

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Responsibility: Student Engagement

Approved by: Donna Hunt

Date: 28 September 2018

Purpose: To deal quickly and appropriately with all complaints concerning South & City College Birmingham customer provision for which an immediate remedy has not been provided.

Scope: Complaints regarding the service provided by the college raised by customers – students, employers or agencies, staff, visitors or local community. Staff grievances and collective staff disputes will be handled by the staff grievance procedure. Appeals against student exclusions will be referred to the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

### Procedure:

In the first instance, the receiver of any complaint will attempt to satisfy the complainant if it is in their power to do so.

If a solution is not immediately available then the formal complaints procedure should be implemented immediately.

Complaints can be made in any format (e.g. customer feedback form, letter to South & City College Birmingham, Hall Green Campus, Colebank Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 8ES), telephone call (0800 111 6311), email ([hello@southandcity.com](mailto:hello@southandcity.com)), face-to-face report, website, Moodle). Customer feedback forms will, however, be kept at each college reception, library and Customer Feedback Office. All complaints received by the Customer Feedback Office will be considered formal and be dealt with as detailed below.

1. The Customer Feedback Office will acknowledge the complaint and copy it to the relevant Head of Division within 3 working days. Where there is a complaint under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the complaint will be forwarded in the first instance to the designated Freedom of Information Officer.
2. The Head of Division responds to the complainant as soon as possible and informs the Customer Feedback Office of the response given within 10 working days of the complaint date. In instances where a resolution to the complainant will take more than 10 working days, the Head of Division will contact the complainant, preferably in writing, indicating the reason for delay and the expected timescales to provide

resolution to the complaint. The Head of Division will also ensure that the Customer Feedback Office receives copies of all correspondence sent to complainants.

3. The relevant Head of Division can, where appropriate, pass the complaint to another relevant manager within the division, however the named Head of Division is still responsible for ensuring the procedure is followed within stated timescales.
4. The Head of Division will also determine if any further action is needed as a result of the complaint, for example, review or produce a procedure, remind staff of procedure etc. This action should be recorded onto the feedback form if one has been used and returned to the Customer Feedback Office. Higher Education students must be signposted to a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' at the time of responding to a complaint so that they can appeal to The Office of the Independent Adjudicator if they remain dissatisfied (obtained from the Customer Feedback Office and/or HE manager).
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, the complaint can be escalated to a member of SMT.
6. If the complainant is still not satisfied with the response given by the college, they may refer their complaint to the Skills Funding Agency or an appropriate external advisory service (e.g. the Disability Rights/Equal Opportunities Commission). For complaints relating to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, if the complainant is not satisfied by the response given by the college's Freedom of Information officer, the complainant may after using this complaints procedure address his/her complaint directly to the Information Commissioner for complaints relating to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Tel. 0303 123113. Fax 01625 524 510. Email: [casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk). web: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk). The Office of the Independent Adjudicator is an independent body set up to review individual complaints against Higher Education Institutions Tel. 0118959 9813.
7. If the complainant is not satisfied by the College's response relating to Data, there is a right to complain under the Data Protection Act 2018 there is a right to complain to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Tel. 0303 123113. Fax 01625 524 510. Email: [casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk). web: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).
8. The Customer Feedback Office will monitor complaints and produce termly analyses/reports for college managers. A monthly report of outstanding, uninvestigated complaints will be sent to SMT. Relevant reports will also be presented to the Corporation.
9. Heads of Divisions should use these reports, and customer feedback reports to assess trends and take appropriate action to review or produce procedures to prevent recurring issues.