

Compliments and Complaints Policy



Compliments and Complaints Policy

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Values

Passion

We are passionate about education & enabling our Students to reach their potential.

Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurialism

We foster an entrepreneurial climate which encourages innovation and creativity.

Respect, Social Justice and Fairness

We believe that every individual should be treated with courtesy and fairness and we respect the rights and beliefs of each other, regardless of gender, marital status, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or position within the organisation.

High Standards and Quality

We have aspirational targets and standards

Professionalism

We never compromise our standards and values, and care passionately about our Students, our community, our colleagues and our success.

Friendliness and Commitment

We believe that our staff and Students should work in an environment of friendliness, with a clear sense of purpose to achieve our mission and realise our vision.

Flexibility, Responsiveness and Ability to Change

We value new ideas and approaches and seek new opportunities and solutions to meeting the needs and demands of our Students, employers and the local community whilst supporting national and regional education and economic strategies.

Accountability

We are all accountable for ensuring our plan is delivered

Risk-Taking

We encourage and celebrate creativity and risk-taking, learning from all that we do.

Behaviours

We will:

- ❖ Foster excellence
- ❖ Work together
- ❖ Role model the Values
- ❖ Deliver results for Learners, Employers, Our People

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Vision

To be a truly great college, passionate about success

Mission

To be outstanding in:

- Education
- Training
- Partnerships

Our Strategic Objectives:

Transformational, inclusive and entrepreneurial teaching, learning & assessment for students

Excellent learning outcomes for students that lead to work and economic independence

Empowered, motivated and entrepreneurial staff

Customers First in our strategies for local economic growth and in our work with businesses and communities

The latest education and training solutions delivered in the workplace, or in industry standard facilities

To become an entrepreneurial business and less dependent on public funding

To contribute to a sustainable future through targeted changes in our behaviours and business relationships

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Compliments and Complaints Policy

1 Statement of Purpose

Barking & Dagenham College is committed to providing the highest quality education and training. The only way we can make this possible is if we receive direct comments from our students and Customers. Compliments and complaints are important to us as they provide insight into what we are doing well, and indicate those areas where we may need to improve.

Barking & Dagenham College values all constructive feedback in the interests of continually improving the service we offer. We record this feedback, regularly monitor what our Customers tell us, and use the information in our planning processes. We seek to manage and respond to all Customer feedback in a consistent and professional manner.

In rare cases a complaint may raise a health and safety concern, a safeguarding concern or a concern in relation to radicalisation. In such cases the complaints procedure may be replaced by a different more appropriate procedure.

2 Definitions

2.1 Customer

A Customer is a person who makes a compliment or complaint to the College. A Customer can be:

- A current or past student of the College
- A Customer of one of the College businesses (e.g. The Salon, The Chef's Hat, The Gym)
- A member of the public
- A member of staff who is commenting about a service provided by the College. (Staff with complaints about another member of staff should be referred to the Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy or Grievance Procedures)
- Any other stakeholder

2.2 Compliment

A compliment is defined as a Customer statement of positive recognition or praise for a service or individual.

2.3 Complaint

A complaint is defined as a criticism or a direct expression of dissatisfaction.

A complaint can also take the form of a comment or suggestion for improvement to our service.

3 Compliments Process

3.1 Submitting a compliment

A compliment can be submitted to the College via the webform, or forwarded to the Quality and Transforming Learning Team from the curriculum area or student service that has received it.

3.2 Acknowledging compliments

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All compliments will be acknowledged within 5 working days by the Quality and Transforming Learning Team.

3.3 Communication of compliments

The Quality and Transforming Learning Team will notify any individual members of staff who have been praised or recognised in a compliment.

3.4 Recording compliments

The Quality and Transforming Learning Team will keep a record of all compliments received, and will report on these on an annual basis.

4 Complaints Process

4.1 Scope of the Complaints Procedure

The complaints procedure can be applied to complaints about:

- Enrolment
- Fees/Finance
- Quality of teaching
- Treatment by Staff
- Behaviour of other Students
- Information, Advice and Guidance
- Estates/Facilities

The complaints procedure should NOT be used for:

- appealing an assessment grade, for which there is a separate Academic Appeals Procedure.
- matters relating to harassment which are covered in the Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying
- matters relating to safeguarding children or vulnerable adults (including radicalisation or promoting violent extremism) which should be referred to the Principal Safeguarding Officer
- matters relating to staff grievances, which are covered in the Grievance Procedures
- matters relating to potential personal injury which are covered in the relevant Health and Safety documents.

Complaints may not be made anonymously.

Customers aged 18 years or over should submit their own complaints, although may be assisted through this process by a parent, carer or friend.

If Customers wish to make a joint or group complaint, they should nominate one person to 'lead' the complaint. All correspondence will be sent to this individual.

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4.2 Stage 1 – Informal Procedure

In the first instance, Customers who wish to make a complaint should be referred to front line staff, who will usually be able to resolve the issue quickly and amicably. Examples of front line staff who are able to resolve complaints informally include:

- Personal Coach
- Curriculum Manager
- Opportunities Coach
- The Learner Involvement Co-ordinator
- The Catering Manager
- The Salon Manager

Where complaints are resolved by front line staff, the complaints will be treated as informal and not recorded.

4.3 Stage 2 – Formal Procedure

4.3.1 Formal complaints can be made if:

- The Customer is not satisfied with the informal resolution of their complaint
- The Customer advises that they wish to make a formal complaint

4.3.2 Formal complaints can be submitted to the College via the Webform or by sending a complaint form or letter of complaint to the Quality and Transforming Learning Team. Customers who are unable to use the Webform or complete the complaint form may contact the Quality and Transforming Learning Team for assistance.

4.3.3 Once received by the Quality and Transforming Learning Team, all complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days.

4.3.4 The Quality and Transforming Learning Team will identify the most appropriate Curriculum or Business Support Manager to act as Investigating Manager and pass on details of the complaint.

4.3.5 Investigations will be completed as quickly as is practicable. The Investigating Manager may choose to interview the parties involved in the complaint. In such cases, the parties may be accompanied by a friend or representative, but not by a legal or other professional advisor.

4.3.6 The Quality and Transforming Learning Team will monitor the progress of the complaint, and will update the Customer on progress every 15 working days until the matter is resolved.

4.3.7 When the complaint has been resolved, the Investigating Manager will compose a letter of response, which will be checked by the Quality and Transforming Learning Team before being sent to the Customer.

4.4 Stage 3 – Appeal Procedure

An appeal to the Principal and CEO may be made if the Customer is not satisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint.

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In such cases, the Customer should appeal in writing within 15 working days of the date on their letter of response.

The Principal and CEO will determine whether the complaint has been properly dealt with according to our procedures. A decision will usually be made within 15 working days. The Principal's decision is final and closes the College's internal complaints process.

4.5 Stage 4 – External Review

Students who have completed the college complaints procedures and are still not satisfied with the outcome have the right to take their complaint to the Skills Funding Agency:

Skills Funding Agency Complaints Officer,
Director Area Relationship Team,
1 Victoria Street,
London,
SW1H 0ET

complaintsteam@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

Students who have completed the college complaints procedure and are on a prescribed (funded) Higher Education programme can alternatively take their complaint to the OIA:

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for HE (OIA),
3rd Floor,
Kings Reach,
38-50 Kings Road,
Reading,
RG1 3AA

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

An example of a prescribed HE programme would be a BA Degree, Foundation Degree, HNC, HND or Initial Teacher Training programme. An example of a non-prescribed HE programme would be a professional body qualification, such as CIPD. If students are in doubt as to the status of their course they should contact the Quality and Equalities Manager or Quality Enhancement Manager (HE).

5 Staff Responsibilities

5.1 The Quality and Transforming Learning Team should:

- Acknowledge compliments and complaints within 5 working days of receipt
- Communicate compliments to named members of staff
- Identify and contact an appropriate Investigating Manager for formal complaints

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- Monitor the progress of the complaint and update the Customer on progress every 15 working days until the matter is resolved
- Check the letter of response before it is sent to the Customer
- Maintain a confidential file of all correspondence

5.2 The Investigating Manager should:

- Fully investigate the complaint as quickly as is practicable according to our processes
- Use professional judgement to come to an unbiased decision on the facts of the case
- Inform the Quality and Transforming Learning Team of any conflict of interest
- Advise any person named in a complaint
- If the complaint is of a sufficiently serious nature, take steps to separate the Customer and the person named in the complaint
- Discuss serious cases involving staff with the Executive Director People and Organisation to consider whether any disciplinary action should be taken
- If the investigation uncovers a safeguarding issue (including a Prevent issue), where the alleged perpetrator is a member of staff, alert the Executive Director People and Organisation
- If the investigation uncovers a safeguarding issue (including a Prevent issue), even if this is in respect of siblings of the student, where the alleged perpetrator is NOT a member of staff, alert the Principal Safeguarding Officer
- On completion of the investigation, draft a letter of response to the Customer, and send this to Quality and Transforming Learning Team for checking
- Present issues raised for discussion at Curriculum Review Meetings
- Incorporate significant issues raised in complaints into the Self Assessment Report

6 Reporting on Compliments and Complaints

The Quality and Transforming Learning team keep an up to date record of compliments and formal complaints. The team will present regular and ad hoc reports to Corporation, SLT, Academic Board and the Equality and Diversity Committee as required.

An annual report on compliments and complaints will be presented to SLT in order to inform the planning and delivery of College services.