

# Complaint Procedure

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Stage 1: Raising Issues	1
Stage 2: Informal Complaint	2
Stage 3: Formal Complaint	2
Stage 4: Review	3
Independent External Review	3
Monitoring & Review	4
Equality Impact Assessment	4

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The College aims to provide an inspirational, enjoyable and successful learning experience that supports learners to achieve their goals. However, we appreciate that there may be occasions when you are not completely happy about a part of the service provided by or on behalf of the college and feel this has affected your experience at the College. This complaints procedure has been put in place to help deal with these instances.
- 1.2 The College is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability and seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner, taking into account the requirements of the funding bodies and the standards in public life set out in the reports of the Nolan Committee. If you have a genuine suspicion of bribery, or that there have been breaches of the law and other serious wrongdoings you should raise your concerns under the College's Whistle Blowing Policy with the Director of Governance.
- 1.3 If you wish to appeal against a decision which has been made in relation to an application to study one of our Higher Education programmes you should refer to the HE Admissions Policy and Procedure for details of the Appeals process. A copy is available on the HBUC home page.
- 1.4 This procedure should not be used to raise a concern or complaint related to the outcomes of assessment performance or academic judgements except where there is a complaint about a service provided which has to be resolved before an appeal decision can be made. If you are an HE student and wish to appeal against an assessment decision based upon your academic achievement or progress you should refer to the High Education Appeals procedure available on the HBUC home page.
- 1.5 It is expected that the majority of concerns and issues can be resolved at either stage 1 or Stage 2 of this procedure. However, in the event of a serious matter being raised with the College it may be decided that the matter should be considered immediately under the formal stage 3 of the Procedure.

## 2. Stage 1: Raising Issues

- 2.1 If you are unhappy with an aspect of the service you have received at the College, rather than let your concern become a complaint, you should try and resolve your issue promptly and informally by either speaking directly with the person, who in your opinion, is responsible for your dissatisfaction or concern about the service provided or, raising your concerns with the supervisor/manager for the area/service concerned.
- 2.2 If you are a student you should raise your concerns directly with your tutor/assessor, your Progress Coach/Student Engagement Officer or any member of staff to whom you feel comfortable speaking with. You can also talk to your class representative and ask them to represent your views through the learner voice system.

### 3. Stage 2: Informal Complaint

- 3.1 If your concern has not been resolved at Stage 1 or you feel the issue has not been responded to satisfactorily, you can take your complaint to the second stage of the Complaints Procedure by submitting a Customer Complaints Form (CC1) available from reception, or downloadable from the College website.
- 3.2 In completing the form, you should identify both the nature of your complaint and, if appropriate, the individual against whom the complaint is being made.
- 3.3 The completed form can either be handed in at reception in the Balliol building marked for the attention of Nicole Phillips, Executive Administrator, Principal's Office, or emailed to [nicole.phillips@hughbaird.ac.uk](mailto:nicole.phillips@hughbaird.ac.uk)
- 3.4 Following receipt of the form, the College will review its contents and determine whether the matter you are raising would be more appropriately dealt with under another College Procedure, such as the processes in place for Safeguarding or the Staff Disciplinary procedure if it is a complaint about the conduct of a member of staff. If a different procedure is to be used to resolve your concerns, you will be notified in writing with an explanation of the process which will be followed.
- 3.5 If your concerns are to be dealt with under this procedure, the Complaints Form will be forwarded to an appropriate manager of the area you are providing the feedback or complaint about. You will be contacted by the relevant manager to discuss the matter, either face to face or by telephone, within five working days.
- 3.6 The manager dealing with your concern at this stage of the procedure will have the authority and discretion to consider any reasonable option to resolve your concerns. It is therefore envisaged that the majority of complaints will be resolved satisfactorily at this stage with no further action being necessary.

### 4. Stage 3: Formal Complaint

- 4.1 If you feel your issue or complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2 of this procedure, you may request that the matter is dealt with as a formal complaint. You should submit your request in writing to Nicole Phillips, Executive Administrator, Principal's Office or via email to [nicole.phillips@hughbaird.ac.uk](mailto:nicole.phillips@hughbaird.ac.uk)
- 4.2 On receipt of a formal complaint the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development will identify an appropriate independent College manager to undertake a formal investigation of the facts relating to your complaint. You will receive an acknowledgement of your complaint and be provided with the name and contact details of the Investigating Manager within 5 working days<sup>1</sup>.

- 4.3 The Investigating Manager may contact you for further information and you may ask to meet with you to discuss the details of the complaint further.
- 4.4 The Investigating Manager will normally provide you with a formal written response to your complaint within 15 working days<sup>1</sup> of the acknowledgement letter. If for any reason there will be a delay in a response being provided we will write to you to let you know.

## 5. Stage 4: Review

- 5.1 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint you have the right to appeal under Stage 4 of the Complaints Procedure. Your appeal must be submitted in writing within 14 calendar days of receipt of the formal outcome under stage 3 detailing the reasons for your dissatisfaction.
- 5.2 Your appeal will be acknowledged within 5 working days<sup>1</sup> and you will be informed of the name and contact details of the senior manager who has been appointed to undertake a review of your complaint and the findings and conclusions of the investigation undertaken at Stage 3 of this procedure.
- 5.3 The reviewing manager may contact you for further information and may ask to meet with you to clarify the concerns you have raised.
- 5.4 We will normally write to you within 15 College working days<sup>1</sup> with the outcome of your appeal. If we are not able to do so within this timescale we will write to you to let you know. This represent the final stage of the College's Complaints Procedure.
- 5.5 Depending upon the nature of your complaint you may, if you remain dissatisfied, have the right to pursue the matter through an external complaints procedure. If this applies, your final outcome letter from the College will signpost the relevant next steps for you.

## 6. Independent External Review

- 6.1 Depending upon the nature of the matter you have complained about you may have a further right of appeal to either the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) or the office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education if you remain dissatisfied.

### Complaints regarding FE Provision

- 6.2 You can obtain a copy of the ESFA Complaints Procedure from the Complaints Team, Education & Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT. Guidance on submitting a complaint can also be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>.

- 6.3 You should be aware that any complaint made to the ESFA must be made in writing within twelve months of exhausting the College Complaints Procedure.

### **Complaints regarding HE Academic Matters**

- 6.4 If you are a Higher Education student and remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the College's Complaints procedure you may, depending upon the nature of your complaint, pursue the matter through the Complaints Procedure of the awarding partner for your programme. A link to individual partner institution policies and procedures are available on the HBUC home page, located in the Wider Information Set (WIS) Policies and procedures.
- 6.5 Following a review of your complaint by a partner institution, you will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter. If you still remain dissatisfied you have a right to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education, who provide an independent scheme to review student complaints. You will need to use the OIA's complaints form which you will find on its website <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/> Please be aware that you have one year from the date of your Completion of Procedures letter to ask the OIA to look at your complaint.

## **7. Monitoring and Review**

- 7.1 Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development to ensure it is consistently and fairly applied and reviewed annually.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 The College is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and providing a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment means that this policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

## Hugh Baird College

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0151 353 4444

**Email**

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[www.hughbaird.ac.uk](http://www.hughbaird.ac.uk)

Customer Complaint Form (CCI)			
Name		Date	
Address		Post Code	
Telephone Number		Email Address	
Student ID Number		Course Tutor	
		Course Title	
<p>The information which you supply on this page is very important. You should try to give as much detail as possible, and you must ensure that essential information such as dates, times, location, witnesses, etc. are all included on this form. The more information you can supply the more thorough our investigation can be. Use additional sheets of paper if necessary.</p>			



Please outline below the steps you have taken to resolve your concerns under Stage 1 of the procedure

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What resolution to your complaint are you looking for

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Signature	
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Full Name		Date	
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**Please either hand the completed form into reception in the Balliol Building marked for the attention of Nicole Phillips, Executive Administrator, Principal's Office or email to [nicole.phillips@hughbaird.ac.uk](mailto:nicole.phillips@hughbaird.ac.uk)**

**For College Use:**

Date Received		Acknowledgement Letter sent	
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Complaint Referred to	
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### Diversity Monitoring

The College aims to ensure that unfair discrimination does not take place when a complaint is made. In order to help the College monitor the effectiveness of this policy you are asked to provide the information requested below. We collect data relating to protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. This information is requested solely so that our procedures can be monitored and complaints data analysed and will be separated from the complaints form and securely stored.

**Gender:** Male  Female  Other  Prefer not to answer

Age: 14-16  16-18  19+  24+

**Ethnicity:**

**White**

**Asian/Asian**

**British**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Irish Traveller                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other white background                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese                    |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background |

**Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean  | <b>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African  | <input type="checkbox"/> African             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian  | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black/African/Caribbean background |  |

**Other Ethnic Group** Please write what 'other' background/group you are from:

- Arab  
 Any other ethnic group

**Disability:**

Do you have a learning difficulty or disability:?

Yes  No  Prefer not to answer

