

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### 1. Purpose

To detail Strode College's processes for resolving complaints. Strode College places significant emphasis on customer feedback and views the complaints process as a valuable tool to inform and improve the quality of its services.

### 2. Scope

The complaints procedure is designed to deal with, but is not limited to:

- 2.1 Complaints raised by students, apprentices (FE and HE), parents, guardians, employers, customers or the general public in relation to College activities, staff or any services provided by the College.
- 2.2 Complaints relating to sexual, racial, disability or any other form of discrimination.
- 2.3 Equipment and facilities.

**The complaints procedure does not cover the following (which are subject to other separate procedures):**

- 2.4 Decisions made in examinations and assessments.
- 2.5 Academic decisions.
- 2.6 Allegations of misconduct by a student.
- 2.7 Staff grievance against an individual or the College.

### 3. Process

#### Stage 1: The informal approach

Most concerns are of a minor nature and should be able to be resolved informally without the need to invoke the formal process.

- 3.1 They should be raised immediately with the person who has day-to-day responsibility for the area in which the matter occurs. (Student Support Services are able to provide support to students, if required)
- 3.2 The person receiving the informal concern will keep notes on the nature of the concern, the complainant and how the concern was dealt with. These notes should be stored safely and confidentially.
- 3.3 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, following the response, they should make the concern formal and adhere to the following process:

#### Stage 2: The formal approach

- 3.4 A complaint will be regarded as formal if it is of a serious nature, or cannot be satisfactorily resolved on an informal basis by the relevant College department against whom it was directed; or the complaint has been put in writing to the Principal and Chief Executive.

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- 3.5 The complaint should be put in writing to (a complaints form is available to download from the College’s website or from our reception area, if required):

Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality  
Strode College  
Church Road  
Street  
Somerset  
BA16 0AB

- 3.6 All complaints will be acknowledged by the Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality within 3 College working days of receipt.
- 3.7 The complaint will be investigated by an appropriate manager and a response to the complainant will be made within 10 College working days. If the response time needs to be extended for any reason, the complainant will be notified in writing and given a reason for the delay.
- 3.8 Upheld complaints will be followed up after a period of 20 working days to check the complainant is satisfied with the resolution.

### Stage 3: Appeals

- 3.9 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the College’s response to their complaint they may appeal in writing to the Principal and Chief Executive Officer within 10 College working days of the date of the College’s response.
- 3.10 This will be acknowledged within 5 College working days of receipt.
- 3.11 The Principal and Chief Executive Officer will conduct a review and respond within 10 working days. If the response time needs to be extended for any reason, the complainant will be notified in writing and given a reason for the delay. Complainants will be provided with a ‘Completion of Procedures’ letter detailing the final outcome of your Appeal.

**Appeals are final and no further correspondence with regard to the substances of the complaint will be entered to.**

### 4. HE funded courses (please also refer to the Higher Education Complaints Procedure)

- 4.1 If the complainant is a student studying an approved HE programme with a partner Higher Education Institution (HEI) and in receipt of student funding, the College’s internal complaints procedure should be followed.

If the complaint is regarding a programme validated by the University of Plymouth and is not just about a service issue e.g. resources and facilities then the complaint should be directed to the University of Plymouth [complaints@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@plymouth.ac.uk)

- 4.2 If students are still unhappy with the outcome they should refer to the relevant HEI’s complaints procedure. If their complaint remains unresolved, they can take their unresolved complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education. This is the designated operator of the complaints handling scheme for HE. Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Second Floor, Abbey Gate 57-75 Kings Road Reading, RG1 3AB Tel: 0118 959 9813 Via website: [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

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## 5. Other funded courses

- 5.1 The Education Skills Funding Agency is the monitoring organisation for all other Government funded courses and may be approached if the complainant feels that the College's complaints process has not been followed. A complaint may be sent in writing to: The Complaints Team Education and Skills Funding Agency Cheylesmore House Quinton Road Coventry, CV1 2WT Email: [complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk)

## 6. Monitoring and quality assurance

Complaints are monitored through SMT on a monthly basis and Academic Standards and Quality on an annual basis.

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