

# Customer Complaints Procedure



## What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a standard of service, action or lack of action by First College affecting an individual customer or a group of customers.

Anyone can make a complaint if they are unhappy about the behaviour of our staff or the quality of the service we provide.

First College actively encourages complaints and visual promotion of how to complain are displayed around the centres including feedback cards and a designated text number (07860 546085) to voice your concerns.

Complaints may be made by any person or someone acting on behalf of a person receiving or looking to receive a service of any kind from First College.

In addition to our Customer Complaints Procedure, when disputing learning, assessment and internal quality assurance practices, there are Appeals Procedures to use for this purpose. These are available from all staff who will provide you with a copy of the correct procedure to follow dependant on the nature of your appeal.

## Informal (Verbal)

First College aims to settle the majority of complaints informally at the time of the problem. The complaint may be resolved quickly by way of an apology, by providing the service required or by providing an acceptable explanation to the person making the complaint. Your complaint should be discussed with the First College member of staff you are dealing with if you are comfortable to do so or a senior manager on site at the time.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome or if the complaint is of a serious nature, then the following procedure should be followed.

## Formal (In Writing)

If your complaint is in writing it must be received within 10 working days of the disputed incident.

Your written complaint should be sent to the Customer Assurance Adviser, First College, 19 Ida Road, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 2AR or email [sheila.blackett@firstcollegelincs.co.uk](mailto:sheila.blackett@firstcollegelincs.co.uk).

The Business Manager will be made aware that a complaint exists.

Within 5 working days you will receive an initial letter confirming receipt of your complaint. An investigation will then take place in relation to your complaint and once this has been completed you will receive a written explanation of the findings, normally within 15 working days. A copy of which will be given to the Business Manager.

## Appeal

If you are unhappy with the decision and wish to appeal you should contact the Business Manager in writing. You will be contacted by the Business Manager within 5 working days and invited to discuss your dissatisfaction with the outcome of the findings. The Business Manager will consider all of the evidence and make a decision within 15 working days and this decision will be final.

## Responsibilities

### First College

- Respond promptly and in accordance with our stated timescales
- Deal with your complaint seriously, sensitively and in confidence
- Remain calm and respectful

### Complainant

- Raise any concern promptly with a detailed explanation
- Allow us the opportunity to deal with your complaint by providing accurate information
- Remain calm and respectful

## External

Before making a complaint externally, you should have exhausted First College's complaints procedure, including the appeals procedure detailed in this document. If your complaint remains unresolved you have the right to complain externally.

Examples of inspection, regulatory or funding organisations include;

Ofsted	Inspection	<a href="http://www.contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints">www.contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints</a>
Jobs22	Regulatory	<a href="http://www.jobs-22.co.uk">www.jobs-22.co.uk</a>
Education and Skills Funding Agency	Funding	mail to: <a href="mailto:complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk">complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk</a>
Lincolnshire County Council	Regulatory	<a href="http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/feedbackform">www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/feedbackform</a> or mail to: <a href="mailto:feedback@lincolnshire.gov.uk">feedback@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>

If you are unsure who you need to contact or require the contact details of any other inspection, regulatory or funding organisations these are available from all staff, alternatively contact our Customer Assurance Adviser who will provide you with the details you require.



**Ian Dickinson**  
**Business Manager**