

# Policy: Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions for Improvement

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## **1. Purpose**

Franklin College Trust aims to provide a high-quality service in all aspects of its work with its students and the wider community.

Comments expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with any service provided, and suggestions about how the Trust can improve its services, are always welcomed by the Principal and CEO as part of our drive for continuous improvement.

Students and other stakeholders have the right to expect the Trust to consider complaints fairly and quickly. The Trust encourages early notification of any issue, rather than a situation being allowed to steadily get worse.

The Trust will maintain a record of formal complaints, compliments and suggestions including a summary of the resolutions or planned action.

Any complaint will be regarded as confidential, but it will usually be necessary to discuss the nature of the issue with all staff involved. If a student/client does not want this to happen, this must be clearly stated.

Complaints procedures must ensure fairness for everyone; the person/service complained about as well as the person complaining.

The Board of Directors will receive an annual summary and evaluation from the Principal and CEO of the number and general character of complaints, compliments and suggestions and subsequent resolution/planned action.

## **2. Scope and legal definitions**

The Trust publishes this Policy on its website.

Our Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions for Improvement Procedure is designed to help stakeholders register their concerns and to help the Trust respond effectively and appropriately.

## **3. Policy Statement**

Complaints are dealt with in two ways:-

- Informal – by talking to us
- Formal – by putting the complaint in writing.

### **3.1 Contacting the Trust**

If a complainant is not satisfied with the service being provided, they can contact the Trust informally by:

- Talking to the subject teacher, to the Head of Department for that subject area, or by contacting the relevant Progress Coach.
- Providing feedback via student questionnaires, focus groups etc.
- Talking to any member of the Pastoral staff including the Associate Principal for Pastoral and Progression, the Associate Principal for Inclusion and Wellbeing and Progress Coaches.

Formal complaints should be put in writing (including email) and sent to the Deputy Principal.

- If preferred, the Complaints / Compliments and Suggestions for Improvement Form can be used to submit a complaint. This is available from main Reception or from the Trust website, where it is an appendix to this policy. This should be completed and posted in a sealed envelope to the Deputy Principal, Franklin College Trust, Chelmsford Avenue, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN34 5BY. Alternatively, it can be delivered in person to the Trust main Reception.
- Written complaints can also be emailed to the Trust at the following address: [reception@franklin.ac.uk](mailto:reception@franklin.ac.uk)
- Complaints which relate to the College Principal, to an individual Member, Director or Community Governor should be addressed to the Governance Professional. These can be submitted by post or email to the following address: [clerk@franklin.ac.uk](mailto:clerk@franklin.ac.uk)

### **3.2 The complaints procedure**

- Where a complaint is fully or partially upheld, the Trust will take positive action to put things right, make every effort to prevent the same thing from happening again and will ensure the complainant is kept informed throughout. If a complaint is not upheld, the complainant will be advised accordingly.
- Once a complaint has been received, the Trust endeavors to acknowledge receipt of that complaint within five working days.
- The Trust will appoint an appropriate manager to investigate. The manager will then contact the complainant to discuss the situation and work towards achieving an acceptable solution.
- If help is needed in making a complaint, then support can be provided upon request.
- The Trust will ensure that any complaint is dealt with impartially and confidentially.

### **3.3 Outcome of the investigation**

On completion of the investigation, the complaint will be classified in one of three ways:

- **Upheld** – the complaint was fully justified and will result in the Trust taking corrective action, e.g., an amendment of management/service procedures, staff training, improved communications.
- **Partially upheld** – certain aspects of the complaint were considered justified and will result in the Trust conducting some follow-up action.
- **Not upheld** – the complaint was not justified.

### 3.4 Concluding action

On completion of the investigation, the investigating manager will:

- Ensure the Deputy Principal or their delegated representative is in possession of all necessary information and paperwork to officially record and log the process.
- Inform any members of staff who have been involved in the complaint of the outcome and any follow-up action.
- Make sure the complainant has been fully briefed about the outcome.
- Ensure, if the complaint is about equality and diversity, safeguarding or disability that the appropriate Trust manager has been notified.

### 3.5 Appeals

- If a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of the complaint, they can request a review of the matter which will be undertaken by the Principal and CEO.
- A further investigation will be undertaken to try to reach a solution acceptable to both the complainant and the College.
- If the above mechanisms fail to produce an acceptable solution to any complaint, student/clients may appeal by writing to the Chair of Directors, C/O the Governance Professional, Franklin College Trust, Chelmsford Avenue, Grimsby, DN34 5BY within 30 days of receiving the Trust response. Depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint, the Chair of Directors will aim to respond within 7 working days.

### 3.6 Time periods

The time periods, as set out in this procedure, are for guidance and under some circumstances may be subject to extension. Where any such extensions are made, the complainant will be notified in writing.

### 3.7 Serial and vexatious complainants

A serial and/or vexatious complainant is someone who acts in an unreasonable manner, is unreasonably persistent in the way they raise their complaint, for example, shifting goal posts, not accepting what is being said. The Trust has a duty of care for its employees; when dealing with a serial and/or vexatious complainant the Trust reserves the right to refuse to investigate a complaint and may, if appropriate, refer the matter to the Trust's solicitors.

### **3.8 Compliments and suggestions for improvement**

The Trust welcomes compliments and suggestions for improvements which can be lodged through the following methods:

- the Complaints / Compliments and Suggestions for Improvement Form, available from main Reception and available on the Trust website as an appendix to this policy. This should be completed and posted in a sealed envelope to the Deputy Principal, Franklin College Trust, Chelmsford Avenue, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN34 5BY. Alternatively, it can be delivered in person to the Trust main Reception.
- Written complaints can also be emailed to the Trust at the following address:  
[Reception@franklin.ac.uk](mailto:Reception@franklin.ac.uk)

### **3.9 Evaluation of Complaints/Compliments and Suggestions for Improvement**

The Principal and CEO will prepare an annual summary evaluation of the number and general character of complaints, compliments and suggestions along with subsequent Policy References.

## **4.0 Policy References**

### **4.1 Access to the Policy**

The policy is available on the Trust's website.

### **4.2 Quality and Assurance Monitoring**

The content and operation of this policy will be formally reviewed every 3 years.

**Appendix A**  
**Written Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions for Improvement form**

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone Number.....Email Address.....

Nature of Complaint / Compliment

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.....  
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Suggestions for Improvement

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Any other comments

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Signed: ..... Dated: .....

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN A SEALED ENVELOPE TO:

The Deputy Principal, FRANKLIN COLLEGE TRUST, Chelmsford Avenue, Grimsby, North East  
Lincolnshire, DN34 5BY