

Compliments, Feedback and Complaints Policy

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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.

This policy cannot be used to make complaints in relation to disciplinary or attendance procedures/appeals as there is provision for appeals contained within these procedures. Academic appeals must be made under the Academic appeals process.

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

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

Your complaint will be forwarded to the relevant Member of the Senior Leadership Team 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.

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 3: Review/Appeal

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 a member of the Senior Leadership Team not previously involved with your complaint and who will be appointed by the Principal. This appeal must be submitted to Quality@waltham.ac.uk within 14 working days of the receipt of the response.

The appeal will only be progressed if new information is provided or if the correct process was not followed at Stage 2. The Stage 3 Review/Appeal will start with a review of the first investigation to ensure it was sufficient, and where appropriate further investigation will take place. The Principal reserves the right to deny the appeal if no new information is provided. A response to the Appeal will be provided in writing within 14 working days.

Following the review, a final response will be provided in writing.

Stage 4: Appeal to External Agencies

If, after the stages of the College process have been fully exhausted, you remain dissatisfied you have a right of appeal to external agencies. Please refer your complaint to the Department for Education or any other relevant organisation in order to make a complaint about the college. A copy of the Department for Education policy is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>

Adult learners should appeal to the GLA via their website: [Guidance for learner complaints | London City Hall](#)

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.

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.