Complaints Handling Procedure

A Guide for Students

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Charity Number: SCO 36198

Complaints Handling Procedure – A Guide for Students

City of Glasgow College is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

We value complaints and use information from complaints to measure how well our services are performing, identify trends and recurring issues, and make improvements. We also publish information about complaint performance to demonstrate transparency and accountability.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more customers about the college's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by the college or on its behalf.

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- a failure to provide a service
- an inadequate quality or standard of service
- the admissions process
- the disciplinary process
- a request for a service or for information which we have not actioned or answered
- our policies
- wrong information about academic programmes or our services
- the quality and availability of facilities and learning resources
- accessibility of our buildings or services
- the behaviour of a member of staff or contractor
- a student's behaviour
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor
- disagreement with a decision where you cannot use another procedure (such as an appeal) to resolve the matter
- our failure to follow the proper administrative process.

Your complaint may involve more than one college service or be about someone

working on our behalf, such as a contractor.

What can't I complain about?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- a request for information or an explanation of policy or practice
- a disagreement with academic judgement
- a claim for compensation against the college
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or tribunal
- disagreement with a decision where a right of appeal exists, for example the academic appeals process
- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information Acts
- a grievance by a member of staff
- an attempt to have us reopen or reconsider a complaint we have concluded or given our final decision on.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

How do I complain?

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the college service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff in the department you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

You can complain in person, by phone, in writing, by email, or through our College web-site.

Contact by phone or in writing

Performance Team

City Campus

City of Glasgow College

190 Cathedral Street

G4 ORF

Tel 0141 375 5555

Contact by e-mail

- Send your complaint to complaint@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk

Contact through the College web-site

Visit the College web-site at Feedback, Complaints & Appeals | City of Glasgow College

Using our Complaint Form

If you would prefer to use our Complaint Form, copies of this can be found at all our Reception Areas and Libraries or can be downloaded from our web-site.

On completing the form please hand to our Reception Areas or send to the Performance Team at the above address.

If you require support in completing a form or in raising your complaint with the College, a member of staff will assist you.

On 16 July 2024, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 came into force, making Scotland the first nation in the UK—and the first devolved nation in the world—to directly incorporate the UNCRC into domestic law.
The Act places children's rights at the heart of policy and decision-making and ensures that public bodies in Scotland take these rights into account, including through their complaints procedures.

If you are under 18, we will make sure our complaints process is **easy to understand, supportive and focused on your needs**.

When you make a complaint, we will:

- **Put your wellbeing and best interests first.**
- **Listen to what you have to say** and make sure your views are taken seriously.
- **Let you choose how you would like to communicate with us**, wherever possible, and provide any support you need.
- **Explain everything clearly**, so you understand what is happening, what your options are, and what happens next.
- **Treat you with kindness, respect and fairness** throughout the process.
- **Keep your information private and confidential.** We will only share information with your parent, carer or another adult if you agree, or if we need to do so to keep you or someone else safe.
- **Support you to understand your rights** and make sure you can take part in the complaints process with confidence.

We want every young person to feel listened to, respected and supported when raising a concern or making a complaint.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and email address or contact telephone number
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

You can submit complaints, correspondence, and requests in any language, including Gaelic.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint:

- within six months of the event you want to complain about, or
- within six months of finding out that you have a reason to complain, as long as this is no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Contact details

Performance Team

City Campus

City of Glasgow College

190 Cathedral Street

G4 ORF

Tel 0141 375 5555

Or email complaint@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk

What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint.

Our complaints procedure has two stages:

Stage one – frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

A complaint is considered resolved when suitable arrangements have been put in place to satisfy the issues raised in the complaint.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage 2. You may choose to do this immediately or shortly after you get our initial decision.

Stage two – investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

A complaint is considered resolved when suitable arrangements have been put in place to satisfy the issues raised in the complaint.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

There may be elements of your complaint that will be unable to be resolved. For all complaints, feedback is taken and recommendations are made and used to make improvements to services.

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) or Qualifications Scotland (QS) (or other awarding body) to look at it. For qualifications that are regulated, if you remain dissatisfied with the way the awarding body has handled your complaint then you may complain to the qualifications regulator, QS Accreditation.

The SPSO does not have the power to revise course awards. Only QS and other awarding bodies have the power to do this and students should always approach QS or other awarding body through the relevant procedure where this is what they want to achieve as a result of their complaint, following completion of the City of Glasgow College complaint handling procedure.

The SPSO consider complaints about the quality of service and maladministration, which may include issues surrounding course delivery.

Further information on who to approach about your complaint is available from

Performance Team

City Campus

City of Glasgow College

190 Cathedral Street

G4 ORF

Tel 0141 375 5555

Or email complaint@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk

In all cases, the complaint must first have been considered by the college.

The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (**so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO**)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

In Person:

SPSO

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh, EH7 4NS

We are open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm

Tuesday 10 am – 5pm

By Post

Freepost SPSO

Freephone: 0800 377 7330 or call 0131 225 5300

Online contact www.spso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spso.org.uk

Mobile site: http://m.spso.org.uk

Getting help to make your complaint

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Tel: **0131 260 5380** Fax: **0131 260 5381** Website: **www.siaa.org.uk**

We are committed to making our services easy to use for everyone. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure we make reasonable adjustments to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font or Braille, please tell us in person.

Our contact details

Compliance Manager

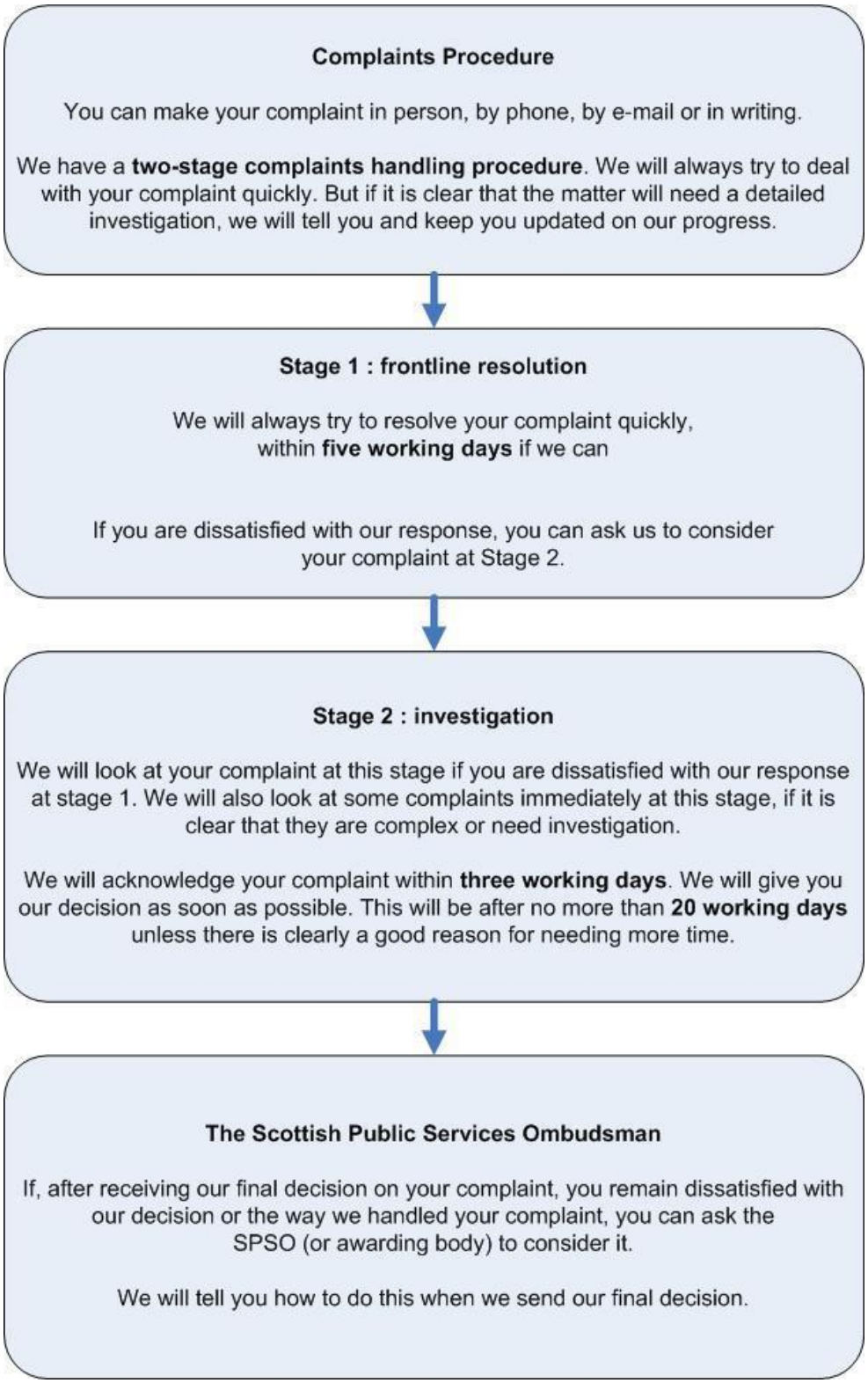
City Campus

City of Glasgow College

190 Cathedral Street

G4 ORF

Tel 0141 375 5555

We can also give you this leaflet in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille).

Quick guide to our complaints procedure