

# Complaints Policy and Procedure (GWHR10)

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This Policy applies to all Groundwork South and North Tyneside, Route2Work learners, (hereafter referred to as Groundwork).

## 1 Policy Statement

Groundwork welcomes comments and complaints from all members of the College community and from the general public. We use this process to improve services for learners and the wider community in which we exist.

Groundwork is committed to the continuous improvement of the services it provides. We recognise that, occasionally, mistakes will be made or the service offered will not meet an individual's requirements or expectations. For these reasons it is Groundwork's policy that all complaints should be:

- Treated seriously and in an open manner
- Acknowledged immediately, preferably in writing
- Investigated
- Resolved, wherever that is reasonably practicable, within no longer than 13 working weeks
- Used as feedback to improve the service which the college offers

No complainant bringing a complaint under this procedure will be treated less favourably by any member of staff. If there is evidence to the contrary, the member of staff may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

## 2 Scope

The policy applies to all members of the College community but does not replace College procedures for, staff grievances, academic appeals and student disciplinary action: those procedures should be used where appropriate.

## 3 Legislation

The Human Rights Act 1998 applies to the operation of this policy.

## 4 Responsibilities

Date of Issue: September 2021

Review Date: September 2022

4.1 All College Staff have a responsibility for receiving complaints, treating them seriously and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below.

4.2 The Management Team have a responsibility for resolving a complaint, and leading or contributing to an investigation into a complaint when this is considered appropriate.

4.3 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for resolving complaints which have not been resolved during the previous two stages. The decision made by the CEO is final.

4.4 The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the Complaints Policy and Procedures are operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the CEO, Management Team, or members of the governing body.

## **5 Actions to Implement and Develop Policy**

### **5.1 Stage One**

The College expects complaints about courses to be made in writing to the Deputy Head R2W College.

The College usually expects complaints to be made by the person concerned. However, it will consider complaints made by a learner's parent or advocate.

Anonymous complaints cannot be investigated.

All comments/complaints will be acknowledged as being received, in writing, within 5 working days.

### **5.2 Stage Two**

The Deputy Head will then respond in writing within 5 working days, explaining what has happened as a result of the complaint. Where this involves a member of staff, specific detail of action taken will not be made available. This is to ensure that our employees are afforded appropriate dignity at work.

If the complaint requires further investigation that cannot be carried out within the week, the manager shall keep the complainant informed and specify a date when a response can be given.

### **5.3 Stage Three**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Deputy Head's response then the complaint will be forwarded to a member of the Senior Management Team to resolve.

The senior manager dealing with the complaint will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working weeks and a final reply will be completed within 8 working weeks to allow time for any formal investigations to take place.

### **5.4 Stage Four (final internal College stage)**

If the complaint is still dissatisfied with the response then the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will respond within three weeks. The Chief Executive's decision is final.

The total comments/complaints procedure should be finalised in no more than 13 working weeks unless there are exceptional circumstances in which case, the complainant will be kept informed of progress.

### **5.5 Complaints against the Chief Executive or Members of the Governing Body**

Complaints against the Chief Executive should be addressed to the Chair of the Governors. Complaints against the Governing Body should be addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

## **6 Monitoring & Evaluation**

Date of Issue: September 2021

Review Date: September 2022

6.1 Groundwork HR will maintain a confidential record of complaints dealt with to feed into the College's quality improvement processes. The Head of Service will produce a termly report for analysis by the Governors.

## 7 Related Policies

- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Internal Assessment Appeals Policy
- Staff Grievance Procedure