



Gower College Swansea  
Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe

## Complaints Procedure

<b>Issue</b>	<b>March 2013</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
<b>Originator</b>	<b>Jeff Walters, Head of Quality</b>
<b>Location of Policy</b>	<b>BIZ-Sharepoint/Intranet/Policies &amp; Procedures/</b>

## **1. AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1 To provide our customers with a culture that promotes an open and fair approach. In this context, a customer may be a stakeholder, a student, a member of the public or a member of staff.
- The Quality Unit, and where appropriate the Principal's Office, will ensure that all complaints are given equal consideration.
- 1.2 To respond in a timely manner to customer complaints and endeavour to ensure a professional, impartial and honest outcome on all reported issues.
- Gower College Swansea is committed to providing its customers with an excellent service. It is the policy of the College to resolve as fairly as possible any complaint a customer may have about the services provided.
  - The College will endeavour to provide a response to all complaints within 3 weeks.
- 1.3 To use the outcomes of the issues from complaints to ensure a climate of continuous quality improvement.
- The main purpose of the Complaints Procedure is to provide a means, wherever possible, to resolve all issues to the satisfaction of all interested parties.
  - The process also affords the College the opportunity to identify concerns and weaknesses and provides the necessary information to effect improvements to procedures.
  - The information collated will be reviewed and assessed by the Strategic Management Group and Curriculum and Quality sub-committee of the Corporation Board.

## **2. SCOPE OF PROCEDURES**

- 2.1 The scope of the Complaints Procedure will include:
- Complaints in respect of the students' experience at the College, including relationships with all staff, fellow students and visitors or services and facilities provided by the College.
  - Complaints by members of the public or members of staff concerning any service or facility provided by the College.
  - Complaints relating to all discrimination including race, disability, age and sexual orientation.

2.2 The procedure does **not** cover the following for which separate procedures exist:

- Appeals by students against decisions made by Examination Boards (Student Appeals Procedure).
- Complaints involving misconduct by a student (Student Disciplinary Procedure).

2.3 The following will be included in this procedure; however, in some cases they will invoke procedures covered by other identified policies:

- Complaints involving allegations of misconduct by a member of Staff (Staff Disciplinary Procedure, Whistle Blowing Procedure).
- Complaints by a member of staff against another member of staff (Staff Grievance Procedure).

### **3. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS**

3.1 An **informal** complaint is defined as a **verbal** complaint.

3.2 Where possible, complainants are requested to talk directly about their concerns with the individual(s) or department involved to see if an informal resolution can be achieved promptly and directly through discussion.

3.3 If this is not possible, or if the complaint has not been resolved informally, the issue should be raised as a formal complaint. In such cases the complainant should be informed of the formal procedures.

### **4. FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

4.1 A **formal** complaint is one that comes in as or becomes a **written** complaint.

4.2 Making a Complaint

- A complainant wishing to make a formal complaint within this procedure should submit details to the Head of Quality in the following ways:
  - in writing, by letter or by email,
  - in writing, using the Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions form (available at all Reception areas),
  - verbally, in person or by telephone (01792 284232), to be recorded by recipient.

- A formal complaint received by any other member of Gower College Swansea staff must be forwarded to the Quality Unit for processing.
- A complaint sent directly to the Principal will be responded to by the Principal's office but will be administered by the Quality Unit.
- Wherever possible, there will be a representative of the College available to speak directly to the complainant.
- If it is appropriate' the complainant is entitled to bring an advocate with them to support them in making their complaint, e.g. tutor, outside agency, translator etc.

#### 4.2 Response to the Initial Complaint

The Quality Unit will log details of the complaint and within **three working days** will notify the complainant in writing, who within the College will be dealing with the complaint.

#### 4.3 Responsibility

- The Head of Quality will ensure that the complaint is referred to the relevant person to investigate the complaint. This will normally be the appropriate senior member of staff.
- In the event of a complaint being made against the Principal, the complaint will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors who may refer it to the Board of Governors.

#### 4.4 Time Frame

- **Three weeks** following referral of the formal complaint to the appropriate senior member of staff, a response to the complaint will be sent. If no further correspondence is received from the complainant, the matter will be deemed as closed.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved in three weeks by the appropriate senior member of staff, the matter will be referred to the Principal, who will assume responsibility for resolving the dispute, either directly or by delegating the matter to an alternative senior member of staff.
- The Principal's office will inform the Quality Unit of the outcome of the further investigation and the Principal will respond directly

to the complainant. If no further correspondence is received from the complainant, the matter is deemed as closed.

- In the event of the Principal failing to resolve the complaint, the matter would be referred to the Board of Governors who would decide upon an appropriate course of action and the complainant would be notified in writing of the decision of the Board of Governors.

#### 4.5 Follow-up

The Head of Quality will ensure that all complaints are followed up to ensure appropriate action and a timely response.

#### 4.6 Review

The Head of Quality will provide reports to the Senior Management Team and Curriculum and Quality sub-committee of the Board of Governors on the nature of complaints received, the manner in which with they were resolved and any actions identified for improvement.

### 5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

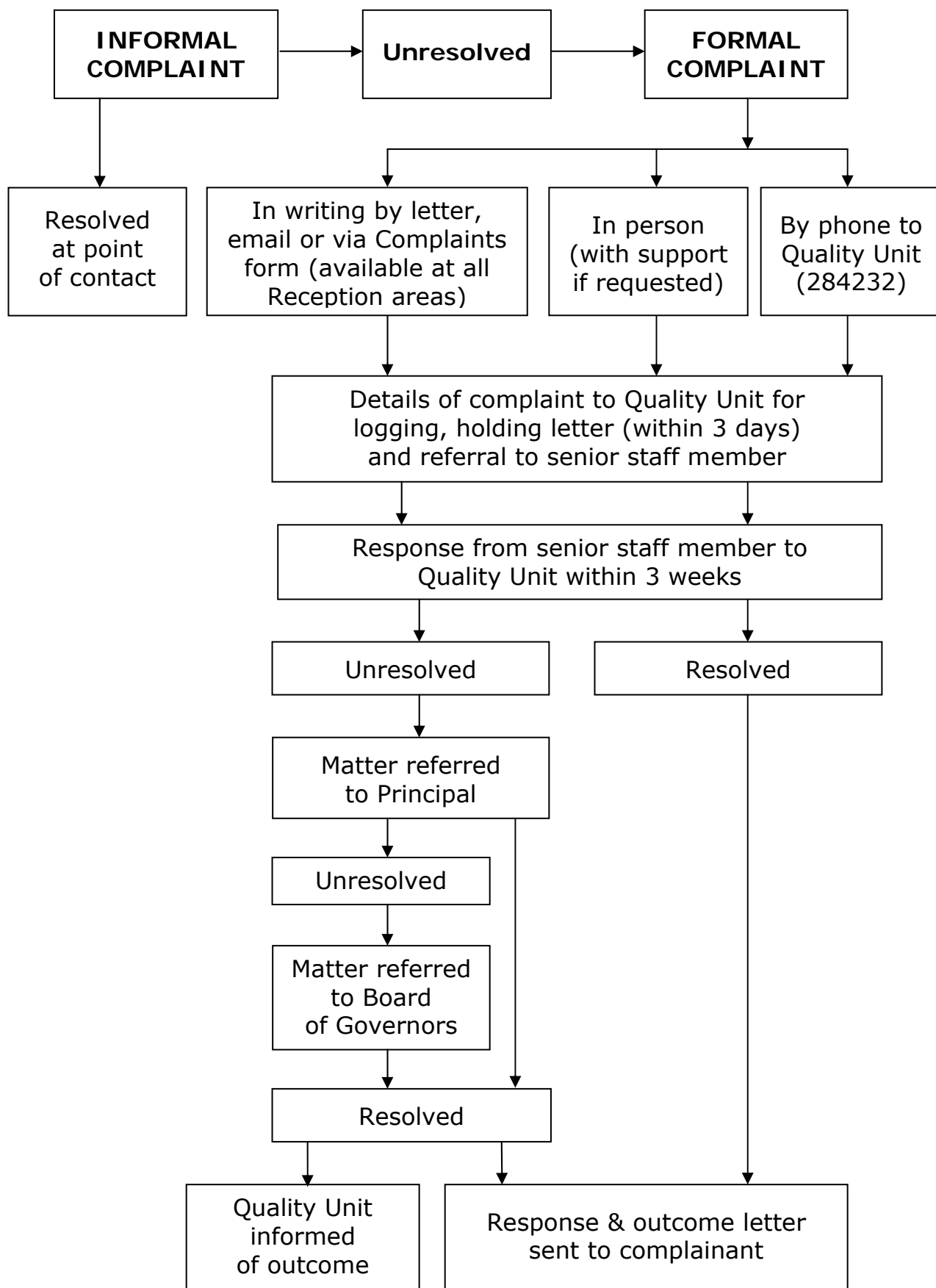
- Student Appeals Procedure
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Whistle Blowing Procedure
- Staff Grievance Procedure
- Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions Form

If you, or someone you know, would like this document in large print, audio, electronically or in Welsh, please contact the Quality Administrator, Beverley Smith.

Tel: 01792 284232

Email: [beverley.smith@gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk](mailto:beverley.smith@gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk)

## 6. GOWER COLLEGE SWANSEA COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



## **7. The Welsh Language**

Gower College Swansea is committed to the promotion of the Welsh language and will endeavour to address and support the needs of Welsh speakers in accordance with the College's Welsh Language Scheme.

Coleg Gwyr Abertawe yn ymrwymedig i hyrwyddo'r iaith Gymraeg a bydd yn ymdrechu i ddelio ag anghenion siaradwyr Cymraeg â'u cefnogi yn unol â Chynllun Iaith Gymraeg Y Coleg.