



Customer Complaints Policy and Procedures
Newbattle Abbey College

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Policy

As a learning organisation Newbattle Abbey College is committed to:

- Maintaining a strong customer focus and meeting customer requirements
- Continuously improving and working towards the achievement of high standards
- Personal development with a recognition of each individuals contribution to organisational success
- Teamwork within the organisation and collaboration with others in sharing ideas and expertise
- Delivering services effectively with due regard to value for money

It is our policy that we will deal with any complaints about members of staff, the services we provide or administration of the College quickly and effectively avoiding the need for a written complaint wherever possible. However, should the matter necessitate a written complaint, the procedures detailed below will be followed.

Separate guidelines are available for:

- students who have a complaint about non-academic matters
- students who have a complaint about academic matters
- members of staff who have a complaint or grievance
- people who believe that have been treated in an unlawful or discriminatory way

Procedure

1. The complainant should fill out a complaints form (copy attached) identifying both the nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, the individual against whom the complaint is being made. Any complaint against an individual should be dealt in a confidential manner. This should be addressed to the Administration Manager in the first instance.
2. The complaint will be formally acknowledged within five working days of receipt.
3. The Administration Manager will:
 - log all complaints and provide responses to the complaint

- in cases where the complaint is against the College or the Administration Manager, copy the complaint to the Principal who will undertake to review the circumstances of the complaint and make a decision on the course of action to be taken
- in cases where the complaint is against a particular individual, forward the complaint to the individual's line manager to review and progress. The outcome of the review will be communicated to the Administration Manager for approval and responses to the complainant.

In either instance the College may seek further information from the complainant regarding the circumstances of the incident.

4. A decision will normally be communicated in writing to the complainant within 15 working days. Where a full response within 15 working days is not possible, a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining progress in dealing with the complaint and indicating when a response is likely to be forthcoming - usually within a further 15 working days.
5. If the complainant is satisfied with the College's explanation or proposed action, the matter will be considered to have been closed. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the explanation or course of action, and, he/she will have the right to appeal to the Principal*.
6. The Principal* will consider all facts of the matter and will come to a decision that may confirm that the action proposed is adequate or may require that further or different action be taken.
7. The outcome of the decision will normally be communicated in writing to the complainant within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal. Where a full response within 15 working days is not possible, a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining progress in dealing with the complaint and indicating when a response is likely to be forthcoming - usually within a further 15 working days.

Procedures 5, 6 and 7 apply only if the complainant is in respect of an individual whose line manager is not the Principal. In all other instances, the Principal will be involved in resolving the complaint from the outset and cannot be part of the appeal process - in such cases, the appeal process should resume with procedure 8.

8. If the complainant is satisfied with the Unit's explanation or proposed action, the matter will be considered to have been closed. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the explanation or course of action he/she will have the right to appeal to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

9. The Chair of the Board of Directors will consider all the facts of the matter and will come to a decision that may confirm that the action proposed is adequate or may require that further or different action be taken.
 10. The outcome of the decision will normally be communicated in writing to the complainant within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal. Where a full response within 15 working days is not possible, a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining progress in dealing with the complaint and indicating when a response is likely to be forthcoming - usually within a further 15 working days.
 11. In the event that the complainant remains dissatisfied with the decision, he/she will have the right to complain to the Scottish Ombudsman under the terms of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 within a year of the incident to which the complaint refers. The Scottish Ombudsman can be contacted on 0870 011 5378 or by e-mail at:
enquiries@scottishombudsman.or.uk
- In the event that the complaint is against the Company Secretary, the complaint should be forwarded to the Principal, or if against the Principal to the Chair of the Board of Directors. The same principle applies for the appeal process.

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