FE COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE 2025/27

APPROVED BY SELT ON 25 September 2025

Applies to:	
Harrogate College	X
Keighley College	X
Leeds City College	X
Leeds Conservatoire	
Leeds Sixth Form College / Pudsey Sixth Form College	X
Luminate Group Services	X
University Centre	

CHANGE CONTROL

<table>
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<tr><td>Approval committee (ELT, SELT, Board)</td><td>Date approved</td><td>Version</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Name of author:</td><td colspan="2">Kirsty Lister</td></tr>
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● Grievance policy and procedure
● Positive Behaviour policy
● Health and Safety policy
● Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy
● Policy against Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation
● Safeguarding & Prevent policy
● Fee Refund and Recovery policy
● Whistleblowing policy
● GDPR/Data Protection
● Freedom of Information
● Subject Access Requests</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Equality impact assessment completed</td><td>Date:</td><td>Oct 25</td></tr>
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X Full

☐ Part

☐ Not required</td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="2">X Yes

☐ No

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<tr><td>Policy will be communicated via:</td><td colspan="2">Colleges and Luminate group websites. Staff shared areas and via Google docs. Available upon request to external stakeholders</td></tr>
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Next review date:	October 2027

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1. PROCEDURE STATEMENT

It is important to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint, as taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will allow the relevant teams to take quick action so the issue doesn't continue to develop.

A concern is something that may be affecting a person's welfare or happiness (directly or indirectly) ideally addressed informally in accordance with the Colleges' complaints policy and procedure.

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction from a customer that should be drawn to the Colleges leadership's attention for reasonable action, to be investigated in accordance with the Colleges formal complaints policy and procedure once appropriate informal options have been exhausted. For more detail on complaint definitions, stage timeframes and flowchart please see Appendix 1,2 and 3.

The staged approach applied by the college is outlined in section 3. For more detail on the policy and further relevant information related to the implementation of this procedure, please refer to the Compliments & Complaints policy.

2. PROCEDURE AIMS

2.1. The Colleges complaints policy and procedure is designed to encourage the fair and efficient resolution to issues at the first point of contact. Following a restorative approach to fairly address any issues raised.

2.2. This procedure outlines the steps to take if you need to raise a complaint with us. All concerns or complaints will be handled by Colleges staff in an open, professional and restorative manner, on the basis that we will try to resolve any issues you have at the lowest level possible.

2.3. If you need the complaints policy or procedure in an alternative format, please contact the Quality team on 0113 284 6349 or via email at **quality@luminate.ac.uk.**

3. How to Raise a Complaint - Staged Approach

The Colleges are committed to the building and maintaining of positive relationships and actively encourages all staff to engage with restorative practices when dealing with a concern or complaint.

3.1. Informal

If you wish to raise a concern, in the first instance we recommend that you try to resolve it directly with the member of staff concerned or by contacting one of the following:

- The Course Tutor, Programme Manager, or Deputy Head of Department
- Any Student Support Services e.g. Student Life, Students Union
- Apprentices, workplace students or employers- please contact assessor or key college contact

If additional support is required for example; when attending meetings or phone appointments, please contact the Quality Team to discuss in further detail.

In line with the Colleges commitment to restorative practices based on respect, inclusion, collaboration and social responsibility, with your agreement a restorative intervention will be arranged. The meeting will usually include the member of staff involved in the complaint and a suitable senior member of staff. This could be a line manager, Deputy Head, Head of Department or Director, depending on the nature of your concerns. The purpose of a restorative intervention is to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to meet and openly discuss the issues raised and agree on a reasonable resolution.

Complaints can be made by email, telephone, in person or in writing. On receiving a complaint, all Colleges staff are expected to take appropriate and immediate action, communicating directly to establish all the relevant facts and resolve the matter as quickly as possible. We recommend that all parties keep a written record of the complaint and actions taken, as this may be required in any further investigation should there be a need to escalate the complaint.

It is important to include the complaint purpose and outcome being sought as a result, to aid with internal investigations.

Where possible, outcomes will include detail of actions to be taken as a result of a complaint, however this may not always be possible due to the nature of the complaint. If this is the case, a response will be provided explaining this.

3.2. Stage One

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, please contact the Quality team by email at **quality@luminate.ac.uk** by phone on 0113 284 6349 or in writing to the following address:

FE Colleges: FAO Quality Team
Teacher Development Centre
Park Lane Campus
Park Lane
Leeds
LS3 1AA

Please include names, contact details and as much relevant detail regarding the complaint including any steps already taken to try to resolve it, as well as the desired outcome. We will confirm receipt of a complaint within two working days (unless received during periods of Colleges closures) and raise it with the relevant Head of Department for investigation and resolution. Please try to raise any concerns as soon as they happen to ensure we are able to fully investigate (within 6 months of issues occurring).

We aim to deal with all complaints as quickly as possible, and if delays occur we will provide updates in the interim. On average, Stage One complaints are dealt with within 10 working days.

A restorative approach will be recommended at every stage of the Colleges' procedure regarding complaints to ensure that a fair process is applied and all parties are given the opportunity to speak and be heard without fear of judgement.

All stages must be followed before escalation to the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) or other external organisation can occur.

3.3. Instances of 'Immediate Escalation' to Stage two

We will consider immediate escalation of a complaint to stage two if it directly relates to:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (Equality Act 2010)
- Health & Safety (Health & safety at Work Act 1974 or any college Risk Management/Health & Safety policy)
- Safeguarding (if referred by the safeguarding team)
- Lack of response at the previous stage
- The Quality Team reserve the right to immediately escalate to stage two dependent on the nature of a complaint

3.4. Stage Two

If a complaint cannot be resolved at stage one, the option is available to escalate it to stage two of the complaints procedure. This can be done by contacting the Quality team using the details provided in section 3.2 within 10 weeks of a response at the previous stage. When doing this, please detail the reasons for escalating the complaint and the outcome being pursued.

We will confirm receipt of the complaint and instigate an investigation alongside the relevant Director/Deputy Director/Principal/Assistant or Deputy Principal into any concerns on behalf of the Colleges to find a resolution within fifteen working days. Where circumstances mean it will take more than fifteen working days to complete a thorough investigation, we will provide an explanation for the delay, when an outcome should be expected and how often to expect updates as the investigation progresses.

On completion of the investigation, we will send a formal response in writing.

3.5 Appeals

Where stages one and two/immediate escalation of our procedures have been followed and a complainant remains dissatisfied with the resolution offered, there is a right to appeal within thirty calendar days of the stage two response.

Please submit an appeal in writing by email to **quality@luminate.ac.uk** or by letter at the following address:

FE Colleges: FAO Quality Team
Teacher Development Centre

Park Lane Campus
Park Lane
Leeds, LS3 1AA

Please include the reasons for appealing and the outcome being sought. We will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within two working days.

If it is not possible to provide a written appeal, please contact the Quality Team on 0113 284 6349 and we will arrange to take the appeal via an alternative method.

A member of the Colleges' Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will review the appeal and a written response will be sent within twenty working days.

The response from ELT is final. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the final Colleges response, they have the right to raise it with the relevant awarding organisation/validating body, or with the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) within three months. But must have first exhausted all stages of the college's complaints procedure.

4.0 Compliments

As an organisation, we are focused on transforming lives by providing outstanding education, training and outcomes for our students. The aspiration is to always add value for students and society by having a positive impact, allowing all students to succeed and improve their lives.

You can submit a compliment for a member of staff, a team or a specific organisation. Compliments will be passed on to our staff, their line manager and are used to identify areas of good practice and opportunities for development.

Compliments can be submitted in writing to quality@luminate.ac.uk or via telephone on 0113 284 6349.

Compliments are used to enable service and individual developments, and employees will be recognised appropriately.

Quality Team
Email: quality@luminate.ac.uk
Tel: 0113 284 6349

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5.0 Appendix 1 - Stage Timescales

Stage of Complaint	Responsibilities	Timeframe
Informal	Course Leader, Programme Manager, Deputy Head	N/A
Stage 1	Head of Department	approx 10 working days
Stage 2	Deputy Director, Director	15 working days
Appeal	Senior & Executive Leadership Team	20 working days

Appendix 3 - Flowchart

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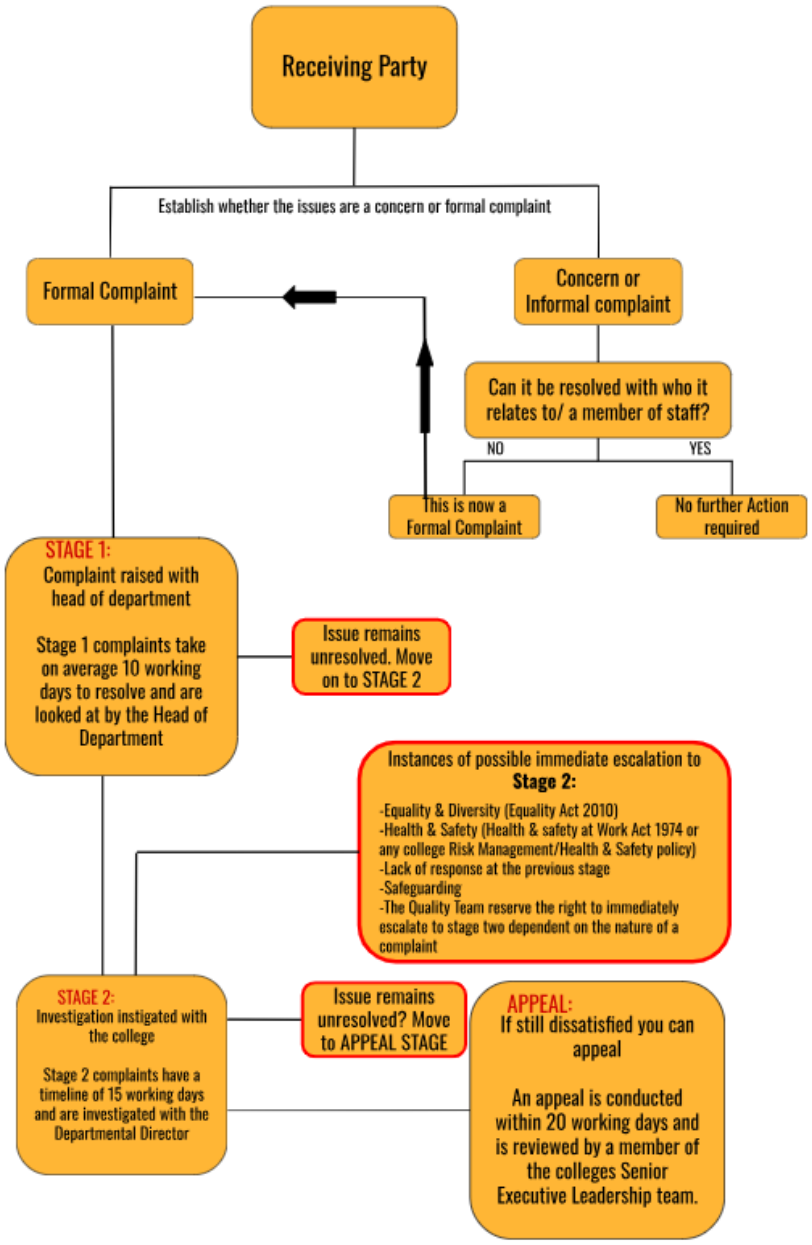
Receiving Party
Establish whether the issues are a concern or formal complaint
Formal Complaint
Concern or Informal complaint
Can it be resolved with who it relates to/ a member of staff?
NO
YES
This is now a Formal Complaint
No further Action required
STAGE 1:
Complaint raised with head of department
Stage 1 complaints take on average 10 working days to resolve and are looked at by the Head of Department
Issue remains unresolved. Move on to STAGE 2
Instances of possible immediate escalation to Stage 2:
-Equality & Diversity (Equality Act 2010)
-Health & Safety (Health & safety at Work Act 1974 or any college Risk Management/Health & Safety policy)
-Lack of response at the previous stage
-Safeguarding
-The Quality Team reserve the right to immediately escalate to stage two dependent on the nature of a complaint
STAGE 2:
Investigation instigated with the college
Stage 2 complaints have a timeline of 15 working days and are investigated with the Departmental Director
Issue remains unresolved? Move to APPEAL STAGE
APPEAL:
If still dissatisfied you can appeal
An appeal is conducted within 20 working days and is reviewed by a member of the colleges Senior Executive Leadership team.