



## **COMPLAINTS POLICY** **&** **PROCEDURE**

<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	<b>JULY 2011</b>
<b>LAST REVIEWED:</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2011</b>
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>NEXT REVIEW:</b>	<b>AS REQUIRED</b>
<b>POLICY LEAD:</b>	<b>COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE</b>

### **COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**DIRECTOR**  
**STUDENT WELFARE OFFICER**  
**ACADEMIC OFFICER**  
**COURSE COORDINATOR**

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS**

Students wishing to make a Complaint about the College's policies or services, either academic or non-academic, can do so informally:

- a. At the point where the service is provided, or
- b. By contacting the person in charge of the relevant area,
- c. By raising the matter with the student representative on the appropriate College committee.
- d. With their College Tutor.

If a student wants to submit a formal complaint, their first point of contact should be the Students Welfare Officer.

Occasionally, students may wish to make a complaint about the services they receive. This document sets out the procedure for making a complaint to the College. The College recognizes that it has a duty to provide fair and objective procedures for examining and resolving complaints, and to ensure that its procedures are free from partiality arising from personal or institutional conflict of interest or other sources of bias. Having raised a complaint will disadvantage no student, but the College expects that students will not make perky, malicious complaints.

This document covers complaints from students only in areas that are within the control of the College. Students may have complaints that are within the control of other institutions, e.g. awarding bodies. Some areas about which students may wish to comment or make a complaint are covered by other policy documents issued by the College policies and procedures. Below is a brief guide to the different procedures. If you are unclear about where the responsibility lies for the matter that you wish to raise, then you should seek advice from your Tutor.

The College is responsible for all the services it provides for students, and comments or complaints about these should follow the procedures outlined in this document.

The College expects that complaints will normally be dealt with informally in the first instance. It should be possible to resolve most problems quite quickly in this way, avoiding stress and saving time. Students with a complaint should seek to bring it to the attention of the College, using the procedure outlined here, as soon as possible following the occurrence of a problem, and ideally within two weeks. Many complaints can be dealt with quickly and effectively in this manner, without recourse to formal procedure. The College's procedures have been developed with this in mind.

At the outset a student with a complaint to make will be invited to suggest the remedy they are seeking, without prejudice to the outcome.

Every attempt will be made to maintain the confidentiality of a complainant. However, where a complaint is of a personal nature against an individual, it is likely that the complainant's identity would have to be revealed at some stage in all but the most exceptional cases in order for there to be a fair investigation. For example, where a complaint is made against an individual, that person has the right to know who is complaining against them and what the nature of the complaint is. The College will endeavour to inform an individual complainant of the extent to which their identity is likely to be revealed at each stage of the procedure.

## **INFORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Students who experience a problem with any service provided by the College or anything else within the control of the college can, under the informal procedure, raise the matter in a number of ways.

Either:

They can raise the matter directly with the individual who has given cause for complaint. If informal discussion does not resolve the situation satisfactorily the person responsible for the area to which the complaint relates can be approached. If that still does not resolve the issue then students should consult a Tutor.

Or:

If they prefer, they can raise the matter with a Tutor immediately.

If the matter relates either to: a student-to-student complaint or a complaint against the College or a staff member of the College, the matter can be raised with the Student Welfare Officers who is designated as the focal person for the student issues.

## **FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**Stage One:** If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily a complaint should be made in writing to the Students Welfare Officer, who will acknowledge receipt and ensure that the matter is looked into as soon as possible. An initial response to any complaint can be expected within 7 days of its receipt, and a considered response to the complaint should be received within a further three weeks, with any subsequent remedy implemented with the minimum of delay.

In some cases the informal procedure set out above may have already involved the Students Welfare Officer. In that case, or if the complaint is against the Students Welfare Officer, the complaint should be put in writing to the Principal who will appoint another Senior Member of the College to act in the place of the Students Welfare Officer and vice versa.

**Stage Two:** It is hoped that very few complaints would remain unresolved after this stage. However should this be the case, the complainant can request that for non-academic matters the Students Welfare Officer refers the matter to the Principal who will arrange a College Compliance Committee to undertake an independent assessment of the case and come to a conclusion on the matter. None of those appointed to do so will have been involved in the matter previously. A full and considered response to the complaint should be completed within six weeks and any subsequent remedy implemented with the minimum of delay. The College Compliance Committee will be comprised of the:

1. Director
2. Students Welfare Officer or Senior College member
3. Academic Officer
4. Course Coordinator
5. Student Representative (if applicable)

Throughout any formal complaints procedure a written record of the complaint will be recorded and made available on request to anyone involved in the matter, subject to what is said about confidentiality above. At Stage 1 above the written record will be maintained by the Tutor; at Stage 2 it will be the responsibility of the Students Welfare Officer to keep a written record and to send a copy to both the Principal and Academic Officer.

In the unlikely event that a resolution to the complaint cannot be achieved through the formal process, all efforts will be made to source an external agency to take over the case. The complainant and all relevant parties will be kept informed of the proceedings.

## College Complaint Form

We are sorry that you have had cause to complain about the College. We are committed to providing the highest possible quality in our provision and we are continually trying to improve the service offered to students and other customers. Please complete this form, including as much information about the problem as possible to enable us to fully investigate your complaint.

Please note that staff is under an obligation not to allow a complaint by a student to have any bearing on the way that the student is treated or assessed.

Name		Date of Complaint	
Address			
Course		Tel.	

Please set out clearly the nature and origin of your complaint

Please continue overleaf if necessary

Please describe the steps you have taken to resolve your complaint informally. If this has not been possible, or the outcome is not satisfactory, please explain why.

Please continue overleaf if necessary

Signature of complainant

College date stamp

Please return to the College reception or by post to:

**Metro College of Management Sciences**

**Manchester Campus:**

**Houldsworth Mill, Houldsworth Street, Reddish, Stockport, SK5 6DA**

**Birmingham Campus:**

**Metro House, 416 High Street, West Bromwich, Birmingham, B70 9JR**

The information provided on this form will be stored and processed under the Data Protection Act 1998

