

# COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY

2023/2026



## Policy Cover Sheet

Please fill in the following details:

Policy Name	Compliments & Complaints Policy
Version Number	V1
Policy Owner	Ross Black
Release Date	30/01/2024
Policy valid for	3 years

Documents included:

Completed Checklist (below)	X
Policy text	X
Filled in EIA	X

Where should this policy be shared? All policies will be shared on the HUB.

The HUB	X
Net Consent	X
Website	X

### Policy Checklist

Have you completed the following tasks:

Used the Microsoft Accessibility Checker	X
Used formatted headings	X
Used Arial 12pt font	X
Included numbered paragraphs	X
Included page numbers	X
Included alternative text for all images which accurately describe what's in the picture	X
Checked for gender neutral language e.g. remove dinner ladies, workmen, he/she and replaced with servers, contractors, they.	X
Used the full phrase instead of the acronym at least the first time	X
Used the spelling and grammar check	X
Gained feedback from colleagues to ensure the policy is clear and accurate	X
Included any legal, social or organisational changes since the last policy review	X
Reviewed the connected policies to ensure they are still active	X
Filled in the change log	X
Listened to the policy using the accessible reader	X
Reviewed the policy flowchart	X
Informed the EDI Manager of upcoming policy deadlines	X

**Sign Off: To be filled in by the named person only**

	Name	Date
SLT	Matthew Taylor	30/01/2024
Corporation (if required)		
Trade Union		
EIA	Adam Carney	30/01/2024

## Change log

Version number	Changes description	Major changes? Y/N	Initiator	Rationale	Date of completion	New version number
N/A	Updated key terminology	N	Ross Black	Updates for 23-26	30/01/2024	V1

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy identifies the arrangements to be used by Hopwood Hall College to deal with anyone who has had a positive or negative experience with the College services. This includes compliments, comments, feedback and complaints from students, parents, customers, employers, contractors, local residents, visitors and any other users of our services.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy and procedure will enable customers to provide the college with compliments, comments, feedback and complaints. It will help to eliminate direct and indirect discrimination against any individual on grounds of protected characteristics.
- 2.2. This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on grounds of sex, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, disability, inclusion need, gender identity, socio-economic status or any other protected characteristic.
- 2.3. The college does not accept any form of sexual harassment, violence or abuse and any member of the college community who wishes to make a complaint of this nature will be supported to do so and it will be managed through the Positive Behaviour Support and Disciplinary Policy for students or Professional Guidelines for Staff. Any reasonable adjustment or support required to enable compliments and complains to be made will be put in place.
- 2.4. This policy does not replace the College's Disciplinary Procedure, Speaking Out Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, Allegation Management Procedure, Higher Education Policies or Fees Policy and these policies / procedures should be followed where appropriate.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1. The College is committed to providing high quality experience for all its customers through teaching, learning and a range of professional support and commercial services.
- 3.2. The College welcomes compliments, comments, feedback and complaints and will deal with them in a sensitive, fair and efficient way. The Policy will be published on the College's website, communicated to all staff via Netconsent and updated accordingly.

## 4. AIM

- 4.1. The compliments, comments, feedback and complaints procedure plays an important part in enabling the college to gain awareness of positive aspects of our services and areas that require further development. This policy is in place to:
  - 4.1.1. Help customers understand the compliments, comments, feedback and complaints procedure
  - 4.1.2. Enable customers to compliment, comment, feedback and complain
  - 4.1.3. Address all complaints effectively
  - 4.1.4. Allow speedy handling with established time limits for action

- 4.1.5. Keep people informed of the progress of their complaint
  - 4.1.6. Ensure a full and fair investigation where required
  - 4.1.7. Respect customers confidentiality
  - 4.1.8. Collate information to assist the College to improve services and work in a more equitable way.
- 4.2. The College defines Compliments, Comments, Feedback and Complaints in the following way:
- 4.2.1. **Compliment:** 'A polite expression of praise or admiration'.
  - 4.2.2. **Comment:** 'A verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction'.
  - 4.2.3. **Feedback:** 'Information about [reactions](#) to a [product](#) or a person's [performance](#) of a [task](#), which is used as a [basis](#) for development or praise'.
  - 4.2.4. **Complaint:** 'An expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of services provided which requires a response'.
  - 4.2.5. **Working Day:** this is a college working day and applies to term time only.

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1. All staff

- 5.1.1. All staff have responsibility for ensuring that customers are sign posted to the Student and College Services Team who will receive and record both **informal and formal** compliments, comments, feedback and complaints.
- 5.1.2. All staff must refer Compliments, Comments, Feedback and Complaints to the Student and College Services team so that they can be logged and tracked.

### 5.2. Student & College Services team

- 5.2.1. Student and College Services staff are responsible for initial clarification and recording of Complaints on the college Compliment and Complaint system.
- 5.2.2. Student and College Services staff will provide customers who have made a formal complaint with an acknowledgment letter which is generated by the system automatically once a complaint is recorded.
- 5.2.3. Respond to any reasonable adjustment or support.

### 5.3. Student & College Services Manager

- 5.3.1. The Student and College Services Manager will ensure that this policy is updated and accessible.
- 5.3.2. The Student and College Services Manager will be responsible for the allocation of Complaints for investigation to the appropriate Manager.
- 5.3.3. The Student and College Services Manager will make the manager of the reviewer aware of investigation.
- 5.3.4. The Student and College Services Manager is responsible for monitoring the compliment and complaints process and for preparing termly reports and an annual report on the operation of the procedure.

5.3.5. Respond to any reasonable adjustment or support.

#### **5.4. Investigating Manager**

5.4.1. The Investigating Manager is responsible for undertaking the timely investigation into a Complaint allocated to them and reaching an outcome or resolving the Complaint and compiling the resolution letter. The Investigating Manager is also responsible for recommendations for future preventive measures.

5.4.2. Respond to any reasonable adjustment or support.

#### **5.5. Head of Communications and Marketing**

5.5.1. The Head of Communications and Marketing is responsible for tracking comments made on social media channels and over direct messaging, establishing the nature of the comment and, where appropriate, advising the complainant how to follow the College's Complaint Procedure. We reserve the right to remove complaints posted on any public facing platform.

#### **5.6. Customer**

5.6.1. Customers are required to bring their Compliments, Comments, Feedback and Complaints to the college's attention as soon as possible. This can be done in various ways including face to face, writing a letter, by telephone and via the college website.

5.6.2. Representatives are only permitted when the student's consent is confirmed.

5.6.3. Complaints/comments submitted from suspended learners should be pointed to the positive behaviour policy. If there is an ongoing investigation, this must first be concluded before a formal complaint can be raised.

5.6.4. Learners can request support via the pastoral team in submitting compliments/complaints.

#### **5.7. Apprenticeships – End Point Assessment Providers**

5.7.1. The Employer acknowledges that the College does not exercise control over the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). If the Employer has a complaint about the EPAO they should contact the College in the first instance to discuss the complaint by contacting Training @ Hopwood: Telephone: 0161 643 7560 or email: [apprenticeships@hopwood.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@hopwood.ac.uk)

5.7.2. The College at its sole discretion considers it appropriate to mediate any complaints between the Employer and EPAO. The College may, however, determine that it is appropriate for a complaint against an EPAO to be raised directly with the EPAO. If the Employer is directed to EPAO to raise a complaint with them, the Employer shall keep the College's Training @ Hopwood informed of the progress and resolution of the complaint.

5.7.3. In the event that the Employer is not able to reach a resolution with the EPAO the College may provide assistance to the Employer or the EPAO as it considers appropriate in order to resolve the complaint.

- 5.7.4. If the Employer has not been able to resolve a complaint with EPAO in accordance with the above the Employer could raise a formal complaint with the College regarding the EPAO.

## **6. PROCEDURE**

### **6.1. Informal compliments, comments, feedback and complaints**

- 6.1.1. Informal Compliments, Comments, Feedback and Complaints may be received by any member of staff.
- 6.1.2. Staff members should listen and respond to any concerns or negative feedback in a sensitive, fair and efficient way.
- 6.1.3. Informal Compliments and Complaints should be referred to the Student & College Services team to be recorded on the college Compliment and Complaint system (This means that if an employee has received a Compliment, Comments or Complaint and have resolved the case, they should send the information only to Student & College Services for recording purposes).
- 6.1.4. No formal responses are necessarily required for Compliments, Comments, Feedback and informal Complaints.
- 6.1.5. Where appropriate Staff should make recommendations for improvement within their own area when they have resolved an informal complaint.

### **6.2. Formal compliments, comments, feedback and complaints**

- 6.2.1. All formal Compliments and Complaints should be referred to the Student & College Services team to be recorded on the college Complaint system.
- 6.2.2. Student & College Services will respond to any formal complaints with an acknowledgement letter. The customer will receive this within 2 working days. (Face to face complaints may receive an acknowledgement letter immediately).
- 6.2.3. The Student and College Services Manager will allocate an investigator within 2 working days.
- 6.2.4. The investigator may liaise with the complainant to seek further clarification.
- 6.2.5. The investigator will investigate the complaint and aim to find a resolution within 12 working days.
- 6.2.6. The investigator will provide the complainant with an outcome letter within 12 working days.
- 6.2.7. The Student and College Services Manager will record the outcome on the college Compliment and Complaint system.

6.2.8. Where further investigation is required and more time is needed, this will be communicated to Student & College Services and the complainant.

6.2.9. Where appropriate the investigator will make recommendations for improvements using the recommendations for improvements form.

6.2.10. If there are any HR implications, these will be sent to the HR Manager for escalation.

### **6.3. Appeals**

6.3.1. If a customer is dissatisfied with the outcome offered by the investigator, the complainant may appeal and request a review of the outcome.

6.3.2. The Student and College Services Manager will record the appeal and allocate a Reviewer within 2 working days.

6.3.3. The Reviewer will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

6.3.4. The Reviewer will review the complaint and aim to find a resolution.

6.3.5. The Reviewer will provide the complainant with a final outcome letter within 12 working days of the date appeal being made.

6.3.6. The Student and College Services Manager will record the outcome on the college Compliment and Complaint system.

### **6.4. HE Refunds**

6.4.1. In the event that the college can no longer offer continuation of study then HE students may receive a refund of their tuition fees and a compensatory payment to offset the additional costs incurred to complete the course of study at an alternative location.

6.4.2. Consideration will be given to other costs incurred such as maintenance costs and lost time where it is not possible to offer continuation of the course. Students to provide evidence of additional costs prior to any such consideration being made to the student. In these circumstances, the college may also honour student bursaries awarded at the time of enrolment.

### **6.5. Unresolved**

6.5.1. If the complainant has exhausted all avenues within the college policy and remains unsatisfied with the resolution provided by the College, then they should seek advice from the Government funding agencies (ESFA).

6.5.2. In the case of a complaint relating to the college's Higher Education provision, advice should be sought from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for which the College is a member of the scheme. The process for resolving any queries or complaints regarding the apprenticeship, including quality. This must include details of the escalation route within the main provider's own organisation and the escalation process to the ESFA Apprenticeship Service Support on 08000 150 600 or [helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk](mailto:helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk)



## **6.6. Feedback & Comments**

- 6.6.1. The college will also offer a wide range of opportunities for its customers to provide feedback and comments including during Enrolment and Open Days, Learner Voice mechanisms, Principal's Question Time, PACE Tutorials / Progress Reviews, email, Its Learning and via Social Media.

## **7. MONITORING & EVALUATION**

- 7.1. The Student and College Services Manager will track the progress of all complaints and will submit a termly report to the wider management team summarising compliments and complaints. Any concerns or complaints relating to inclusion will be shared with the EDI Manager and reported annually to the E&D steering group.
- 7.2. This policy will be shared through the following methods:
  - 7.2.1. All employees (via Netconsent)
  - 7.2.2. All students (PACE Sessions)
  - 7.2.3. All customers and visitors (via college website and Student & College Services)
  - 7.2.4. All employers (via a services agreement)
  - 7.2.5. All Apprentices (via e-portfolio and induction)

## **8. DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POLICY**

- 8.1. Positive Behaviour Policy
- 8.2. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- 8.3. Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- 8.4. Bullying & Harassment Policy
- 8.5. Speaking Out Procedure
- 8.6. HE Policies
- 8.7. Fees Policy

## 9. APPENDIX A: COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART

