

## **POLICY**

<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Board of the Corporation</b>
<b>Date approved</b>	<b>18 October 2022</b>
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>October 2023</b>
<b>Lead responsibility</b>	<b>Deputy Principal</b>

## **1. Purpose**

1.1. Compliments and complaints play an important role in ensuring our College provides educational services that meet and exceed expectations. Derwentside College is committed to utilising the views of learners, employers and other members of the public to make improvements to its provision.

## **2. Scope**

2.1. This policy and procedure details the College's methods for receiving, investigating and responding to compliments and complaints. Those submitting compliments or complaints may be learners, prospective learners, parents, employers, stakeholders, or any other interested party.

2.2. Complaints from staff should be directed to the HR team. Compliments regarding staff from other staff members can be dealt with in the scope of the policy or in the usual way via feedback to the Line Manager or to a member of the Executive Team.

2.3. This policy and procedure does not cover safeguarding issues or complaints. Any complaints or concerns relating to safeguarding should refer to the Safeguarding Policy.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1. The Executive Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring an effective Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure is in place;
- Maximising opportunities for continuous improvement based on the application of the Policy and the findings of investigations.

3.2. The Principal and Chief Executive is responsible for:

- Hearing appeals from complainants against the findings of investigations;
- Writing responses to appeals.

3.3. The Deputy Principal is responsible for:

- Overseeing the policy;
- Ensuring its principles are adhered to;
- Reporting to the Board of Governors;
- Appointing investigators;
- Writing responses to complainants.

3.4. Investigating managers are responsible for:

- Investigating formal complaints in-line with this policy and procedure;
- Writing investigation reports within the timescales laid out in this policy and procedure;

3.5. The Business Operations Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring all compliments and complaints are logged;
- Coordinating the administration of investigations and written responses to complainants on behalf of the Executive Team

3.6. All staff are responsible for

- Ensuring compliments and complaints are reported through the appropriate channels, in adherence with this policy and procedure.

#### 4. Policy

- 4.1. Complaints will be handled sensitively. Members of staff named in complaints will be informed of the complaint and will have the right to be interviewed in any investigations.
- 4.2. Wherever possible, complaints will be handled with confidentiality. However, the circumstances of the complaint may not allow this; in these cases, the complainant and/or their representatives will be informed that confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- 4.3. Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the issues or events that prompt the complaint.
- 4.4. If the complaint is received from a learner under the age of 18, the College may inform the learner's parents or guardians.

#### 5. Procedures

##### 5.1. Compliments:

- 5.1.1. The College welcomes positive feedback on the service it provides across any of its areas of operation. A wide range of opportunities to voice positive feedback are available including: during delivery of provision, via learner voice activity, via social media, verbally, or in writing.
- 5.1.2. Compliments may be received by any member of staff, in any form, and should be forwarded to the relevant member of the Executive Team to be recorded in the Compliments Log. A Compliments Form is also available for use (**see Appendix A**).
- 5.1.3. The College will use the information from compliments to support quality improvement.

##### 5.2. Complaints:

- 5.2.1. Complaints that cannot be resolved informally should be submitted using the College's Formal Complaint Form (**see Appendix B**), or in any other written format, and addressed to the Deputy Principal.
- 5.2.2. Complaints will be acknowledged within three working days from the date that the complaint is received by the Deputy Principal. The complaint details will be recorded by Business Operations Team in the College's Complaints Log.
- 5.2.3. The Deputy Principal will appoint an investigating manager, inform the relevant member of the Executive team and an investigation will be conducted. Meetings may take place with the parties concerned in order to allow for a comprehensive response.
- 5.2.4. Following completion of the investigation, the investigating manager will produce a report and send it to the Deputy Principal.
- 5.2.5. The Deputy Principal will write a response to the complainant, which will normally be sent within 10 College working days of the acknowledgment of the complaint. More complex complaints may require longer to resolve.

5.2.6. If the complaint concerns the conduct of a College employee, the investigating manager may recommend that the complaint be referred to the College's Performance Improvement Policy or Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

5.2.7. If the complaint concerns the Principal and Chief Executive or any member of the Board, complaints should be addressed to the Clerk.

## **6. Appeals**

- 6.1. The complainant has the right of appeal if they are not satisfied with the written response to the outcome of the investigation. Appeals should be made in writing to the Principal and Chief Executive within 10 College working days of receiving the response, outlining the reasons for the appeal.
- 6.2. The Principal and Chief Executive will review the complaint, including the notes of any investigations.
- 6.3. Further investigations may be conducted as part of the appeal review. Following completion, a written response will be sent to the complainant within 10 College working days.

## **7. External Appeals**

- 7.1. Following the appeal review, if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the College's response, they have the right to direct their complaint to an external body. FE students should contact:

complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk,

or;

ESFA Complaints Team  
Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Cheylesmere House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2WT

## **8. Equality & Diversity**

- 8.1. The College has paid due regard to equality considerations during the preparation and implementation of this Policy and Procedure.
- 8.2. These considerations included the potential for any differential negative effect on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership.
- 8.3. The College's judgement is that there is no such negative effect on those grounds and, consequently, no potential breach of the Equality Act 2010.
- 8.4. The operation of this Policy and Procedure will be monitored by the HR Manager in order to establish that no unlawful discrimination is taking place and to identify opportunities for the College to enhance equality of opportunity and fair treatment.

## **9. Review**

- 9.1. This document will be reviewed by October 2023.

9.2. The Deputy Principal will undertake this review, taking into account the effectiveness of the policy, legislative changes and developments in good practice.

9.3. The outcome of the review will be reported to the Executive Team.

<b>Category</b> [select ONE only]	<input type="checkbox"/> Programmes/courses <input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Health and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Services <input type="checkbox"/> MIS <input type="checkbox"/> Admissions <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching and learning <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel
<b>Audience</b> [select ALL that apply]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suppliers

# Appendix A - Derwentside College Compliments Form



**To be completed by the student or member of the public who would like to submit a compliment**

Completed by:

Date of Compliment:

Contact Details:

Details of Compliment: (include dates and locations, or attach letter/email as appropriate)

Signed:

Date:

**To be completed by the Business Operations Team**

Date Compliment received and logged:

Date details of Compliment passed onto the relevant Manager:

## Appendix B - Derwentside College Formal Complaints Form

**To be completed by complainant, or staff member receiving formal complaint**

Completed by:  Date of complaint:

Name of complainant:  Name of learner: (if different to complainant)

Address:  Telephone number:   
 Email:

Details of complaint:

**To be completed by the Deputy Principal**

Date acknowledged:  Investigating manager:

Date investigation report received:  Date response sent:

Complaint upheld?  Yes/No

Summary of actions taken as a result:

**To be completed by the Business Operations Team**

Date complaint logged:  Date response logged:

