



LINCOLN COLLEGE

**CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE – FURTHER
EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

POLICY CQ/PR/9

SPONSOR

Principal & CEO

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Lincoln College strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination, specifically across all protected characteristics. We will work towards a fair and just organisation and promote inclusion for all those impacted by Lincoln College and the wider community.

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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LINCOLN COLLEGE

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure applies to customers and further education learners of Lincoln College and is designed to give the opportunity to have complaints and grievances dealt with fairly and consistently. Complaints made in regard to Higher Education provision should follow the 'Student Complaint and Grievance Procedure - Higher Education' not this procedure. The procedure is not for use by college staff.
- 1.2 The purpose of the procedure is to maintain a high standard of customer care and rectify causes of dissatisfaction as quickly as possible.
- 1.3 This procedure should be considered in conjunction with the Admissions Policy and the Learner Assessment and Appeals Policy.

2 AIMS

- 2.1 The procedure aims to ensure that all complaints and grievances are dealt with fully, promptly and allow all persons involved the opportunity to state their point of view.

3 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 It is expected that, except in exceptional and fully documented circumstances, a customer who wishes to make a complaint will invoke the Informal Stage within three calendar months of the incident which is the cause for complaint.
- 3.2 All complaints and grievances will be handled as confidential matters.
- 3.3 Any person making a complaint will have the right to appeal against any judgement made as a result of the Customer Complaint and Grievance Procedure being used.
- 3.4 Any person involved will have the right to be accompanied by an advocate (who may be a member of staff, learner of the college or a relative) during any part of the Complaint and Grievance Procedure.
- 3.5 Advocates can be used by those individuals who are not able or do not feel sufficiently confident to represent themselves.
- 3.6 Customers who have a disability that prevents them from submitting a written complaint may request that a member of staff completes any required documentation on their behalf.
- 3.7 Where it is not possible to deal with a complaint or grievance to the satisfaction of the customer then the reason given will be provided in writing to them.

- 3.8 In the rare event that complaints are vexatious or malicious, learners bringing those complaints may be subject to the college's Learner Conduct Procedure.

4 LEARNER ASSESSMENT AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- 4.1 The Customer Complaint and Grievance Procedure is not intended to replace the established Learner Assessment and Appeals Policy and Procedures.

5 PROCEDURES

5.1 Informal Stage

- 5.1.1 When a customer has a complaint or grievance, it may first be discussed with a member of the college staff and attempts should be made to resolve the matter by a direct approach to the persons involved where appropriate. Customers can receive guidance on who to make an informal complaint to by accessing support from the college reception (in person or by calling 01522 876000) or the Performance and Standards Team (complaints@lincolncollege.ac.uk).

5.2 Investigation

- 5.2.1 If the matter remains unresolved the customer may raise a formal complaint or grievance either:

- Verbally to any manager of the college who will inform the complaints team
- In writing: a customer complaint form (Appendix One) is available from college reception desks
- By email to complaints@lincolncollege.ac.uk
- [Online form](#) on the Lincoln College website

- 5.2.2 All formal complaints will be logged and distributed as follows:

- Complaints regarding curriculum areas will be sent to the relevant curriculum lead.
- Complaints regarding issues that are not directly curriculum-related will be sent to the relevant senior member of the unit or directorate.
- Complaints regarding members of staff will be sent to the relevant curriculum lead or senior member of the unit or directorate, unless they are deemed serious enough to be passed to the Head of People Services for consideration.

Written acknowledgement will be sent to the customer with the proposed response date included.

- 5.2.3 The customer may request a personal meeting with the allocated respondent. Usually, the interview should be arranged within five working days of the submission of the request and the person may be accompanied by a suitable responsible person. Outside of term time, the interview will be arranged as soon possible but at a mutually agreed time, considering potential restrictions caused by staff taking leave.
- 5.2.4 The allocated respondent shall investigate the matter and send a written reply to the customer, usually within ten working days of receipt of the formal complaint. In rare situations, such as during holiday periods when staff members are on leave, it may not be possible to complete an investigation within the ten-day timescale. Where this occurs, the customer will be informed in writing and a new deadline given.
- 5.2.5 In cases involving complaints regarding members of staff which have been referred to the People Services Manager/Head of People Services, who will respond directly to the customer.

5.3 Formal Investigation

- 5.3.1 If, after any action to resolve the complaint or grievance, the customer is still dissatisfied, they may escalate their complaint or grievance to the relevant assistant principal or senior manager to investigate further by contacting complaints@lincolncollege.ac.uk. As part of this, the customer may request a personal meeting with the assistant principal or senior manager which, usually, shall be arranged within ten working days of the submission of the request. Outside of term time, the interview will be arranged at as soon possible but at a mutually agreed time, considering potential restrictions caused by staff taking leave. The assistant principal or senior manager will conduct a formal investigation, interview all parties concerned, take steps to resolve the issue and initiate appropriate action.

5.4 Appeals Procedures

- 5.4.1 If a complaint remains unresolved, then the customer has the right of appeal and this will be made clear in the written confirmation noting the outcomes of the formal investigation.
- 5.4.2 Appeals must be made, in writing, to College Appeals Panel and be received within ten working days of receipt of the written confirmation of the formal investigation into the complaint.
- 5.4.3 All appeals must follow the procedure noted in the College Appeals Panel Policy and Procedure (Policy CQ/PO/26) which can be obtained by contacting quality@lincolncollege.ac.uk.

6 MONITORING OF THE CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

6.1 For the purpose of monitoring, reports will be presented to the following committees, providing analysis of complaints and grievances received:

- Learning Standards Quality Committee
- Board of the Corporation

7 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

7.1 The Learning Standards Quality Committee will review the Customer Complaint and Grievance Procedure on an annual basis and make recommendations for its development.

APPENDIX A

Ref No:

Lincoln College Customer Complaint Form

Lincoln College welcomes your feedback and takes every complaint seriously. You will receive written confirmation that we are dealing with your complaint and will be given a date by when you will receive a response to your correspondence.
Thank you for your time.

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

..... Post code:

Home Tel: Mobile:

Email:

Learner Other (Please specify)

Please give full details of your complaint below or attach a separate sheet.

Office Use Only

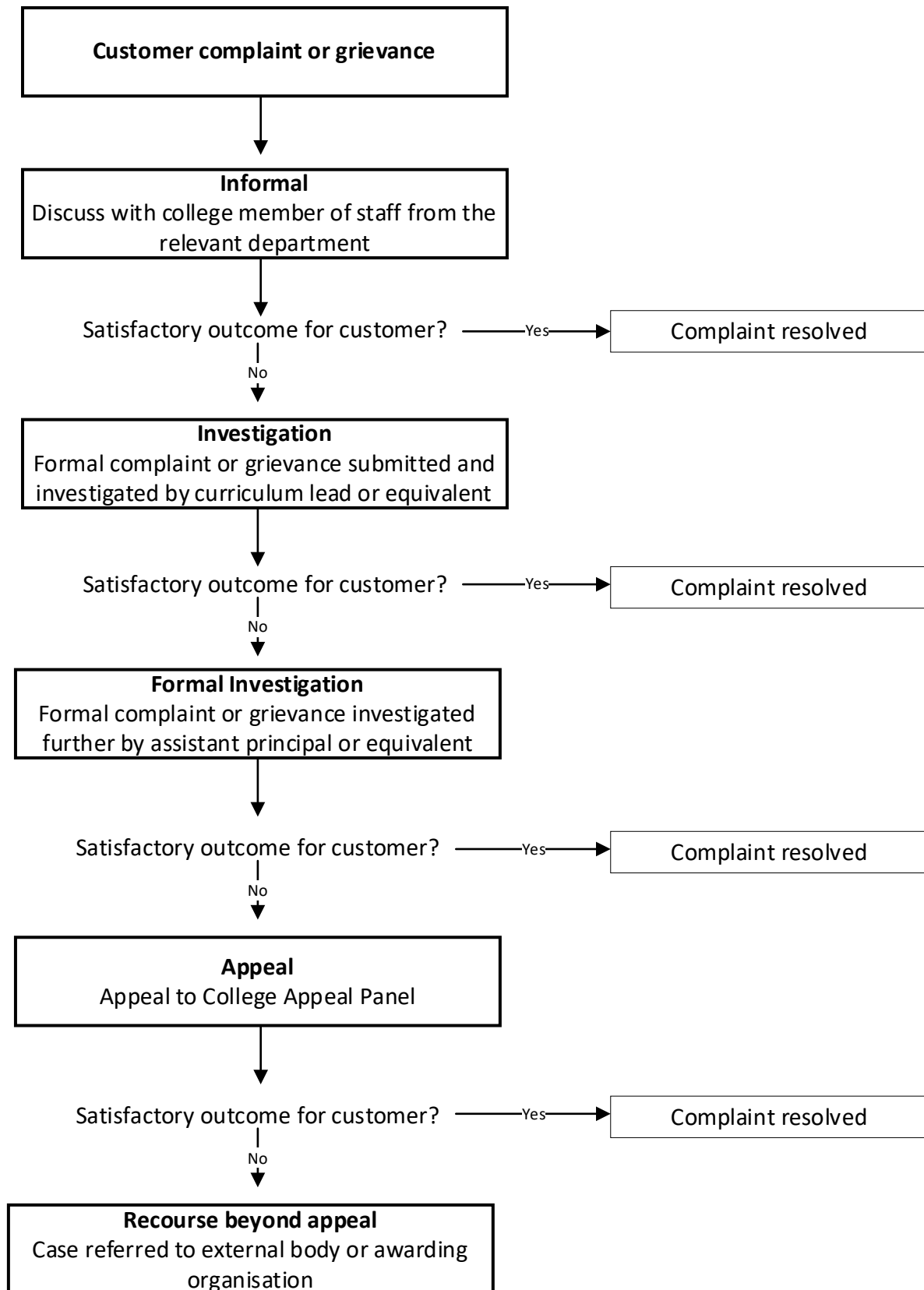
Date received:

Referred to:

Response date:

APPENDIX B

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE



APPENDIX C

VALIDATING ORGANISATION PROCEDURES

CHARTERED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (CMI)

Following completion of the College Formal Investigation (5.3), dissatisfied students enrolled on CMI accredited provision may refer their complaint to the CMIU by going to <https://www.managers.org.uk/~media/Angela-Media-Library/New%20EP/PolicesProcedures/Procedures/CMI%20Complaints%20Procedure.pdf>

APPENDIX D

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT TYPES

Comment – Positive comments help us understand where we are performing well

- Record and send onto the relevant department

Concern – Help us understand how we can improve

- Doesn't require a full investigation
- Will receive an acknowledgement email
- Will receive a response from either the relevant department or complaints team

Complaint – If you have an issue you need resolving

- Requires a full investigation from curriculum lead or equivalent
- Will receive an acknowledgement email
- Will receive a written response from the curriculum lead or equivalent