



South Downs College

Suggestions, Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Introduction

South Downs College is committed to providing a high quality service. We actively encourage and welcome feedback from everyone using our services. Please contact us when you wish to put forward a suggestion, offer a compliment or make a complaint. We are committed to using the suggestions, compliments and complaints made to review and improve our services.

The College complaints procedure has 3 stages

1. Informal – resolving complaints through informal discussion
2. Formal – after all other informal avenues have been exhausted or if the matter deemed too serious to be dealt with informally
3. Appeal – if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation

Aim of the Procedure

1. Respond professionally to suggestions, compliments and complaints in a timely manner.
2. Record and implement, as appropriate, suggestions and compliments and to resolve any complaints.

South Downs College believes that it is in everyone's interest to deal with complaints fairly, promptly and effectively. Our aim is to keep you informed of the progress of the complaint and the personnel concerned. No student, parent or customer will be disadvantaged by making a complaint. In order for us to make sure we are providing an excellent service you may be contacted by one of the Customer Service team to see how we did.

How to contact us

Should you wish to contact us with a suggestion, compliment or complaint regarding our services, please inform us by e-mailing college@southdowns.ac.uk, visit/write to us at Customer Services, South Downs College, College Road, Waterloo, PO7 8AA or call us on 023 9279 7964.

Where English is not your first language, Customer Services hold a database of speakers of other languages who will be able to assist you with a suggestion, compliment or complaint.

Please provide as much of the following information as you can:

- Your name and address
- A telephone number
- A student ID number
- An e-mail address
- A clear reason for your communication
- If known the service or department your communication should be forwarded to.



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What Happens Next?

Complaints Procedure Once a communication has been received, the College will acknowledge receipt of your communication within 2 working days when you will be given a reference number. An appropriate Head of Department/Manager will be appointed to fully investigate your complaint agreeing with you a method of response. We will propose a resolution which we hope will meet with your satisfaction as early as we can; please allow up to 10 working days for the investigation. We may contact you to further discuss the matter and if it is taking longer than anticipated we will let you know when we expect to reply.

Confidentiality

If requested, every effort will be made to maintain your confidentiality. However, where a complaint is against an individual, it is likely that your identity will have to be revealed at some stage in order for there to be a fair investigation. The College will endeavour to inform you of the extent to which your identity is likely to be revealed at each stage of the process. Your confidentiality will be maintained in the publication of all monitoring reports.

What to do if you are still not happy

This may happen occasionally and you may feel that you should contact us again restating the issue and confirming that you have tried to resolve the complaint through the informal procedure. We would then advise you to follow the procedure for making a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints Procedure

The formal complaints procedure should be used when the matter is deemed too serious to be dealt with informally or the procedure outlined above has not resolved the matter.

A formal complaint should be made in writing or by email to the Principal's Executive Assistant, South Downs College, College Road, Waterlooville Hants, PO7 8AA. Formal complaints will also be accepted via a recorded message service on 023 9279 7941 or in person to have scribed by a member of the Customer Services team.

The complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days and the matter will be looked into as soon as possible by the Vice Principal or Assistant Principal, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, dependent on the complaint. A full and considered response to the complaint will be given within 10 working days and any actions that need to be implemented taken as soon as possible. In exceptional circumstances it may not be possible to give a final response within 10 working days; you will be kept fully informed of the reasons for the delay and progress towards the resolution of the complaint. If you are required to attend in person as part of an investigation into a complaint, you are entitled to bring a friend, relative or advocate with you.

If the complaint relates to Higher Education provision, the college may involve the University where the matter cannot be resolved within the college. If after the investigation you are not happy with the outcome you can request a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' informing you of your right to bring the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. More information can be found via the website <http://oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia/how-to-make-a-complaint.aspx>



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In case of ISTD qualifications learners should contact the Head of the ISTD Customer Services & Quality Assurance Department, Imperial House, 22-26 Paul Street, London EC2A 4QE. 10

Appeals

If you are dissatisfied with the decision reached regarding your complaint you can appeal in writing to the Principal. The Principal will review the matter and the decision will be final.

In the event that your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may contact the Complaints Adjudicator, Skills Funding Agency, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT.

Where the University of Portsmouth is the awarding organisation students are able to utilise the University of Portsmouth's complaints procedure once they have exhausted South Downs College's procedures if they are not happy with the outcome.

Feedback

From time to time a member of the Customer Services Team will contact a complainant to see how the complaint was handled and to find out if there is any more that can be done to improve the service.

The Suggestion, Compliments and Complaints Policy which fully outlines the purpose, procedures, and reporting of Suggestions and Complaints is located on the College Website www.southdowns.ac.uk.