

Student Complaints Policy

POLICY DETAILS	
Policy Category:	Student
Version Number:	V3
Approving Authority:	Academic Board
Approval Date	12 September
Date Reviewed:	5 September 2025
Date of next review:	1 August 2026
Author:	Quality Assurance Manager
Owner (if different from above):	Principal
Version History	1. Added Policy Details table at the beginning and replaced “Compliance Measures” with Version History. 2. Deleted Introduction section as it was redundant. 3. Added a Purpose section. 4. Added a Scope section. 5. Embedded the content of the Underlying Principles section into the Purpose and Scope sections. 6. Updated the Definitions section, clarified the distinction between a Complaint and an Appeal, embedded former 4.2 (matters covered by other policies) into the Scope section, and embedded former 4.3 (grievance) into the Scope section. 7. Corrected “Academic Malpractice” to “Academic Misconduct”, covering offences such as cheating, collusion and plagiarism. 8. Updated numbering throughout. 9. Corrected typographical errors.
Related Policies / Procedures	Academic Appeal Policy Academic Misconduct and AI Use Policy Extenuating Circumstances Policy Grievance Policy Student Code of Conduct Bullying and Harassment Policy Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy
Effective Date:	15 September 2025

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out how students can raise concerns about the College's services, facilities or treatment and how those concerns will be considered.

1.2 It provides a clear process for resolving complaints fairly, promptly and without disadvantage to the student.

1.4 Where possible, complaints will be resolved informally at a local level; where this is not possible, they will be escalated for further consideration.

1.5 It supports compliance with the Office for Students' (OfS) regulatory framework and the Good Practice Framework of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

1.5 It also ensures that outcomes from complaints are recorded and used to improve teaching, learning and the wider student experience.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all students registered with the College, including those on franchised programmes.

2.2 It covers complaints about the College's services, facilities, learning environment, or staff conduct where this affects the student experience.

2.3 The College will deal with such matters openly, fairly and effectively, offering appropriate solutions where students are adversely affected.

2.4 Where a complaint is submitted that falls under another procedure, it will be referred to that procedure. The College reserves the right to re-direct formal complaints into alternative policies and procedures as it sees fit. The Policy excludes aspects which are dealt with by separate policies, for example:

- Academic Appeals– appealing against the outcome of Assessment Board. A complaint in relation to review an Assessment Board decision, falls within the Academic Appeals Policy and will be considered as an Academic Appeal and not a Complaint.
- Academic Misconduct – relating to academic offences, for example cheating, collusion, plagiarism etc.
- Extenuating Circumstances – relating to extenuation in relation to assessments
- Student Code of Conduct - disciplinary offences including complaints by students about the behaviour of other students.
- Bullying and Harassment
- Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

2.5 Complaints from applicants are outside the scope of this policy. Separate arrangements apply to admissions matters.

2.6 Complaints relating to the misconduct of a member of staff or student may be submitted initially as a complaint but may later be referred to the appropriate Grievance or Disciplinary Procedure

3. Definitions

Appeal: A formal request for a decision to be reconsidered. An appeal is made when an individual believes that a decision was reached incorrectly or unfairly and seeks a review of that decision.

Complainant: The student submitting the complaint.

Complaint: A complaint is the expression of a specific concern about an aspect of the programme, service, facility or site which is deemed unsatisfactory and should be investigated.

Formal Complaint: A written complaint submitted on the Student Complaints Form requiring investigation and a written outcome.

Informal Complaint: A concern raised directly with the staff member, department, or service involved for quick resolution.

Respondent: The individual or service against whom the complaint is made

4. Confidentiality

4.1 All complaints should be made without fear of penalty. Information will be released to those who need it for the purposes of investigating or responding to it.

4.2 All complaints will be handled sensitively, will be fully investigated, and will receive an appropriate explanation. Confidentiality should be maintained from all parties involved in the process.

4.3 Details of any complaint about a student or a member of staff will be shared with them, so that they can respond to any allegations.

5. Support

5.1 Students may refer to any staff member they feel comfortable to talk to for help, advice, guidance and support in making a complaint.

5.2 If there is a particularly sensitive issue to raise, they can approach the Student Welfare Team for help. The team will make sure that any such complaint will be made known to the

smallest number of staff necessary for the purpose of the investigation and that the complaint will be dealt on a confidential basis.

6. Who can make a complaint?

6.1 Any registered student can make a complaint. If a third party is making a complaint on behalf of a student, written consent from the student will be required and a valid reason as to why the student was unable to raise a complaint themselves.

6.2 Anonymous complaints will not be accepted. However, in rare cases, if the complainant provides a valid reason for wanting to remain anonymous, the complaint may be investigated.

6.3 A log of all complaints (formal and Informal) must be maintained with details of resolutions. All complaints will be reported to the Governing Body annually by the Principal.

7. Procedure

7.1 The Student Complaints Policy follows the following stages:

7.1.1 Informal Resolution, student-led informal discussion of the complaint with the individuals directly involved.

7.1.2 Formal Investigation of the Complaint (Stage One) through mediation.

7.1.3 Formal Review Hearing (Stage Two) through mediation.

7.2 Informal Resolution

7.2.1 The College expects students to try to resolve their complaint informally at a local level in the first instance. Students are to contact the member(s) of staff directly to raise their concerns either in writing or as part of a discussion.

7.2.2 Where this is not possible, the students are to contact the Student Welfare Team to raise their concerns.

7.2.3 Mediation meetings will be arranged by the Student Welfare Team, and the details will be communicated to the student. Students should receive at least two clear working days' notice to attend. If they cannot attend a meeting, they will be required to provide notice in advance.

7.2.4 Meetings are usually face-to-face. In exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or disability that would prevent the student from attending a meeting, they may take place via Microsoft Teams. Written representations might be considered but in such cases the complainant should explain the reasons for such a request.

7.2.5 If a complainant fails to attend scheduled meetings, without reasonable explanation, the College reserves the right not to schedule any further appointments. In such cases, the complaint will not be dealt with due to the complainant's failure to engage with the process.

7.2.6 A written record of the discussion and any written correspondence must be kept.

7.2.7 A response and any remedy proposed should be provided to the student within 15 working days of the complaint being raised. If there is a good reason for requiring a longer period, the student should be informed.

7.2.8 The student will also be informed of their right to proceed to the formal stage of the process should they not be satisfied with the outcome of the Informal stage.

7.2.9 A basic record of the Complaint will be retained, including details of the Complainant, the nature of the Complaint and the outcome.

7.3 Formal Investigation of the Complaint

7.3.1 If an issue is not resolved informally, the complainant must complete a Stage 1 Complaint Form with accompanying evidence and details of the steps the student has taken to resolve the issue informally or their reasons for not doing and send it to the Student Welfare Team.

7.3.2 To make a Formal Complaint, the student must complete a Formal Complaint Form (Appendix 1).

7.3.3 Complaints must be escalated within 15 working days of the response made at informal stage. The College reserves the right to reject any complaint outside of this timescale.

7.3.4 The Student Welfare Team will review the complaint form and accompanying evidence and will acknowledge the receipt of the form.

7.3.5 The Principal will nominate an impartial investigator who will offer to meet face to face with the complainant who will receive at least two clear working days' notice to attend. A note of the meeting will be taken, and the complainant may be accompanied by a fellow student or a student representative.

7.3.6 The Investigator will work with the co-operation of staff and management of the College to investigate complaints speedily, fairly and transparently. Where possible the investigation should be tracked by written notes or documentation.

7.3.7 Following the Investigation, a written response with appropriate explanations, should normally be sent to the complainant within 15 working days. All responses should be copied to Student Welfare Team.

7.3.8 The response will indicate whether the Complaint has been upheld, not upheld or partially upheld and will, where appropriate, identify any action to be taken.

7.3.9 Where the complaint is not upheld, the student will be notified of their right to proceed to a Stage 2 Review.

7.4 Formal Review Hearing

7.4.1 Students are entitled to seek a Review of the decision concerning their Stage 1 complaint, only where:

- There was a procedural irregularity at the Stage 1 formal stage (e.g. there was a material failure by the College to follow the complaints procedure at Stage 1, or clear reasons were not provided for the Stage 1 decision, or there is evidence of bias)
- The Stage 1 outcome was not reasonable in all the circumstances (e.g. aspects of the complaint were not sufficiently covered by the investigation, or the outcome is contradictory to regulations)
- New material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.

7.4.2 A request for a Stage 2 review must be made in writing within 15 working days of the written notification of the Stage 1 outcome. The College reserves the right to reject any requests outside of this timescale.

7.4.3 Requests should be sent to the Student Welfare Team and clearly indicate the reasons for dissatisfaction and why a review is required.

7.4.4 Stage 2 does not normally involve a full new investigation.

7.4.5 The Principal will review all information collated for the complaint, together with any new evidence presented. The Principal may also contact anyone previously involved in the complaint as well as any new witnesses.

7.4.6 The decision taken at the Review stage is final and will be communicated in writing normally within 20 working days for a request being accepted.

7.4.7 The student will also receive a Completion of Procedures letter which will include the Stage 2 Review response.

8. Office of the Independent Adjudicator

8.1 If the student remains dissatisfied with the College's response, they have the right to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

8.2 Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Guidance can be found at:

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/96361/oia-good-practice-framework.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Student Complaints Form – Formal Complaint



Student Complaints Form – Formal Complaint

Please read the Student Complaints Policy before completing this form.

If you need help completing the form, you should contact the Students Welfare Team at studentwelfare@resultsco.org.uk

All sections of this form must be completed in full and supporting evidence should be provided wherever possible. Please sign and date the form. Your appeal will be delayed if you do not complete this form in full.

Section 1 - Student details

Student Name	
Programme	
Phone number(s)	
Email address(es)	
Address for postal correspondence	

Section 2 – Nature of the Complaint

Date of the event(s) or situation about which you are complaining.
Statement of the events that took place in chronological order.
Statement of the consequences that you believe you have had as a result, giving your case for complaint.
Please list below any documents you have attached as evidence (if applicable).

Section 3 – Outline of action(s) you have taken.

If you have already taken steps to resolve your complaint informally, please outline these below. If not, please proceed to the next section

What steps have you taken to resolve this informally?
Why are you dissatisfied with the response?

Section 4 – Desired Outcome

What do you suggest to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction?

DECLARATION

By submitting this form, I confirm that:

- I have read the Student Complaints Policy.
- The information I have provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge.
- I understand that if any information I have provided is found to be false or malicious in intent, I may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Student name	
Date	
Signature	

Appendix 2 – Student Complaints Form – Request for Review



Student Complaints Form – Request For Review

Please read the Student Complaints Policy before completing this form.

If you need help completing the form, you should contact the Students Welfare Team at studentwelfare@resultsco.org.uk

All sections of this form must be completed in full and supporting evidence be provided wherever possible. Please sign and date the form. Your appeal will be delayed if you do not complete this form in full.

Section 1 - Student details

Student Name	
Programme	
Phone number(s)	
Email address(es)	
Address for postal correspondence	

Section 2 – Eligibility Check

Have you submitted a Stage 1 complaint form and received formal notification of the outcome?	☐ YES ☐ NO
Are you providing new evidence or information that there was a procedural irregularity at the Stage 1 formal stage?	☐ YES ☐ NO
Are you providing new evidence or information that the Stage 1 outcome was not reasonable in all the circumstances? (e.g. aspects of the complaint were not sufficiently covered by the investigation or the outcome is contradictory to regulations etc.)	☐ YES ☐ NO
Are you providing new material evidence or information that you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process?	☐ YES ☐ NO

Section 3 – Grounds for the review

Statement of the grounds for the review of your complaint

Please list below any documents you have attached as evidence (if applicable).

Section 4 – Desired Outcome

What do you suggest to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction?

DECLARATION

By submitting this form, I confirm that:

- I have read the Student Complaints Policy.
- The information I have provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge
- I understand that if any information I have provided is found to be false I may be subject to disciplinary proceedings

Student name	
Date	
Signature	