



Complaints and concerns

1 Policy statement

- 1.1** At King Edward VI College we aim to maintain high standards in fulfilling our responsibilities. We value feedback on all aspects of our work, as it helps us make improvements and prevent concerns reoccurring. Where a concern does arise, we will treat the matter seriously and openly and in a way that is fair to all parties.

It is in everyone's interest to address complaints and concerns effectively and fairly. By listening to complaints and concerns, rectifying any issues, and acknowledging when a complaint is unfounded, we can enhance the quality of the College's services while respecting the professionalism of staff.

- 1.2** In responding to a concern, the College commits to:

- listen carefully to the complaint;
- accurately record the complaint while adhering to the Data Protection Act;
- conduct a thorough and impartial investigation within a specified timeframe;
- notify the complainant of the investigation findings and any right of appeal;
- if the complaint is substantiated, inform the complainant about actions taken to prevent re-occurrence.

- 1.3** This policy does not apply to child protection matters, which should be dealt with according to the child protection policy, or to matters relating to bullying and harassment of students, which should be dealt with according to the bullying and harassment policy (students).

2 Policy guidelines

- 2.1** Students, parents, carers, and other stakeholders who wish to lodge a complaint about any aspect of college services, including teaching, learning and student support should follow the guidelines provided below.

- 2.2** Members of staff who wish to make a complaint should discuss the matter with their line manager or with HR, who will offer guidance on the appropriate course of action. Internal staff complaints are dealt with through the college's staff grievance procedure.

- 2.3** Before initiating this procedure, it is advisable to first communicate directly with the person involved in order to try and resolve the issue. Concerns should be addressed and if possible, resolved at the lowest possible level within the College. Prompt and effective resolution prevents escalation into formal complaints.

- 2.4** Disputes between individuals are best dealt with through direct communication. Students are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the relevant member of staff or student about

whom they have concerns. Similarly, if parents have concerns, we encourage them to address these concerns directly with the appropriate member of staff.

- 2.5** Suggestions for how we can make improvements to college services should be directed to an individual staff member, a member of the college leadership team, subject leader, or operational staff manager, as appropriate.
- 2.6** Concerns regarding a student's general well-being or academic progress should be directed to the relevant personal tutor (PT) or, if the concern relates to a specific subject, the relevant teacher or subject leader. This should usually be recorded on the student's pastoral log on CEDAR.
- 2.7** Complaints regarding the quality of college services, including teaching, learning and student support should follow the procedure outlined below. It is preferable to resolve complaints informally with the person directly involved before escalating them
- 2.8** The College will maintain a record of all written complaints received for monitoring purposes throughout the academic year, and a summary will be reported to governors on an annual basis.
- 2.9** Some complainants may wish to remain anonymous. In such cases, we cannot guarantee to resolve the matter.

3 Informal resolution of concerns

- 3.1** If you have been unable to resolve your complaint directly with the person concerned, seek assistance from your son's/daughter's personal tutor (PT) or, if your complaint relates directly to a specific subject, the help of the subject leader.
- 3.2** If your complaint relates to your son's/daughter's PT or a subject leader, you should refer the issue to your son's/daughter's lead tutor or the Faculty Director for the relevant subject. They will discuss the issue with you and help you to decide what, if any, further action you wish to take.
- 3.3** Try to resolve the matter with the person involved, either independently or with the support of the staff member with whom you discussed the complaint.

4 Formal complaint

- 4.1** If the issue remains unresolved to your satisfaction, please contact; concerns@kedst.ac.uk.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days and provide the name of the relevant member of the college leadership team responsible for investigating and responding to you within ten working days.

- 4.2** Please note that if a formal complaint is received without having first gone through the informal process (see section 3), the assigned college manager will attempt to informally resolve the matter before proceeding with the formal stage.

- 4.3** Where a complaint is substantiated, we will inform the complainant of actions taken to prevent re-occurrence.
- 4.4** Where a complaint is not substantiated, a-comprehensive explanation will be provided to the complainant, along with the right of appeal.
- 4.5** Appeals will be addressed by the Principal. In cases where an appeal is upheld, appropriate remedial action will be taken. Where an appeal is not upheld, the Principal will provide a detailed explanation.
- 4.6** **If you remain dissatisfied after the appeal stage, you may refer the matter to:**
- Complaints
Ministerial and Public Communications Division
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
- 4.7** Governors do not involve themselves with operational complaints unless the complaint refers to the Principal (see section 4.8).
- 4.8** If the complaint concerns the Principal, you should write to the Clerk to the Governors (clerk@kedst.ac.uk) who will investigate the matter and respond to you within ten working days.

5 The right to be accompanied

Throughout the above procedures, the student may be accompanied. This can be a parent, guardian, another student, or a member of staff for informal resolution of concerns, or a parent or guardian for a formal complaint. To exercise this right, students must make a reasonable request to the College. Where the chosen person is unavailable on the proposed meeting date, an alternative date will be offered within 5 working days of the original meeting offered.

6 Record

Detailed records will be maintained, documenting the raised complaints, the College's responses, any actions taken, and the reasons behind those actions. These records will be kept confidential and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 which requires the release of certain data to individuals on their request. Copies of any meeting records will be given to the individual concerned although in certain circumstances some information may be withheld in certain circumstances, such as to protect a witness.

7 Reporting

The Executive Office will maintain records of complaints received and the College's responses. These will be collated by the Principal and reported to governors on an annual

basis. However, as noted above in section 4.7, unlike schools, governors in the further education sector do not involve themselves directly with complaints unless the complaint relates to the Principal (see section 4.8).

8 **Equality impact**

The College's equality, diversity and inclusion policy has been taken into account when considering this policy.

Date of review	Date agreed	JCC	Governors	Review date	Comments
June 2023	September 2023	N/A	N/A	June 2025	