

LIPA
SIXTH FORM
COLLEGE

Complaints Policy

Version Date:	June 2018
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Next Review Date:	June 2020
Approving Committee	Governing Board

Document Version History

Version	Date	Ref	Change Summary
1.0	August 2016		New Policy.
1.1	June 2018		Reviewed.

Complaints Policy

Introduction

This is the complaints procedure statement agreed by LIPA Sixth Form College. A parent or a student may raise a concern. 'Parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the student but who has parental responsibility for the student or who has care of the student.

It is natural that occasionally a parent or a student may have a personal concern regarding educational issues at LIPA Sixth Form College. Often the concern will resolve itself, but if it does not then this statement enables either a parent or a student to raise the issue with the college. The objective is to conduct the process in a fair, impartial, objective and transparent manner.

All the documents referred to in this statement are published widely, including on the LIPA Sixth Form College website. Copies of the documents can also be obtained from the Chair of Governors to whom any questions about this statement or any other document should be addressed.

The parties are expected to do their best to adhere to the timetable. If for any reason a party is unable to comply with the timetable, then they should write to the other party explaining why and saying when they will comply with the timetable.

1) Informal Concern

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a concern as quickly as possible. Therefore, the parent or student should speak to the member of staff concerned at the first opportunity. It may be necessary to make an appointment at a time which is convenient to both the member of staff and the parent or student.

It is important to let the member of staff know what the concern is when making an appointment so that if necessary further enquiries can be made prior to the meeting.

If either the member of staff concerned, or the parent or student wants another colleague to deal with this concern then they should inform the Director of Sixth Form about referring the matter to another member of staff.

The purpose of the meeting is to find a solution or to agree a plan of action to resolve the concern informally. On most occasions this should resolve the concern.

If the meeting does not achieve its objective, then either party may suggest that the Director of Sixth Form should become involved. The parties should inform the Director of Sixth Form to become involved in resolving their concern.

The Director of Sixth Form may wish to make their own enquiries of the parent, staff or students before their meeting with the parent or the student who raised the concern.

If the Director of Sixth Form is involved, then this process should be concluded within 7 working days from the date of the request for the Director of Sixth Form to be involved.

If the Director of Sixth Form's intervention does not resolve the concern to the satisfaction of the parent or the student, then the parent or the student has the option to consider making a formal complaint.

2) Formal Complaint

A formal complaint must be in writing and addressed to the Director of Sixth Form. Copies of relevant documents should also be enclosed with the complaint letter.

A formal complaint should be made at the earliest opportunity. Any delay at this stage may hinder enquiries that may need to be made, or prejudice the satisfactory outcome of the complaint.

A formal complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days. The aim is to send a decision to the parent or student within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.

The Director of Sixth Form may delegate the investigation to a senior colleague. However, the decision will be that of the Director of Sixth Form.

If the complaint is about the Director of Sixth Form, the complaint form or letter should be sent to the Chair of the governing body. The Chair will then delegate the investigation of the complaint to a governor of LIPA Sixth Form College. The Chair of the Governing Body will write to the parent or student informing them of the name of the person who will carry out the investigation.

The person with responsibility for investigating the complaint may request a further meeting with the parent or student. This meeting will be a formal meeting at which another member of staff may be present to take a note. The parent or student may be accompanied to the meeting.

The Director of Sixth Form or Governor will send a written decision to the parent or student.

3) Review of the Decision

If a parent or student wants to ask for a review of the decision then they must write to the Chair of the Governing Body within 10 working days of receipt of the decision letter, setting out why they disagree with the decision.

The Chair of the Governors will convene an impartial panel consisting of three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Two members will be members of the governors, and one member will be independent of the management and running of LIPA Sixth Form College. The independent panel member will be nominated by the Chair from a list of candidates drawn up by the board of LIPA Sixth Form College.

If the complaint concerns a governor of LIPA Sixth Form College then the Chair, Vice-Chair or another director of LIPA Sixth Form College will convene the Review Hearing.

Principles of equality and diversity will influence the make-up of the panel.

The chair of the panel will be elected by the members of the Review Hearing.

The Chair of Governors will acknowledge the request for a review within 3 working days of receipt, and also inform the parent or student of the names of the panel members. The Chair of Governors will then agree with the parent or student a mutually convenient date and time for the Review Hearing.

The parties should cooperate with the intention of holding the Review Hearing within 10 working days of receipt of the written request for a review.

The Review Hearing will be held in private and it will take the form of a discussion led by the chair of the Review Hearing. A note of the Review Hearing will be taken by a person appointed by LIPA Sixth Form College.

The manner in which the Review Hearing is conducted is entirely within the discretion of the chair of the Review Hearing acting in accordance with the objectives set out above. It is not expected that there will be any witnesses called to give a statement.

If there are any witnesses, then they should provide written statements. It is preferable that witness statements should be sent to all the parties before the hearing in order to avoid the risk of the Review Hearing being adjourned.

A parent or student can be accompanied to the Review Hearing by a person of their choice. However, it is not anticipated that they will be represented at the Review Hearing.

A witness cannot attend the Review Hearing, or the parent or student be represented unless the chair of the Review Hearing has previously agreed to this in writing. In no circumstances will there be cross-examination of a witness.

The chair of the Review Hearing will send the written decision to the parent or student within 3 working days of the Review Hearing. A copy of the written decision will also be available for inspection at the college premises by the governing body and the Director of Sixth Form.

The decision of the Review Hearing is final.

If a parent or student is dissatisfied with the decision of the Review Hearing they should write to the Secretary of State for Education.

Correspondence can be by email provided all the parties agree. Otherwise, correspondence will be sent by first class post.

Record Keeping

There will be a record kept of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing and what the outcome was. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints will be kept confidential and will only be available to the relevant parties involved, the trust and the Director of Sixth Form.

LIPA Sixth Form College Governing Body Review

The LIPA Sixth Form Governing Body will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure and make changes where necessary.

As well as addressing an individual's complaints, the process of listening to and resolving complaints will contribute to the process of school improvement. When individual complaints are heard, the college may identify underlying issues that need to be addressed. The monitoring and review of complaints by LIPA Sixth Form College and the governing body will provide a useful tool in evaluating the college's performance.

Complaint Form

Part 1 – Customer Details

Title: Mr, Miss, Mrs, etc.	Surname:	Forename(s)
Address:		
Telephone number:	Programme Area:	
Course Title:	Date of Birth:	

Part 2 – The Complaint

Received by:	Date received:
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Letter	In Person	Telephone	Internet	Email
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Details of Complaint:

Letter Attached: <input type="checkbox"/>
