



**BRIDGWATER
& TAUNTON
COLLEGE**

STUDENT/CUSTOMER/CLIENTS COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Guidance for Students, Customers and Clients on how to make a complaint

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Contents

	SECTION	PAGE
1	Introduction and policy statement	3
2	How to make a complaint	3
3	Appeals procedure	3
4	Stage 2 Appeals procedure	4

1. Introduction and policy statement

We aim to provide you with the best possible services and to put you, as our customer, first.

If you are dissatisfied about anything we have done, or if there is anything you feel we should have done but failed to do, please tell us. Unless you let us know we will not be able to put it right.

Because we care about you, we aim to investigate any complaint we receive effectively and fairly. We will do our best to put right any mistakes we find, and we will always tell you the result of our investigation. Please let us know as soon as possible so that we can make a difference to your experience. If your complaint is about a member of staff, we will ensure that you are not disadvantaged.

HE Learners

HE learners should refer to the Higher Education Complaints procedure for students which is available on Blackboard via the HE Student Info Hub or by emailing the HE Team on HE@bridgwater.ac.uk

2. How to make a complaint

When you are following this procedure you can ask someone to give you support. Keep a note of discussions you have at each stage and the dates on which they take place. Also, keep copies of relevant documents.

If you wish to make a complaint:

1. Verbal complaint

It is always best to resolve matters as quickly as possible. In the first instance, discuss the matter with the person or representative from the area directly involved.

2. Formal written complaint

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your verbal complaint or you do not feel comfortable complaining verbally, you can contact us in one of the following ways:

- By email to complaints@bridgwater.ac.uk
- By filling out the form on the college website
- By filling out a form available from Reception or Student Services
- By writing to the Assistant Principal or Director of the appropriate Area
- By writing to the Principal

We will investigate your concerns and give you an answer in writing within 28 working days of receipt of your complaint. We would expect you to lodge your appeal within 10 working days of date of the response letter. If you are not happy with the outcome of the complaint you can appeal.

3. Appeals procedure

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation you can appeal by writing to the Principal stating the grounds for your appeal within 10 working days. An appeal will only be considered on the following grounds:

- Information is now available which was not available to the complainant or the investigating officer at the time

- The complainant feels that a fair and equitable decision has not been reached by the Area investigating officer

You can expect a written reply within 28 working days of receipt of your complaint. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you can move to a stage 2 appeal.

4. Stage 2 Appeals procedure

An appeal against the Principal's outcome decision can be made to the College Board of Governors stating your reason within 10 working days. Your appeal will only be considered on the following grounds:

- Information is now available which was not available to the complainant or the Principal at the time
- The complainant feels that a fair and equitable decision has not been reached by the Principal

A second stage appeal may be made to the College Board of Governors. This should be made in writing and addressed to the Clerk to the Governors, Bridgwater & Taunton College, Bath Road, TA6 4PZ.

The Clerk to the Governors will make arrangements for an appeal hearing by setting up a panel of the Board of Governors. Every effort will be made to convene this panel within 21 working days of receipt of the Appeal.

- You will be invited to attend this Appeal Hearing
- The outcome of the Stage 2 Appeal will be communicated to you within 28 working days of the appeal hearing

Once both stages of the College complaint process has been exhausted, if you are still not satisfied with the resolution offered, if you feel it is appropriate you may correspond with an external agency e.g. Ofsted, a government funding agency or an awarding organisation.

In some cases students/customers may wish to escalate their complaint immediately and alert external agencies to their concerns in parallel with the two stages of the College appeals procedure but in general external agencies would look to the College to seek a satisfactory resolution to the issue in the first instance.

OFSTED – responsible for inspecting Further Education	W: www.ofsted.gov.uk E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Tel: 0300 123 4666
SFA – Skills Funding Agency	W: http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus/complaints/ Tel: 0845 377 5000