



# Compliments and Complaints Policy

Policy Details	
Policy Owner	Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum
Date produced	May 2019
Approved by	Policies and Procedures Committee
Date approved	11 June 2019
To be reviewed	11 June 2020
Publication	4Policies, Student VLE & Website
Version	2

## **1. Statement of Intent**

- 1.1 USP College welcomes suggestions and comments aimed at improving its provision.
- 1.2 Complaints will be investigated impartially and addressed promptly.
- 1.3 Compliments will be shared with a view to prompting best practice and continued improvements.
- 1.4 No person will experience discrimination as a result of raising a compliment or complaint.
- 1.5 Discrimination against a person who has made a complaint will be subject to Disciplinary Procedure.
- 1.6 Students will be given the appropriate support to lodge a compliment or complaint. Students may request the support of their Progress Coach or another member of college staff to make a complaint.
- 1.7 The Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum Development will monitor compliments and complaints received, the outcomes and any trends.
- 1.8 A summary of the compliments and complaints received by the college will be presented on a termly basis to the Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting and will be presented annually to Governors.

## **2. Introduction and Purpose**

- 2.1 This policy aims to highlight and share good practice, and enables shortcomings in the performance of the college to be identified more easily. It is aimed at improving our clients' satisfaction by dealing promptly and efficiently with the complaints received.

## **3. Related Policies and Procedures**

- a. Grievance Policy
- b. Harassment and Bullying Policy
- c. Positive Behaviour Policy
- d. Staff Disciplinary Policy
- e. Whistleblowing Policy
- f. Student Protection Plan
- g. Fees and Refund policy
- h. Freedom of Information Act
- i. Data Protection Policy

## **4. Procedures**

### **4.1 Compliments**

- a. Anyone that is a student, parent, employee as a user of college facilities, other users of college facilities, or anyone else with an interest in the college who wishes to register a compliment, should pass on their comments directly to a Head of Department or via email address [feedbackmatters@uspcollege.ac.uk](mailto:feedbackmatters@uspcollege.ac.uk).
- b. The SMT Support Team or Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum should be notified of the compliment so that it can be logged (Appendix 1).

- c. The compliment will be shared with relevant member(s) of staff and will be used to continue to improve our service.

#### **4.2 Non-formal Complaints**

- a. Anyone wishing to raise a complaint should raise this, in the first instance, with the department head. This can be achieved by emailing:

[feedbackmatters@uspcollege.ac.uk](mailto:feedbackmatters@uspcollege.ac.uk)

- b. Any member of staff who receives a non-formal complaint will:
  - i. Immediately discuss the issue with the complainant with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion there and then or;
  - ii. Explain what action they will take to investigate and resolve;
  - iii. Notify their Manager or Deputy Principal of the nature of the non-formal complaint and their course of action as a result. The Manager or VP should email the details of the complaint SMT support team.
  - iv. However, where the recipient judges the nature of the complaint to be serious or immediately un-resolvable, they must encourage the complainant to put their complaint in writing, addressed to the Principal and CEO. In this instance, the complaint will be dealt with under the Formal Complaint procedures set out below.
  - v. Anyone who is not satisfied that the informal complaint has been dealt with fairly or effectively and within 10 working days may lodge a "Formal Complaint" in writing.

#### **4.3 Formal Complaints**

- a. Any written complaint in the form of a letter or email to the Principal and CEO will be regarded as a Formal Complaint if the complaints process has been followed.
- b. The SMT Support Team will keep a log of all formal complaints received. If provided, the ethnicity, gender, age, health or learning needs of the complainant (or the person about which the complaint relates) will be logged to monitor for possible discrimination.
- c. Complaints against the Principal which cannot be resolved will be referred to the Chair of Governors for attention of the Corporation.
- d. Complaints addressed to the Principal and CEO will be acknowledged by the Principal in writing within 5 working days and a copy of the complaint will be passed to the Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum Development. The Deputy Principal will pass the complaint to the relevant manager to instigate investigation.
- e. The senior manager receiving the "Formal Complaint" should immediately start an investigation. The SMT Support Team will be kept informed of progress.

#### **4.4 Investigation**

- a. The complaint will be investigated and, if necessary, appropriate action will be taken to improve provision. The Manager will report the outcome of the investigation within 10 working days to the appropriate SMT member (usually Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum) who (with the agreement of the Principal and CEO) will notify the complainant in writing within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. The SMT member will also inform the complainant of their right of appeal to the Principal and CEO.

- b. In the event of complaints requiring a liaison with an Exam Board or other bodies for their solution, the complainant will be informed of possible delays in the notification of the outcome.
- c. In the event that students, who have paid for their course, are seeking compensation, this will be presented to the academic board for investigation. The board will convene immediately and make recommendations.
- d. All correspondence relating to the complaint must be retained within the SMT support team.

#### **4.5 Appeal Hearing**

- a. Anyone who considers that their Formal Complaint has not been fairly and/or effectively addressed may appeal to the Principal and CEO, in writing, within seven working days of receiving a written response to the complaint.
- b. The Principal and CEO will hear the appeal within ten working days.
- c. A representative or friend of his/her choice may accompany the complainant.
- d. The complainant will present their complaint to the Principal and CEO.
- e. The SMT member responsible for the investigation of the complaint will present a report of the investigation and outcome.
- f. The complainant and the Principal and CEO will have an opportunity to ask questions to obtain further information.

#### **4.6 The Decision**

- a. The Principal and CEO will give a decision in writing about the outcome of the appeal within five working days. If the complainant is a Further Education student, they will be reminded that they have the right to take their complaint to the appropriate Awarding Body and/or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Higher Education students, if unsatisfied with the decision are entitled to refer their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) or, if appropriate, the University that facilitates their qualification.

#### **4.7 External Support**

- a. The college may promote the services of a professional arbitration service should the complainant remain dissatisfied after the appeals procedure as an alternative to legal action being taken. Both the college and the complainant must agree that the arbitration will be binding and that no further action of any kind will be taken subsequently.
- b. The college will seek advice, where necessary, from the college's solicitors relating to legal and insurance issues.

#### **4.8 Internal Support**

- a. The Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum will review all complaints received and will seek to identify potential areas for improvement in the college. The Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum will present these, together with any recommendations, to SMT on a monthly basis.
- b. The Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum will present an annual report on Compliments and Complaints to the Governors where recommendations for actions will be included.

#### **4.9 Reference to External Policies and procedures**

- a. Other complaints may be appropriately referred to specific awarding bodies or examining boards. Copies of complaints policies from relevant external institutions are available on request from the Exams department or directly via the relevant institutions.



## Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

This form should be used by managers and policy authors within their area of responsibility to carry out Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments (EDIAs) in relation to protected characteristics including: Marriage/Civil Partnership, Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religious Belief and Sex.

The word 'policy' is taken to include strategies, policies, procedures and guidance notes; both formal and informal, internal and external.

The Impact Assessment may be carried out on any policy, service, function or plan you are engaged in, or are about to commence. All policies should be clearly stated. However, in reality, some policies are built into everyday procedures and customs therefore not all policies are open to inspection and review.

Any assessment of a policy should include these customs and practices as well as the formal written policy. 'Functions' means your duties and powers and includes internal and external functions, including service delivery.

### 1. Name of Policy

Compliments and Complaints Policy

### 2. What is the aim (s) objective (s) and/or purpose of the policy?

To ensure the process for raising complaints is clear, fair and valid.

### 3. Who is the policy lead?

Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum

### 4. Which of the following groups could be affected by this policy?

*(Tick all that apply)*

<b>Learners</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Wider Community</b>	<b>X</b>

### 5. Team

Names and positions of Impact Assessment Team (minimum of 3 people and preferably from areas across the College):

Name	Position
David Dolling	Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum Development
Steve Watterston	Associate Director Quality
Ellie Berry	PA

Date EDIAs undertaken:

EDIA undertaken as a result of: Renewal  Revision of Policy  Procedure  New Policy/ Procedure   
 SAR Process

Other

Please state:

Date of Last EDIA (if applicable): NA

**6. Complaints**

Have complaints been received from anyone with one or more protected characteristic about the service provided?  
 If yes then please give details.

No

**7. The Impact**

Four possible impacts should be considered as part of the assessment:

- a. **Positive Impact** - Where the policy might have a positive impact on a particular protected characteristic.
- b. **None or Little Impact** – Where you think a policy does not disadvantage any of the protected characteristics
- c. **Some Impact** – Where a policy might disadvantage any of the protected characteristics groups to some extent. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that where the negative impact on one particular group of individuals with protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.
- d. **Substantial Impact** – Where you think that the policy could have a negative impact on any or all of the protected characteristics. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that the negative impact on one particular protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.

Use the guidance provided above and complete the following table:

Gender/Age	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Woman	Y			
Men	Y			
Age	Y			

Disability	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Visually Impaired	Y			
Hearing impaired	Y			
Physical Disability	Y			
Specific Learning Difficulties	Y			
Global Learning Difficulties	Y			
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Y			

Any other disability – Various	Y			
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Race or Culture	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
White	Y			
Other minority groups	Y			

Other Factors	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Religious Belief	Y			
Sexual Orientation	Y			
Trans	Y			

Please comment on any areas where some or substantial impact is indicated. Any resulting actions must be added to the attached action plan.

**8. Is there anything that cannot be changed?**

What cannot be changed?	Can this be justified?	If so, how?
Not applicable		
E.g. Disabled people can be treated more favorably under the 2005 DDA. If a policy appears to treat disabled people more favorably than other equality groups, the disadvantage may be justifiable		

Please list the main actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment in your area of responsibility. (Continue on separate sheets as necessary)

None needed. The complaints policy in itself can and will act as a mechanism to raise issues that adversely affect protected groups.
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**DIVERSITY IMPACT ACTION PLAN FOR INCLUSION IN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR INCLUSION IN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Area for improvement and expected impact (linked to Corporate Objectives)	N/A
SMART actions/ activities	N/A
Staff development or resources required	N/A
Timescale including milestones	N/A

Distribution: Copies of the final EIA should be sent to:

To those whom this Impact Assessment will cause to have further work to do in either changing processes or re-writing the policy(s) concerned.

All actions recorded here should be carried forward into the QIP, so that actions can be monitored and evaluated to measure the impact. There will be random sampling of action plans through the Equality and Diversity Forum.

## Communications Plan

Title of College Policy:	Date Approved by Policies and Procedures/ Corporation
Compliments and Complaints	11/06/19

Audience (tick appropriate)					
Managers	Y	Curriculum Teams	Y	Business and Learning Support Teams	Y
All Staff	Y	Suppliers		Partners	Y
Parents and students	Y				

Channel (tick appropriate)					
<b>Policy and Procedures</b>	Y	<b>Quality Improvement Team</b>		<b>Marketing Team</b>	
e.g. Meeting, Email, 4Policies		e.g. Meeting, Email		e.g. Managers Update ,Staff Newsletter, Intranet, Website	Y
<b>Individual Team</b>	Y	<b>Suppliers</b>		<b>Partners/External</b>	
e.g. Document, Library, Noticeboards, Team Meeting, Email		e.g. Letter or Email, Meeting		e.g. Letter or Email ,Board	
<b>Senior Management Team (SMT)</b>	Y	<b>Corporation</b>	Y		
e.g. Meeting, Email ,Message Board		e.g. Meeting, Email ,Clerk			

**Communications Plan Activated By:**

Name: David Dolling	Job Title: Deputy Principal Quality and Curriculum development	Date:13.06.19
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