



## **Complaint Resolution Process**

Middlesbrough College hopes that your experience is positive and successful, but on occasion there may be something that might cause dissatisfaction. If this happens during your time with us then the College welcomes your views so that we can answer your concerns and improve our services for the future.

### **Who is this process for?**

1. All current students or students that have recently been registered at the College.
2. Any external user of the College.

In order to support you and to address any concerns that you may have quickly and efficiently, please follow the procedure outlined below. Please note that any complaint made directly to the College Principal will be referred back to this process.

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- All complaints, whether written or verbal, should initially be directed to the person or department that the complaint is about.
- The person or department receiving the complaint will investigate the complaint and attempt to reach a satisfactory conclusion, quickly.
- If your complaint is about a member of staff such as your tutor, you should still follow the Informal Stage, but you may refer your complaint to the head of the department if you would prefer. If you are uncertain who this is, please ask at the Department Administration Office or Reception.
- You do not have to submit your complaint in writing at this stage, but you are advised to keep a note of what you are complaining about, who you complained to, as well as any significant dates, times or other important facts. You should also be clear about what you would see as a satisfactory outcome of your complaint.
- Your complaint will be investigated and an attempt will be made to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible.
- If your complaint cannot be resolved informally, you may be referred to the Formal Complaints process.

## Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

**NB** – your complaint may be referred to the Informal Resolution Stage if you have not already attempted to follow this procedure.

- The Formal Complaint process should be followed only when the Informal Stage is concluded and you have not been able to reach a conclusion.
- All complaints at this stage must be formally submitted in writing with supporting evidence, using the form attached in [Appendix 1](#). If you need help with this, please contact Student Services in the first instance and they will be able to help you.
- Your complaint will be reviewed by the **Complaints Resolution Office**. A decision will be reached based on the evidence provided by you and the department or person about whom you are complaining. The decision at this stage will lead to one of three outcomes:
  - To uphold your complaint
  - To partially uphold your complaint
  - To reject your complaint
- Upon conclusion of this stage, you will be informed in writing of the outcome - and the reasons the decision was reached - as well as any action that will be taken by the College.

## Stage 3 – Appeal

**NB** – The Appeal Stage is only open to complaints that have been through Stage 2 of this process.

- If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Formal Stage, you can request a formal review of your complaint through the Appeal Process.
- Any formal request for a review under the Appeals Process, must be made within 30 calendar days of the decision from Stage 2 of this process being issued.
- Requests for review must be made in writing using the form in [Appendix 2](#), stating the reason for the request and providing any additional evidence.
- The basis for a review is to:
  - confirm that the procedures followed at the formal stage were in accordance with College policy;
  - consider new material evidence which the student (for valid reasons) was unable to provide earlier in the process.

- The review will not reconsider the issues in the complaint or involve a further investigation (provided they were addressed at the formal stage).
- Your complaint will be reviewed by the Appeals Panel. A decision will be reached based on the evidence provided by you and the Complaints Resolution Office. The decision at this stage will lead to one of two outcomes:
  - To uphold your complaint;
  - To reject your complaint.
- If a complaint is upheld, the decision will be communicated in writing including an explanation of the action that will be taken by the College. If you request it, a Completion of Procedures letter can be issued at this point (normally only applicable to higher education students).
- If your complaint is not upheld, you will receive a letter explaining the basis for the decision. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued to higher education students informing them of any right of appeal to external agencies.

### Time Scales

Stage	Time
Stage 1 – Informal Resolution	20 working days*
Stage 2 – Formal Complaint	30 working days*
Stage 3 – Appeal	30 working days*

**\* Please note;**

- Working days do not include bank holidays, weekends or College holiday or closure periods.
- You will be notified in writing at the start of Stage 2 and 3 so that you have a clear idea of the length of time involved.
- There will be occasions when it may be necessary to amend these deadlines, for example when an external agent is involved in the process, or when a key member of staff pertinent to the investigation is on leave.
- You will be advised in writing of any occasion when it is necessary to extend a deadline.

Appendix 1

## Complaints Resolution Process

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Post Code</b>	<b>Tel Number</b>

<b>If you are a student, please give the following details:</b>
<b>Course Name</b>
<b>Course Tutor</b>
<b>Student Number</b>

<b>If you are a visitor or member of the public, please give the following details:</b>
<b>Which area were you visiting?</b>
<b>Who were you visiting?</b>

**Please attach details of your complaint. Be sure to provide as much detail as possible as well as any supporting evidence.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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About you – data monitoring form.

Middlesbrough College is committed to ensuring staff, students and visitors should be treated fairly in all the services they access. It would help us to check that we are providing services which are fair and accessible if you would answer the questions below. You can choose not to answer some or all of the questions; this will not affect how we deal with your complaint. The monitoring form will be detached from the complaint on receipt. No personal information which can identify you will be used in our reporting, including name or address. Data Protection Act guidelines will be followed to keep your information secure and confidential.

*Please put a cross in the appropriate box:*

**Gender:**

Female  Male  Unspecified  Prefer not to say

**Age:**

14 – 15  16-19  20 or older  Prefer not to say

**Do you have a disability?**

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

**Ethnicity**

Prefer not to say

Asian/Asian British

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

White

Other (Please specify)

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Thank you for completing this form. The information provided will help us to improve our services to you and others who access the college and its services.

Appendix 2

**Complaints Resolution Process**

**Stage 3 – Appeal**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Post Code</b>	<b>Tel Number</b>

**Please explain the reasons for your appeal (you may use additional sheets if required)**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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