

# Complaints Policy

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**QA28**

## **Complaints Policy**

**Review Date: May 2019**

1. North East Scotland College is committed to ensuring that all clients and customers receive the best possible service and is anxious to respond to any problems quickly and remedy any defect as soon as possible.
2. We require all staff to be responsive to any difficulties encountered by students and other clients of the College. In particular we require teaching staff to develop a classroom atmosphere in which views can be expressed openly and in which problems can be dealt with directly and immediately.
3. Complaints will be administered by the Quality Team in the College. North East Scotland College is an equal opportunities College therefore all complaints are administered in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
4. The College's approach to handling complaints will be drawn to the attention of students in a range of publications, on the College's website and through StudentNet and Blackboard.
5. If anyone finds cause for complaint with any aspect of the service the College offers, please tell us by whatever medium is most convenient, e.g. complaint form, telephone, letter, fax, e-mail, face to face or through the website. Of course, the College will regret the fact that it has been unable to meet your needs fully, but will welcome the opportunity to investigate the problem, responding to you, and remedying any deficiency in College service.
6. As a first stage (if you are a student) you should, if possible, report the problem to your lecturer, Curriculum and Quality Manager or Guidance Tutor. If he/she cannot help you please complete a Complaint Form. These forms are available for your use at each College Centre Reception Office and should be left in the box provided. Alternatively, forms can be completed and submitted online through the College website – [www.nescol.ac.uk](http://www.nescol.ac.uk)
7. Complaints will be logged on receipt and will be answered within either 5 working days from receipt for a Stage 1 (Frontline) or 20 working days from receipt for a Stage 2 (Investigation) complaint, depending on the complexity of the investigation required. Progress in dealing with each complaint will be monitored systematically. The College will

ensure that all complaints are treated in a confidential manner.

8. Should you still be dissatisfied after receiving a Stage 1 response you can ask for your complaint to be treated as a Stage 2, Investigation complaint resulting in further investigation into the issue if required.
9. You will receive a Satisfaction Questionnaire after an interval of 3 weeks following the closure of your complaint to establish your satisfaction with the complaints process.
10. Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint following both the initial response and the follow up contact, you have a right to refer your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) where, as an aggrieved person, you believe you have sustained injustice or hardship as a result of maladministration or service failure.

The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about most organisations providing public services in Scotland. Their service is independent, free and confidential.

You may contact the SPSO directly but you should note that they cannot normally look at complaints more than 12 months after you become aware of the matter you want to complain about or that have been (or are being) considered in court. Their details are below:

Freepost SPSO  
(This is all you need to write on the envelope and NO stamp is required)

Telephone: 0800 377 7330  
Fax: 0800 377 7331

A complaints form is available on the Ombudsman's website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk).

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint relating to a matter such as registration, assessment or certification of a qualification the matter should first be referred to the appropriate Qualification Awarding Body and thereafter to the Qualification Regulator. In both instances, evidence that the College's complaint's procedures have been exhausted should be

provided.

The two main Qualification Awarding Bodies for the College's provision are the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and City & Guilds. Their details are below:

### Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

Scottish Qualifications Authority  
The Optima Building  
58 Robertson Street  
GLASGOW  
G2 8DQ

Telephone: 0345 279 1000

A complaint form is available on the SQA website:  
<http://www.sqa.org.uk>

### City & Guilds

Feedback and Complaints Team  
City & Guilds  
1 Giltspur Street  
LONDON  
EC1A 9DD

Telephone: 0844 543 0033

Email: [feedbackandcomplaints@cityandguilds.com](mailto:feedbackandcomplaints@cityandguilds.com)

It should be noted that learners registered on a Scottish Vocational Qualification have the right to complain directly to the Qualification Regulator.

The role of Qualification Regulator is undertaken by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (please see details above).

If your complaint relates to a Qualification Awarding Body other than those mentioned above, please contact your Faculty Manager in the first instance.

<b>Status:</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Senior Management Team</b>
<b>Date of version:</b>	<b>May 2017</b>
<b>Responsibility for Policy:</b>	<b>Vice Principal (Learning and Quality)</b>
<b>Responsibility for Review:</b>	<b>Vice Principal (Learning and Quality)</b>
<b>Review date:</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
<b>EIA date:</b>	<b>May 2017</b>

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

**Part 1. Background Information.** (Please enter relevant information as specified.)

<b>Title of Policy or Procedure. Details of Relevant Practice:</b>	Complaints Policy
<b>Person(s) Responsible.</b>	Head of Planning & Corporate Governance
<b>Date of Assessment:</b>	May 2017
<b>What are the aims of the policy, procedure or practice being considered?</b>	To ensure that all clients and customers receive the best possible service and to respond to any problems quickly and remedy any defect as soon as possible.
<b>Who will this policy, procedure or practice impact upon?</b>	Staff Students Employers Potential clients SPSO Qualification Awarding Bodies Stakeholders

**Part 2. Public Sector Equality Duty comparison** (Consider the proposed action against each element of the PSED and describe potential impact, which may be positive, neutral or negative. Provide details of evidence.)

Need	Impact	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b></li> </ul>	<p>The Policy states that the College is committed to ensuring that <u>all</u> clients and customers receive the best possible service and is anxious to respond to any problems quickly and remedy any defect as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Any issues reported in relation to unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation are highlighted by regular monitoring processes throughout the academic year e.g. Quarterly complaints reports, and annually through SPSO Performance Indicators and an internal Complaints Audit and Complaint Management Report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Advancing Equality of Opportunity</b></li> </ul>	<p>The Policy states that North East Scotland College is an equal opportunities college.</p> <p>The Policy also states that complaints can be made through various media – complaints form, telephone, letter, fax, email, face-to-</p>	<p>The Policy meets SPSO and Qualification Awarding Body requirements.</p>

	face, website - ensuring complainants with disabilities or additional needs are not disadvantaged in any way when complaining to the College.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Promoting good relations</b></li> </ul>	The Policy states that the College welcomes the opportunity to investigate problems, and is committed to ensuring that all client and customers receive the best possible service.	Full responses to complaints are provided which meet SPSO requirements and timescales. Feedback on the process is sought through the issuing of satisfaction surveys to complainants.

**Part 3. Action & Outcome** (Following initial assessment, describe any action that will be taken to address impact detected)

No action is required.
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<b>Sign-off, authorisation and publishing *</b>	
Name:	Pauline May
Position:	Head of Planning & Corporate Governance
Date of original EIA:	11/4/16
Date EIA last reviewed:	May 2017

*\*Please note that an electronic sign-off is sufficient*