



Complaints Procedure

April 2016

Agreed by: SMT

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Complaints Procedure

North Kent College (“the College”) aims to provide all its students and clients with a high quality service. However, from time to time problems do occur. You have the right to pursue the resolution of any difficulties and the College will undertake to respond to your complaint fairly and impartially, with care and concern. The College will also seek to learn from complaints which are upheld and make changes where necessary.

Making a complaint

Stage 1

As detailed in the Student’s Handbook, initially problems should be discussed with a member of the teaching staff such as your course tutor. If you wish the complaint to be logged, it will be recorded at this point.

If this discussion does not resolve the matter, or if it is not appropriate to discuss a situation with a member of the teaching staff, then the complaint should be made to the person responsible for the particular area or service.

Stage 2

For complaints about courses and teaching, write to, or contact, the Academic Director responsible for the provision of your course. For non-curriculum complaints about the College and its services, write to or contact the relevant Business Support Manager. Our Student Services team can give you the contact details.

Alternatively, you may prefer to record the details of your complaint via our website <http://www.northkent.ac.uk/contact/complaints-procedure.aspx>.

If the matter is not resolved by the first two stages, a formal written complaint should be made to the Deputy Principal (see Stage 3).

Stage 3

Complaints must be made in writing and submitted to the Deputy Principal by post; by hand to the College's Reception; or by email. Again, contact details are available from Reception or Student Services.

A fair and confidential investigation will be carried out and a full, impartial and reasoned reply will be provided to the complainant.

Response to complaints

In response to complaints, the College will:

- make an initial response to you within five working days, indicating the person with whom further contact can be made;
- investigate the circumstances/details of the matter and provide a full response including, where appropriate, explanation and details of any action taken, usually within fifteen working days. If the matter cannot be resolved within this timeframe, you will be kept informed of progress; and
- log and track all complaints for Quality Assurance purposes.

The College is committed to ensuring that the complainant, or the person on whose behalf the complaint has been made, will not be treated unfairly as a result of lodging a complaint.

Complaints about results

Complaints about your course grades and other internal assessments are dealt with via the Student Appeals Procedure. A copy of the procedure is available from Student Services and is detailed on Moodle.

If your complaint is about external assessments, your tutor will contact the relevant awarding body on your behalf.

Appeals

In the event that your complaint is not handled to your satisfaction, you may appeal in writing to the Principal at our Dartford Campus, within ten working days of the date of the response letter (Stage 3), giving the grounds and brief particulars of the appeal. An acknowledgement of the appeal will be sent to you on receipt and a response to the appeal will be made within ten working days. If the matter cannot be resolved within this timeframe, you will be kept informed of the progress.

If you are not satisfied following the Appeal

If the College's complaint procedure has been exhausted and you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, the Skills Funding Agency and QAA (for Higher Education programmes) have their own complaints procedures, which review the processes the College has gone through when dealing with your complaint. Contact details are as follows:

Skills Funding Agency
South East Region
The Observatory
Brunel
Chatham Maritime
Kent
ME4 4NT

<http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus/complaints/>

Procedures for complaints relating to Higher Education funded provision are available from <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Complaints/Pages/default.aspx>.