

INTERNAL PROCEDURE

Title: Complaints Procedure

POLICY HOLDER:	Executive Manager
SMT OWNER:	Principal
VERSION NO:	12
LAST REVIEWED:	December 2021

Summary:

Accessibility: If you would like this information in an alternative format, e.g. Easy to Read, large print, Braille or audio tape, or if you would like the procedure explained to you in your language, please contact the College's marketing team on 01603 773 169.

Further information: If you have any queries about this policy or procedure, please contact the named policy holder.



Amendments log

Review date	Version	Changes	Originated by	Approval
August 2021	11	OIA contact information updated		
December 2021	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy amended to ensure clarity on definition of 'student' in line with other college documentation.• Step 5 - Right of Appeal updated to include OIA and completion of procedure information.		

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Introduction – Why Complaints are Important

City College Norwich (CCN) takes complaints seriously. It is important to address the issues raised by complaints because they allow us to rectify faults or shortcomings in our provision. We can also respond to complaints in a positive way that allows us to improve the operation and services of the College.

We should also be aware that dissatisfied customers are very likely to discuss their complaint with a range of other people. Complaints which are not addressed to the satisfaction of the complainant may well lead to the reputation of the College being tarnished.

Thus, dealing successfully with complaints will improve the provision that we make, improve the reputation of the College and give us knowledge to help us develop in a positive way.

Introduction to The Complaints Procedure

Any student, apprentice, employer or other customer of CCN can raise a complaint about any aspect of college services and have their complaint dealt with in a speedy, fair, thorough and confidential manner. Wherever possible a solution will be found that is satisfactory to all concerned and the underlying causes of the problem will be removed so that the problem does not recur.

Help regarding the operation of this procedure is available from the Advice Shop or the Students' Union (studentunion@ccn.ac.uk).

Further Education

Complaints about Further Education assessment processes or outcomes should be made using the Assessment Appeals Procedure, which is available from the Advice Shop or the Students' Union (studentunion@ccn.ac.uk).

Higher Education

If you are studying on a programme of Higher Education and your complaint is of an **academic** nature you should use the Academic Appeals and Academic Complaints Procedure which is available on Blackboard under HE@CCN/Regulations and Procedures. If your complaint is of a general nature, please follow this procedure.

The Complaints Procedure - How to make a complaint and what happens next

The College takes all complaints seriously and welcomes all forms of feedback to help improve its services. If you wish to give constructive feedback, are dissatisfied with a service, or have a general complaint to make, this is what to do:

Step 1 - Talk to the person concerned or your Head of Area in the first instance

Your concerns will be taken seriously, and most issues can be resolved quickly at this point.

You can ask your course representative or the Students' Union President to do this on your behalf or to support you in doing so.

Step 2 – Submit a Complaint Form

If you are not satisfied with the response or feel unable to discuss the issue directly, please complete and submit a complaint form ([Appendix 1](#)).

Complaint forms are available electronically from Blackboard under Student Charter and Policies, or in paper format from:

- The Advice Shop (Norwich, room A1)
- The Advice Shop (Paston, room SC.0.1)
- Jubilee Reception (Easton, Jubilee Building)
- Students' Union Office (Room A40a Norwich or email studentunion@ccn.ac.uk)

Your course representative or the Students' Union President can provide help in filling in this form. Once you have completed the complaints form please hand it in at one of the areas noted above, the relevant college site main reception or email it to information@ccn.ac.uk.

Step 3 - What happens next?

You will receive confirmation from the Executive Support Team that your complaint form has been received (usually within 2 days and normally via email).

A copy of the complaint will be sent to the manager responsible for the service to which the complaint relates, who will carry out an investigation and make a full response to the Executive Support Team. Normally this will be done within 5 working days to allow a full written reply to be made to you.

You will receive a full written response within 10 working days from the date of confirmation of receiving your complaint form, however this could be subject to extension during times of extreme pressure and demand. Should there be a reason for delay you will be informed of this.

Step 4 - What to do if you are dissatisfied with our response

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive you may ask the Principal to reinvestigate. You may do this by writing to the Principal within 10 working days of receiving our response. After a further investigation, you will receive a full reply from the Principal within 10 working days.

If you are still not satisfied, you may have the right to appeal to an outside organisation.

For more information regarding your right to appeal outside of the organisation please contact:

The Executive Office, Room B40, City College Norwich, Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ.
Tel. (01603) 773615

Step 5 - Right of Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the response from the Principal then, depending upon the nature of your complaint you may have a further right of appeal to an external body. If this applies to you, the Executive Support Team will inform you and provide contact details for your appeal (as detailed in Step 4). This right of appeal could apply if:

- you are taking a further education course, then you could appeal to the Skills Funding Agency;
 - you are taking a higher education course validated by the University of East Anglia (UEA) and your complaint relates to an academic judgement or outcome. In this situation you may be entitled to appeal to the UEA and possibly afterwards to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (see also the HE Academic Appeals and Academic Complaints Procedure);
 - the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. City College Norwich is a member of this scheme. If you are unhappy with the outcome you may be able to ask the OIA to review your case. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>;
 - you normally need to have completed this procedure before you complain to the OIA. We will send you a letter called a "Completion of Procedures Letter" when you have reached the end of our processes and there are no further steps you can take internally. If your complaint is not upheld, We will issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter automatically. If your complaint is upheld or partly upheld you can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter if you want one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedures Letters and when you should expect to receive one here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters>
 - your complaint relates to our adherence to the Data Protection Act 2018 or General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), then you could appeal to the Office of the Information Commissioner.
- **Complaints direct to the Principal**
Complaints that are sent directly to the Principal by email or letter will be dealt with as above and follow the same formal process.
 - **Complaints received by phone**
Complaints received by phone will be recorded by a member of staff on the attached complaints form and sent to the Executive Support Team.
 - **Complaints Against the Students' Union**
If you are dissatisfied with your dealings with the Students' Union you have the right to have the complaint investigated. This applies whether or not you are a member of the Students' Union. If you are a student who is not a member of the Students' Union and feel that you have been unfairly disadvantaged as a result

of opting out of the Union, you also have the right to have your complaint investigated.

A student who has a complaint about the Students' Union should follow the above procedure.

The complaint will be investigated by the Executive Support Team and the above procedure followed.

Monitoring Complaints – Quality Improvements

In order to monitor our response to complaints and to ensure that there is effective feedback into the delivery of courses and services, there will be termly reporting of the pattern and nature of complaints received.

Significant trends and the actions taken to resolve complaints and appeals will be reviewed by the Executive Management Team and submitted to Governors who will be asked to reflect and evaluate the effectiveness of the College's complaints and appeals procedures for enhancement purposes. The report will not name or identify complainants.

- **Annual Complaints Report**

The Executive Office maintains the log of complaints and the Executive Manager will prepare an annual summary report of all complaints received. The report will not name or identify complainants or members of staff. This report will go to:

1. The Student Parliament (summary of complaints from students only)
2. The College Management Team
3. The Corporation

Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated as confidential and details will only be shared with the people who need to know in order to implement this complaints procedure. This will include the appropriate people at the University of East Anglia (UEA) for UEA validated courses.

Making a Complaint

Problems can usually be resolved by discussing them with the person concerned or your Head of Area. If you have not been able to resolve your problem this way:

- complete this form
- put it in an envelope marked complaint
- hand it in at the relevant college site main reception, post it to The Executive Office, *Room B40, City College, Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ* (or scan a copy and email it to information@ccn.ac.uk).

Staff in the Advice Shop or the Students' Union can help you fill in the form, if required.

What happens to your complaint?

We want to respond to your complaint as quickly as we can:

- your complaint form will be passed to the Executive Support Team who will write to you, normally, within two working days so that you know your complaint has been received
- your complaint will be investigated
- you will be sent a written response within 10 working days of the confirmation of receipt date; however, this could be subject to extension during times of extreme pressure and demand
- if more time is needed to investigate your complaint, you will be notified explaining how long it is likely to take.

A copy of the full procedure can be obtained from any of the following locations: the relevant college site main reception, The Advice Shop reception in room A1, the Students' Union office (room A40a) on our Norwich site. The Advice Shop at our Paston site or at our Jubilee reception at our Easton site. Alternatively, the procedure is available electronically on Blackboard under Student Charter and Policies.

**COMPLAINT DETAILS
CONFIDENTIAL**

I have raised this complaint with the person concerned and/or the Head of Area but the problem has not been solved.

Yes/No (Please delete as appropriate)

Your Details

Name

Address.....

.....

Telephone no

Student ID number (if applicable)

Curriculum Area / Course (if applicable)

.....

Please state your complaint:

Please state your preferred outcome to this complaint. We will endeavour to meet any reasonable preferred outcome if the complaint is upheld.

Signature.....

Date.....

PLEASE READ THE EXPLANATORY NOTES OVERLEAF