



Bexhill 6th Form College

COMPLAINTS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: PG5

March 2021

COMPLAINTS POLICY



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Bexhill College is committed to handling all complaints in a serious and constructive manner. Complaints can be a positive factor in our efforts to improve the quality of our provision. The Complaints Policy is published every year in the student handbook and referred to in the introduction in the parent handbook.

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

If you feel that the College has let you down in any way please let us know. We need to understand where we have gone wrong if we are to do anything about it. The first step for students or parents would be to talk to their son or daughters Head or Deputy Head of Section or Vice Principal who will attempt to resolve issues. If they are not satisfied with the outcome, they may consider making a formal written complaint. The College will then respond to this as set out below.

The College's Mission and purpose in all aspects of its activity is to strive for excellence and achieve high standards. The College's aim is, therefore, to have few, or no complaints about any aspects of its activity. Where complaints do arise, the College will always:

- Express regret that the complainant feels they have cause to complain.
- Attempt to resolve the complaint promptly, informally and fairly.
- Take the complaint seriously.
- Ensure that the complainant is kept fully informed of the procedure and the outcome of their complaint.
- Ensure that the complainant is aware of procedures to help them progress their complaint.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints about College activity can come from any source. The main likely sources of complaints however will be:-

- Students – concerning aspects of their programme of study, the resourcing, delivery and final outcome. (The appeals procedure against final grades will remain as outlined in subject handbooks).
- Parents – concerning aspects of the organisation of their son or daughter's programme of study, the resourcing, delivery and final outcome.
- Members of the Public – concerning the impact of the operation of the College on the locality through, for example, student behaviour or traffic management.

In addition, complaints may concern a perceived failure of the College to deliver its Mission or fulfil expectations; aspects of employee behaviour; the conduct or outcome of examinations; the failure of the College to conform to its own policies, as well as other issues.

In all cases the same procedure and time-scales should operate, although the complaints and complainants will vary widely.

1. If the complainant wishes to proceed, they should be given a copy of this procedure and asked to make their complaint in writing to the Principal, if they have not done so already.
2. The Principal will then appoint a senior member of staff (referred to as “the Investigator”) to investigate the complaint and produce a report on findings. They will respond to the complainant within thirty working days. (This excludes College holidays)

The response should be in writing and should always include regret for the fact that the complainant has found it necessary to complain. The written response will be from the person appointed to investigate the complaint.

3. In completing the response, the investigator may seek further clarification on points raised from the complainant.
4. A written response to the complaint will be sent to the complainant. At this stage, many complaints will be resolved and the matter closed.
5. If the complainant feels that a resolution has not been achieved, they may seek an appeal against the response. If the complainant wishes to do this, they must state their wish for an appeal in writing and give the reasons why the initial response is unsatisfactory. They must also state what outcome they seek from the appeal. This should be sent to the Principal.
6. If the appeal request raises further issues, these will be investigated by the investigator following the process outlined in points 2 and 3. This will be confirmed with the complainant and a response to any further issues will be provided within thirty working days (excluding College holidays). Again, further clarification may be sought from the complainant.
7. An appeal will only take place once all issues raised in relation to the complaint have been responded to by the investigator. The Principal will appoint another senior member of staff to review the complaint and the investigator's response. They will respond to the complainant within 10 working days in relation to:
 - Has the investigation been fully investigated?
 - Has the response addressed all the issues raised?
 - How appropriate is the response provided in relation to the investigation?
7. If on receipt of the outcome of the appeal, the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may appeal to the Principal for review. If the Principal has responded to the previous appeal, the Principal may delegate this review to their Vice or Assistant Principal. The Principals review will be the final arbitrator of the complaint on behalf of the College.

The complainant will be informed of the right to raise a procedural complaint with the appropriate body where such an avenue exists.

NOTE

It is important that a written record is kept throughout so the facts can be established promptly before recollections fade or distort. Statements should be taken from individuals who become part of the investigation. All documentation should be regarded as confidential by all parties throughout, and following the investigation (and for appeal if appropriate) will be held centrally by the Principal's Office. A complaint is logged by the Principal's office, the

complainant is contacted with details of who is dealing with the complaint and provided with copy of the Complaint's Policy (PG5). The Strategic Planning, Policy and Quality Assurance Committee are provided annually with details of complaints.