



LINCOLN COLLEGE

**CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

POLICY CQ/PR/9

SPONSOR

Head of Quality Improvement

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Lincoln College strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age or any other inappropriate grounds.

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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LINCOLN COLLEGE

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure applies to all customers of Lincoln College and is designed to give the opportunity to have complaints and grievances dealt with fairly and consistently. 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.

2 AIMS

- 2.1 The procedure aims to ensure that all complaints and grievances are dealt with fully and 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 a friend (who may be a member of staff, student member 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, students bringing those complaints may be subject to the college's Student Disciplinary Procedure.

4 STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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

5 PROCEDURES

5.1 Informal Stage

5.1.1 When a customer has a complaint or grievance, he/she should first discuss the matter 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.

5.2 Investigation

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

- verbally to a middle or senior manager of the college or member of the Quality Unit
- in writing: a Customer Complaint Form (Appendix One) is available from College Receptions; or
- in writing to the Head of Quality Improvement
- by email to quality@lincolncollege.ac.uk

In each of the above the details of the complaint or grievance will be recorded on the Customer Complaint Form.

5.2.2 All completed Customer Complaint Forms will be passed to the Head of Quality Improvement to be logged and distributed as follows:

- Complaints regarding curriculum areas will be sent to the relevant Head of Learning/Training and Skills.
- 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 Head of Learning/Training and Skills or Head of Unit unless they are deemed serious enough to be passed to the Group Head of Human Resources for consideration.

The Head of Quality Improvement will send a letter of acknowledgement to the customer with the name of the allocated respondent and the proposed response date included.

5.2.3 The customer may request a personal interview with the allocated respondent. 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.

5.2.4 The allocated respondent shall conduct an investigation into the matter and send a written reply to the customer within ten working days of receipt of the formal complaint. A copy of the response will be sent to the Quality Improvement Unit. If it is not possible to complete an investigation within that time 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 Group Head of Human Resources, she/he will respond directly to the customer and inform the Head of Quality Improvement of the date of the response.

5.3 Formal Investigation

5.3.1 If, after any action to resolve the complaint or grievance, the customer is still dissatisfied, he/she may request a personal interview with the relevant Director. The interview shall be arranged within ten working days of the submission of the request, and the student may if he/she wishes be accompanied at the interview by a suitable responsible person. The Director will conduct a formal investigation, interview all parties concerned, take steps to resolve the issue and initiate appropriate action.

5.4 Complaint and Grievance Appeals Committee

5.4.1 If the matter remains unresolved then there is a right of appeal to the Complaint and Grievance Appeals Committee.

5.4.2 The Complaint and Grievance Appeals Committee shall comprise the Managing Director of Education and Training (or appointed deputy), a representative of the Student Executive and a member of the Quality Standards Committee. The Managing Director of Education and Training shall convene the meeting.

5.4.3 All relevant documents shall be submitted to the Complaint and Grievance Appeals Committee within ten working days of the receipt of the notice of appeal. The parties concerned if they so wish, may make additional submissions and should be present at the hearing or may be required to attend and may be accompanied by a friend.

5.4.4 The appeal shall be heard not more than twenty working days after the receipt of the notice, and refusal of either party to attend shall not invalidate the proceedings. A majority decision of the Complaints and Grievance Appeals Committee is final.

6 REOURSE TO THE RELEVANT FUNDING AUTHORITY

6.1 If the complainant does not feel that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved at the conclusion of the college Customer Complaint and

Grievance Procedure then he/she may complain to the relevant funding authority, for example, the Skills Funding Agency.

7 MONITORING OF THE CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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

- Quality Standards Committee
- Board of the Corporation

8 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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



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:

Student 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:

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1 AIM

- 1.1 To maintain a high standard of customer care and rectify causes of dissatisfaction as quickly as possible.

2 HOW TO MAKE A FORMAL COMPLAINT

2.1 Verbally to:

- a middle or senior manager at the College
- to a member of staff at Reception
- by telephone to a member of the Quality Unit

- 2.2 In writing using the Customer Complaints and Grievance Record available from Reception. This should be handed back in to the Receptionist or posted to the Head of Quality Improvement, Lincoln College, Monks Road, Lincoln, LN2 5HQ.

- 2.3 By email to quality@lincolncollege.ac.uk

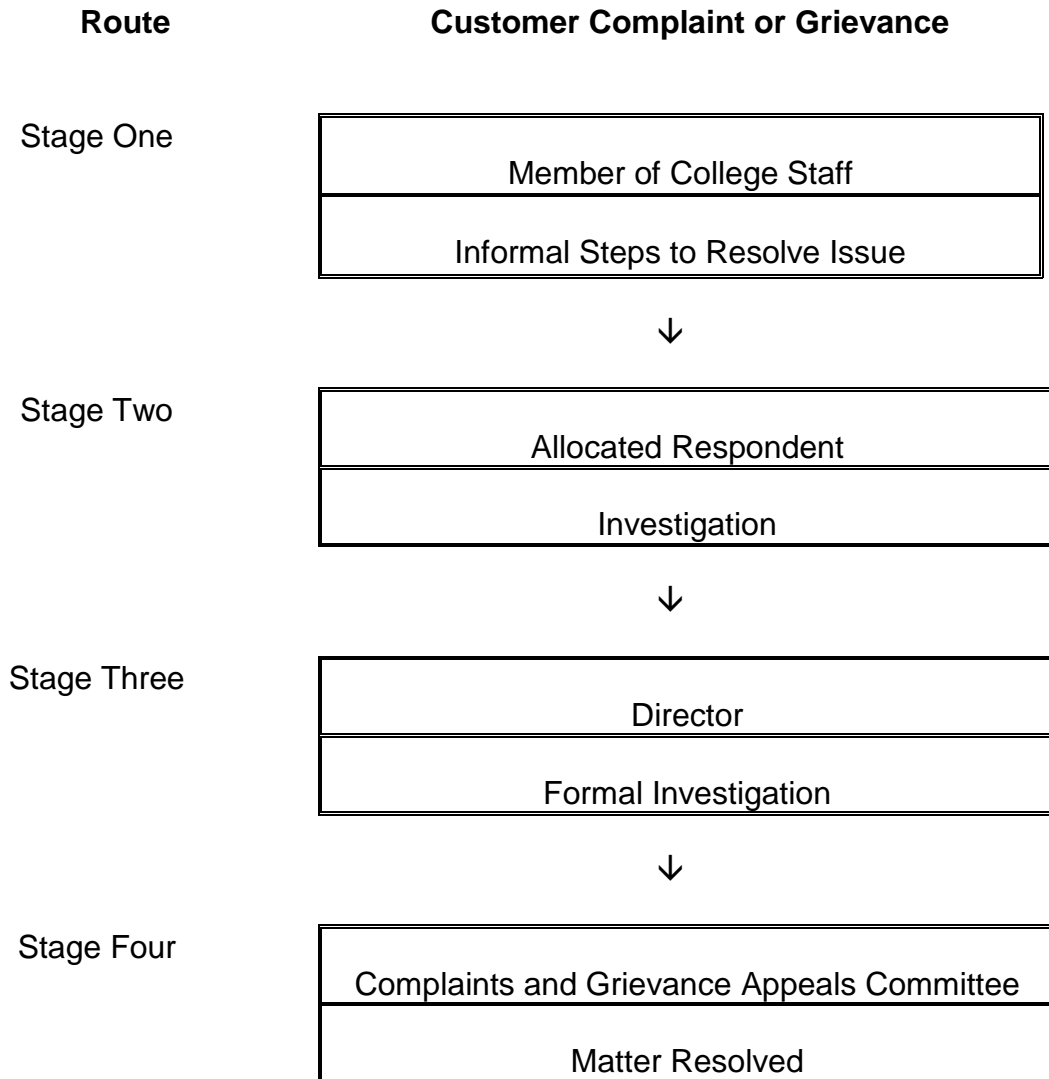
3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION

- 3.1 You should expect to receive a written reply to a complaint made within 10 working days.
- 3.2 If it is not possible to complete an investigation within that time you will be informed in writing and a new deadline given.

4 REVIEW AND MONITORING

- 4.1 Review and monitoring will be undertaken at least annually by the Quality Standards Committee

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE



At each stage the matter may be resolved and there may be no need to progress further.

If the complainant does not feel that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved at the conclusion of the college Customer Complaint and Grievance Procedures then he/she may complain to the Skills Funding Agency.