.

## Appendix A: Complaints Form

Name	
Student's name (if applicable)	
Relationship to student (if applicable)	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email address	

Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the college about it.

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

What would you like the overall outcome of your complaint to be?

Signed	
Printed	
Dated	

Please return this form either in a sealed envelope to the Principal, Wilberforce Sixth Form College, Saltshouse Road, Hull, HU8 9HD or by email to [enquiries@wilberforce.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@wilberforce.ac.uk).

Official use	
Date acknowledgement sent:	
By who:	
Complaint referred to:	