

Compliments, Feedback and Complaints Policy

All our policies and procedures are subject to equality impact assessments to see whether the policy/procedure has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to these impact assessments. Please contact Quality@waltham.ac.uk

Date of issue:	September 2022 (last reviewed January 2024)
Approved by:	SLT
Scheduled review date:	August 2026
Contact:	Executive Manager
Availability:	Intranet/Website

PURPOSE

We want to ensure that all of our learners and customers have an excellent experience at Waltham Forest College.

We're proud of the good work that we do for the vast majority of learners and customers we work with. It is always great for us to hear from our customers about that good work. Feedback is crucial to our continuous improvement efforts – and recognition is always really welcome for our colleagues.

We are aware that things can sometimes go wrong. When this happens we want to know about it, so we can do our best put things right and make sure things don't go wrong again in the future.

All compliments, feedback and formal complaints are handled by the Waltham Forest College Quality team. We will share your feedback, make sure that any complaints are properly considered – and that we respond in good time.

COMPLAINTS

If you make a complaint, we will follow the process outlined below:

Stage 1: Informal Complaint

You may find you are able to deal with your complaint informally. If you are a learner or parent / guardian, you may find it useful to speak to the course team leader or the manager of the area in which you study. If you are a business client or partner organisation, you may wish to speak to the manager you work most closely with in the College. At this stage, your complaint will be listened to and taken seriously and every effort will be made to deal with the issue in an effective and efficient manner

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If you have found you are not satisfied with the outcome of your informal complaint or do not find that stage appropriate, you can make a formal complaint. This can be made in one of three ways. You can either use the feedback form available on the Waltham Forest College website or you can email your complaint to Quality@waltham.ac.uk or you can send your complaint in writing to:

Quality, Waltham Forest College, 707 Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4JB

Stage 3: Acknowledgement

You will receive an acknowledgement within three working days of our receipt of your complaint.

Stage 4: Investigation

Your complaint will be forwarded to the relevant manager for investigation. They will contact you for further information if appropriate. This investigation may include further information provided by you, interviews with the relevant person or audits.

Stage 5: Response

You will receive a response within 14 working days from the date of acknowledgement. If further investigation is required, then a revised response date will be given. The response to your complaint will be confirmed in writing.

Stage 6: Review

It is rare that complaints are not fully answered or learners and customers are dissatisfied with their response. However, if this happens, you can request that further investigation or a review of the response takes place by the Deputy Principal of Curriculum and Quality. This will start with a review of the first investigation to ensure it was sufficient, and where appropriate further investigation will take place. The Deputy Principal of Curriculum and Quality reserves the right to deny the appeal at this point by providing written explanation.

Stage 7: Final Response

Following the review, a final response will be provided in writing from the Deputy Principal of Curriculum and Quality.

Stage 8: Appeal

If, after the stages of the process have been completed, you are still not satisfied, you can appeal the response to the Principal and Chief Executive Officer. The Principal will review the investigation(s) and make a full and final decision of the appeal. The Principal reserves the right to decline appeals.

If you are not satisfied with the final decision, you are able to refer your complaint to the Skills Funding Agency or any other relevant organisation in order to make a complaint about the college. A copy of the Skills Funding Agency policy is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>

Students on Higher Education courses can refer their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator at: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every attempt will be made to ensure confidentiality of the complainant. However, where it is appropriate, the complainant's identity may need to be revealed in order to fully investigate the complaint. If this is the case, the complainant will be informed prior to the revealing of their identity.

DATA PROTECTION

All complaints will be kept and stored according to relevant data protection legislation. If you have concerns about how your personal data is used or stored, or you wish to exercise your rights under the Data Protection Act, please write to Quality@waltham.ac.uk

SAFEGUARDING

If the college receives information that a young or vulnerable person is, or has been, put at risk of harm, the matter will be addressed to one of the responsible persons for safeguarding at Waltham Forest College. Where this is the case, processes covering safeguarding of young and vulnerable persons will supersede the complaints process.

Reviewed: January 2024