

Loughborough College Complaints Procedure

'Making a complaint

If you are unhappy with any services you receive from the college, you are encouraged to raise the issue with the appropriate member of staff. Complaints are best resolved informally with those responsible.

However if you are not satisfied with how your complaint has been dealt with you should put your complaint **in writing** within 5 working days and send this to the PA to the Executive at the college address or email it to webmaster@loucoll.ac.uk ‘

Excerpt from the 'Listening to You' Procedure

On receipt of a complaint

Once a complaint is received in writing it becomes a formal complaint and will accord to the Equal Opportunities Policy of the College then will be logged by the PA to the Executive who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint normally within 3 working days, informing the complainant of the name and phone number of the person dealing with the complaint.

Stage 1

The complaint will then be passed to the appropriate Manager or Team Leader who will arrange to discuss the matter with the complainant, investigate the complaint and normally respond in writing within 10 working days. If the complainant has a particular need relating to a disability or cultural need this will be identified at this point. If more time is needed to investigate the complaint the Manager or Team Leader will inform the complainant of this and give a time limit for a response.

The Manager or Team Leader dealing with the complaint will keep

- a record of any discussions held with the complainant and any member of staff that the complaint involves
- a copy of any written or other form of evidence associated with the complaint

It is important that the complaint is investigated fairly and impartially in line with Equal Opportunities legislation and that a judgement is made as to the validity of the complaint, the outcome of which will be put in writing to the complainant within the appropriate timescale. The outcome may include one or more of the following items:

- an acknowledgement that the college takes all complaints seriously and welcomes feedback on its services and provision
- a statement feeding back what the key issue of the complaint is
- an explanation of how the investigation was carried out
- a description of the decision made
- an explanation of any actions undertaken as a result
- an explanation of what the complainant can do next if they do not feel their complaint has been dealt with properly ie 'If you are still unhappy with how your complaint has been dealt with you should contact the PA to the Executive and explain in writing why within 5 working days. The PA to the Executive will then arrange for an Appeals Panel involving impartial staff to consider your complaint and provide a response normally within 10 working days of you contacting the PA to the Executive.' *Excerpt from the 'Listening to You' Procedure*

A copy of any correspondence will be forwarded with any records to the PA to the Executive.

Stage 2

If a complainant is still unhappy with how a complaint has been dealt with they should write to the PA to the Executive within 5 working days who will then arrange an Appeals Panel involving two managers who will meet impartially to consider the complaint. A response will

be provided normally within 10 working days of the complainant contacting the PA to the Executive.

The Appeals Panel will consider the written evidence from the complainant alongside the written evidence from the Manager or Team Leader investigating the complaint. The Appeals Panel can decide to interview the complainant and members of staff if they consider it necessary. The Appeals Panel will form a decision on the outcome of appeal and inform the complainant in writing of their decision within the specified period.

The letter should inform the complainant that if they are still dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled, they must write within 5 working days to have their complaint referred to the Principal, who will make a final decision and that this is the final stage of the college's Complaints Procedure.

A copy of the letter should be sent to the PA to the Executive and the Manager and Team Leader who investigated the complaint. (This appeals process does not apply where other appeals processes are in place eg student or staff disciplinary procedures, staff grievance or disputes procedure).

Final Stage

The Principal will make the final decision on complaints if complainants are unhappy with the outcome of the appeal process. The Principal's decision is made on behalf of the Board of Governors. A response will be made normally within 25 working days of being notified that the complainant is unhappy with the Appeal. This is the final stage of the college's Complaints Procedure.

If a complainant is still dissatisfied they should contact the PA to the Executive who will provide advice on an Independent Arbitrator relevant to the nature of the complaint.

This procedure has been impact assessed for Equal Opportunities.