



# Bradford College Complaints Policy

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<b>Audience:</b>	Higher and Further Education Students
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<b>Equality impact assessment:</b>	Yes
<b>Student Friendly:</b>	Yes

## Revision history

Version	Type (e.g. replacement, revision etc...)	Date	History (reason for changes)
V1	New	Sept 2016	Specification of a separate procedure for admissions complaints and appeals
V2	Revision	Sept 2018	Revision due to College restructure and GDPR
V3	Revision	Jan 2020	Revision due to College restructure
V4	Update	October 2020	Merger of existing policies into a single document / new formatting
V5	Update	April 2021	No significant changes within the policy
V6	Update	September 2022	Update in job titles and incorporate of key responsibilities. Introduction of Stakeholders into policy.
V7	Annual Review	August 2023	No significant changes within the policy

## Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and Quality & Standards Committee annually.

# Bradford College Complaints Policy

## 1. Summary and Scope of Policy

This purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to:

- Provide a definition of a complaint
- Protect the interests of further education, higher education and apprenticeship students at the College;
- Protect the interest of stakeholders of the College;
- Ensure procedural parity for all students;
- Enable College staff to manage student complaints effectively.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the associated 'Bradford College Complaints Procedure for Students on Higher Education Programmes' or the 'Bradford College Complaints Procedure for Students on Further Education and Apprenticeship Programmes'. Students will not be disadvantaged in anyway because they have used this policy and accompanying procedures.

Stakeholders of the College should read this policy in conjunction with the associated 'Bradford College Complaints Procedures for Stakeholders of Bradford College'.

## 2. Definitions of Complaints

For the purpose of this policy a complaint will be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more individuals about the standard of service, action, or lack of action by or on behalf of the College.

The policy does not apply to:

- academic appeals
- academic judgement
- findings of Fitness for Professional Practice hearings
- complaints against other students.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for:

- Understanding the Complaints Policy and Procedure, including the stages of a complaint
- Their authority to attempt to resolve any complaints received
- The need to try and resolve complaints in a timely fashion.

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the College discharge their responsibilities relating to student complaints in line with the policy and procedures
- Overall responsibility and accountability for the management and governance of complaints handling within the College

The Quality Team are responsible for:

- Discharging efficient and effective administrative processes to support the College in handling student complaints
- Recording accurate information regarding complaints and adhering to GDPR guidance in the storage and retention of associated documentation

- Liaising efficiently with external bodies, including Awarding Organisations, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and the ESFA in regards to escalated student complaints

The Complaints Investigator is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are suitably trained in the conduct of a complaints investigation
- Ensuring that they are cognisant of all aspects of a complaint investigation to which they have been assigned
- Ensuring that they undertake a comprehensive investigation which accounts for all evidence and speak to all parties whose evidence may have a bearing on a complaint outcome.

#### **4. Grounds for making a Complaint**

A complaint may be made about an act or omission on the part of the College that is considered to be unsatisfactory or deficient by an individual, a student or by a group of students.

Examples of matters that would be considered under this policy include:

- the quality and standards of a service provided by the College, including learning and teaching provision, advice, resources and facilities
- failure to correctly apply administrative or academic processes
- unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff

In the first instance the College would hope to treat the matter as a concern at the informal stage. The associated procedures detail the stages of complaint and identify the timescales and rights of a student in their discharge of the procedures.

Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, the complaint will be passed to the College's Human Resources department to identify whether it should be handled through the College's staff disciplinary process. In the event of this referral, the complainant will be notified.

#### **5. Who can submit a Complaint**

Complaints should be completed by the student or stakeholder themselves. Correspondence of any type from other parties will not be considered unless the College has received written and signed authorisation from the student that the third party is acting on their behalf. If a complainant is under 18 years of age a parent or legal guardian may act on their behalf where permission has been granted by the student at enrolment.

#### **6. Retention of Information and records relating to Complaints**

By signing a letter of complaint an applicant is agreeing that the College can process the information it contains for all purposes relating to the Complaints Policy and Procedures. This information and records will be kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation Act (2018).

#### **7. Monitoring of Complaints**

The College records and reviews the number and outcomes of complaints by Department and demographics and will report on this to its formal committees, Corporation and Senior Leadership Team.

#### **Related Polices/Procedures/Regulations**

- Higher Education Complaints Procedure
- Further Education and Apprenticeship Complaints Procedure
- Complaints Procedure for Stakeholders of Bradford College

- Data Protection (GDPR) Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy