

Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy 2016-17

Date approved: 4 November 2016
 Approved by: SMT
 Review date: July 2018
 Responsible Manager (s): Director of Quality and Standards
 Executive Lead: Deputy Principal

Applicable to staff	Yes
Applicable to students:	Yes
Accessible to students:	Yes
Accessible to general public: (including clients)	Yes

Consultation

Consultation undertaken with:

Date:

- | | |
|--|------|
| • SMT | Yes |
| • AMT | No |
| • CCMT | NA * |
| • Students | No * |
| • Employee representatives (<i>HR policies only</i>) | NA * |
| • Other | NA * |

Nov 2016

** please delete as appropriate*

Contents

1. Scope and purpose of the policy
2. Policy statement
3. Accountability
4. Student involvement
5. Linked procedures
6. Equality impact assessment

1. Scope and purpose of policy

The compliments, complaints and feedback policy applies to all services the College provides and is available to students, former students, employers and members of the public.

There are separate policies for dealing with matters such as:

- Safeguarding
- Grievance or disciplinary offences (staff only)
- Personal Mitigating Circumstances in relation to assessments
- Appeals against the outcome of FE academic assessments.
- Appeals against the outcome of HE academic assessments. Higher Education students should in the first instance refer to the College HE Taught Award regulations www.blackpool.ac.uk/he-regulations for further information.
- Making disclosures in the public interest (Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act and Subject Access Requests)
- Appeals against decisions made under the student code of conduct/misconduct procedures

2. Policy statement

2.1 Complaints

The College welcomes feedback from all its customers and is committed to improving the quality of the services it provides.

The College is committed to openness and transparency by providing well publicised, accessible information on how to give feedback or make a complaint.

Compliments, complaints and feedback will be dealt with courteously, fairly and objectively.

Compliments, complaints and feedback are addressed appropriately through the College procedures.

Confidentiality

Where possible, confidentiality will be observed, throughout the operation of this policy. Where a complaint relates to specific individuals, the College may seek permission to share such details with them. If permission is not given, it may not be possible for the College to fully investigate or resolve the complaint.

Anonymous Complaints

The College does not normally accept or act upon anonymous complaints, due to the College not being in a position to collect all relevant information for investigation from such complaints and respond accordingly. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances where the College deems it appropriate to investigate a complaint from an anonymous source, which identifies a risk to the College community or the public.

Vexatious and Malicious Complaints

A vexatious or malicious complaint is defined as a complaint which is deemed unreasonable or untrue, having been put forward so as to abuse the complaints procedure, or an attempt to defame the name or character of another person. In cases

where a complaint is considered to be vexatious or malicious, the College reserves the right to terminate investigation of the complaint.

Permission to Disclose

If the complainant wishes for someone else to raise concerns with us on their behalf, the College has a legal obligation under the Data Protection Act 1998 with regard to sharing information with third parties. Therefore, in some circumstances the College will require written permission to share this information with them.

Before permission is given to share the information with others, the complainant must consider whether our response will include any sensitive information about them. The complainant is required to contact us in advance to tell us which sensitive information we can and cannot share.

Multi-Issue Complaints

If a complaint identifies a number of issues which fall within the remit of other procedures, for example, an academic appeal or both, the content of such complaints will be reviewed. The complainant will then be notified and directed to the relevant policy and procedure.

Collective/group complaints

Collective/group complaints are expected to identify how each individual has been personally affected by the issues which are being brought to the attention of the College. Each individual named in the collective complaint must agree with the content of the complaint before it is submitted and individually sign to say that they are in agreement of the same. Only the nominated spokesperson will receive communication/correspondence from the College.

The College operates a staged complaint procedure (see Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Procedure (Public) for further information) www.blackpool.ac.uk/college-policies

2.2 Compliments and Feedback

The College welcomes feedback from all users of college services. There are number of options available to all our customers to provide compliments and feedback to the College.

- Surveys
- Student and Employer Forums
- By emailing: talkback@blackpool.ac.uk
- By completing the 'Have your Say' compliments and feedback form available at all main reception areas
- By writing to the appropriate Head of Department

3. Accountability

- Heads of Curriculum and Service Areas are responsible for the resolution of complaints at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the procedure
- The Deputy Principal is responsible for the review of a complaint at Stage 3 of the procedure

- The Quality and Standards Directorate are responsible for the monitoring and reporting of complaints and compliments
- The policy and procedure will be reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if required. It will be approved and its operation monitored on a regular basis via the Strategic Management Team and the appropriate committee of the Board of Governors

4. Student Involvement

Student input is essential in understanding the customer experience and must be used by both curriculum and service areas to inform their quality processes. Any shortcomings in the level of service identified by a complaint must be examined to ensure that the root causes of complaints are addressed.

5. Linked Policies and Procedures

5.1 *Linked Policies and statements*

- Safeguarding Students policy
- Further Education and Work Based Learning Appeals against Assessment Decisions policy
- Student Behaviour policy
- Student Attendance policy
- Information Security policy
- Public Interest Disclosure policy
- Single Equality Statement Summary
- University of Salford awards - www.governance.salford.ac.uk/page/student_policies (correct as at October 2016)
- College Higher Education Taught Award regulations www.blackpool.ac.uk/he-regulations
- For policies in relation to College employees, please go to www.blackpool.ac.uk/hr/policies

5.2 *Linked Procedures*

- Compliments, Complaints and Feedback procedure
- Further Education and Work Based Learning Appeals against Assessment decisions procedure
- Public Interest Disclosure procedure
- Student Misconduct procedure

6. Equality Impact Assessment (attached)

6. Equality Impact Assessment

Impact Assessment for the 4 strands of Equality, Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Sustainability	
Initial Form to be completed with Risk Assessments or as part of a proposal or change to a policy, plan or new way of working	
Title of Activity: Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy Author and Date: Director of Quality and Standards	<input type="checkbox"/> New or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision Please tick as appropriate Expected Implementation Date: October 2016 What is the review date? October 2017
Equality and Diversity. Which of the characteristics maybe impacted upon? And, if yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?	None anticipated, but potential Equality and Diversity issues could be identified via this policy
Safeguarding: Are there any aspects of this proposal which could cause a learner/member of staff/visitor to feel unsafe? If yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No None foreseen but potential Safeguarding risks could be identified via this policy
Health and Safety: Have any risks been identified? If yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Potential health and safety risks could be identified via this policy
Sustainability: Are there expected benefits or impacts on sustainability issues? If yes, how have these been considered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Evidence: What evidence do you have for your conclusions and expectations for these conclusions? How will this impact be monitored for all these considerations?	See above via the complaints monitoring process
Is this policy of a high/medium or low risk? :	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low