

Complaints Process

Have your say

Our student and customers' views are important to us and help us to ensure that the services we provide are of the highest quality and consistently meet the needs of all our stakeholders. We want to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. To do this we need to know whether we are getting it right and how we can improve our services to our students and customers.

How to make a complaint

We have tried to make our complaints procedure easy to understand and use.

Informal Complaints

One of the main reasons people become unhappy with the service they receive is because they feel nobody is listening to them. Usually problems can be resolved informally at an early stage by explaining the situation and discussing ways forward. We call this the informal approach and we recommend you start here.

A member of staff will work with you on an informal basis to find a solution to the issue. This could be as straightforward as having a discussion with your lecturer, personal coach or any of the student services team.

Who can I talk to?

This may depend on what the complaint is about. Your lecturer might be the person to talk to first or you might prefer to arrange to talk to a coordinator or team manager who is responsible for your curriculum area.

There are other people who can advise you. You could speak to:

- Careers Team
- Student Services
- A Student Representative
- Personal Coach
- Students Union
- Any other members of staff you feel comfortable talking to

Timeframe

To enable a speedy resolution, any concern or complaint should be raised as soon as possible and within 3 months of the event.

Please note this process is for all further education and general College complaints. If you are a higher education student, please refer to the Higher Education Student section of this guidance document.

I'm still not happy, what can I do now?

Formal Complaints

Details of the complaint and proposed resolution should put in writing –

Using our online [Complaints Form](#)

Alternatively you could submit your concerns via our 'Contact Us' email address: enquiries@derby-college.ac.uk

or via our online contact form: [Contact Form](#)

A printable version of the Complaint Form can be downloaded from the Compliments and Complaints page on our website or you can collect a form from our Reception areas or Student Services.

These forms should be addressed to or emailed to the Vice Principal – Quality of Education.

Our address details are:

Vice Principal – Quality of Education
Derby College
Roundhouse Road
Pride Park
Derby
DE24 8JE

Contact us by telephone: 0800 028 0289, a member of our contact centre will take down the details of your complaint and will forward it on your behalf.

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 College working days of receipt. An appropriate manager will conduct an investigation into the concerns raised in your complaint and will aim to provide a formal written response within 10 College working days. Deadlines may be extended outside of term-time due to the availability of the staff involved or if further investigation is required, in this event, you will be notified.

What happens once my complaint has been investigated?

Following a thorough investigation by an appropriate manager you will be advised of the outcome. Examples of possible outcomes are:

- You will receive an explanation or apology.
- We may improve or change our procedures in light of the investigation.
- In some cases, there may not be enough evidence available to take any action over your complaint.

There may have been factors of which you were unaware which explain our decisions.

Data Protection / Information Release – Student Complaints

If you are a student that is complaining we expect that you will assume responsibility for all communication with the College and for drawing attention to any problems or concerns. However, we are aware that parents/guardians or other individuals may on occasion contact the College if they have concerns.

We will need confirmation that you agree that we can disclose any information that is considered necessary in resolving the complaint therefore you will need to submit a [Student Declaration of Consent Form](#). The form can be downloaded from the [Compliments and Complaints](#) page on our website or you can collect a copy from our Reception areas or Student Services. We would not be able to proceed with any complaints unless we have your permission.

What if I don't agree with the outcome?

The Appeals Process

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can appeal against the decision. The purpose of the appeal is to consider if the correct procedure has been followed during the formal complaint stage and if the outcome was reasonable.

An appeal will only take place if one or more of the following apply:

- There is new evidence for consideration which materially affects the outcome

- Not all of the evidence was considered when coming to a conclusion
- Other procedural irregularity in the process

Your next step is to send an appeal via letter or email to the Deputy CEO within ten working days of the date of the complaint response / close letter.

The Deputy CEO Strategy and Corporate Services or their appointed representative will then review the complaint, including any investigation to date. However, if the complaint is against the Deputy CEO Strategy and Corporate Services, the appeal should be sent to the Chief Executive Officer.

I'm still not satisfied. What's the next step?

If you are still dissatisfied with the findings you have the right to direct your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), or Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). You can contact the ESFA and OIA as follows:

Education and Skills Funding Agency
Complaints Team
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

Or via: complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency>

Higher Education Students

For Higher Education students on programmes awarded by a partner university or by Pearson if you are still dissatisfied with the findings, you have the right to direct your complaint to the relevant awarding body and/or the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

Second Floor
Abbey Gate
57-75 Kings Road
Reading
RG1 3AB

Full details regarding how to take a case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator can be found at:

<http://oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia/guidance-for-students.aspx>