



## Your Voice >> Complaints Procedure





## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our aim at Bridgend College is to provide you with an outstanding service in all areas of our provision.

Most people who come to Bridgend enjoy College life and do not experience any problems. However, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong, and when it does we would like to know about it in order that we can put it right.

Wherever possible, we encourage individuals to use our 'Your Voice' feedback system to provide us with ideas, compliments or concerns.

You can access our feedback portal by visiting [www.bridgend.ac.uk/your-voice](http://www.bridgend.ac.uk/your-voice). Postcards are also available at our campus receptions.

The aim of the complaints procedure is to give you a quick, but thorough response that answers all of your concerns properly. The College annually reviews the number and nature of all official complaints, department by department. The monitoring and review of complaints contributes to our self assessment process which leads to ongoing improvements of our customer services.

### **Higher Education Students**

Higher Education students who have a complaint relating to academic matters will need to follow the relevant University procedure as follows:

University of South Wales

<https://unilife.southwales.ac.uk/pages/3273-complaints>

Cardiff Metropolitan University

<http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/study/student-services/Pages/Complaints.aspx>

### **Harassment and Bullying**

A separate procedure exists for dealing with harassment and bullying. This procedure can be found on the student portal or a copy can be obtained from Student Services.

### **Examination Appeals**

For students, a separate procedure exists for those who feel they have been disadvantaged or unfairly classified in an examination. Such appeals have to be made via the College. Any student who wishes to appeal should first consult their Course Tutor.

### **Welsh Language Standards**

We have a duty under The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) to comply with the Welsh Language Standards in line with the compliance notice issued to us as a public body by the Welsh Language Commissioners Office.



We will endeavour to comply with our standards entirely and to provide a comprehensive service to anyone choosing to communicate with us or access our services through the medium of Welsh.

It is important that you let us know if you feel that we have not been able to provide you with the Welsh service that you would expect, as set out within the standards, so that we can take steps to put things right.

We will record any formal complaint received relating to our compliance under the Welsh Language Standards and any actions taken as a result of a complaint. Any complaint received and subsequent action taken will be reported annually to the Welsh Language Commissioners Office via our annual compliance report.

You can access our compliance notice and find out more about our commitment to the Welsh language here: [www.bridgend.ac.uk/about-us/welsh-language](http://www.bridgend.ac.uk/about-us/welsh-language)

### **Who can complain?**

Anyone who uses, or has used, the College's services and facilities. This can be a Higher Education student, Further Education student, Work Based learner, prospective student or a visitor to the College.

(Staff: please note there is a separate grievance procedure for an employee which is managed by the Human Resources Department.)

### **What can I complain about?**

You can make a complaint about any aspect of our services including teaching and training, support services, advice and guidance and College facilities. You can also complain if you feel you have been treated unfairly or inappropriately. If you feel that the service you have received does not meet your expectations then you should follow the procedures below.

### **How do I make a complaint?**

Before you make a formal complaint, it is always a good idea to try and resolve the issue informally, which is why we ask you to follow stage 1 (informal discussion) before making a formal complaint.

If you feel that you lack the confidence to make a complaint you can talk to a Tutor or the Wellbeing Team who will listen to your concerns and support you in developing the skills and confidence to deal with your concern.



## **Stage 1 (Informal Discussion)**

If you are a College student you may be able to resolve your concerns informally by talking to a Tutor regarding course concerns or the Student Services Manager or Wellbeing Team regarding student support issues.

If you are a visitor or prospective student you may be able to resolve your concern informally by asking to talk to an appropriate member of staff.

You can also use our 'Your Voice' feedback system to share feedback with us. You can do this by visiting [www.bridgend.ac.uk/your-voice](http://www.bridgend.ac.uk/your-voice). Postcards are also available at our campus receptions.

Your concern will be listened to and taken seriously. Every effort will be made to assist you in dealing with your issues. No record of your concern will be kept at this stage.

## **Stage 2 (Formal Complaint)**

If you feel that your concern has not been resolved at the informal stage you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Principal's P.A. You should use the formal complaint form which can be found on the student portal or copies are available at all Campus reception areas.

Should you require assistance in writing the complaint, the Wellbeing Team or Student Services Team are available to help you.

On receipt of the formal complaint the following steps will be taken:

1. The Principal's P.A. will log your complaint and send you an acknowledgement of the complaint within 5 working days.
2. The Principal's P.A. will refer your complaint to an appropriate College Manager who will investigate your complaint. This will involve discussing the complaint with all relevant people. (If your complaint is against one person they will be issued with a copy of it).
3. The College Manager will contact you to discuss the complaint and clarify any issues. If the issue can be resolved at this stage it will be logged and you will be sent a letter outlining the action taken.
4. Where the issue cannot be resolved in the first instance the College Manager and one other member of staff will meet with you to hear your complaint. If you wish to do so, it is your right to bring someone to the meeting with you to offer support. This could be a student union representative, a student mentor, a friend or family member. Every effort will be made to ensure that this meeting takes place within 15 working days of receipt of the original complaint.



5. The College Manager will also hear the views of other people concerned with the complaint.
6. You will be written to within 5 working days of the meeting, outlining any action to be taken.
7. A copy of the proceedings will be submitted to the Principal's P.A.

### **What if I am still unhappy?**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of stage 2 you can move onto stage 3 of the complaints procedure.

### **Stage 3**

In the event that you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint at stage 2, your complaint can be passed to a member of the Senior Management Team for final internal review. You should make your request for a stage 3 review of your complaint within 15 working days of receiving the outcome of the stage 2 investigation. Request for reviews received later than this will not normally be considered.

Requests to review the outcomes of stage 2 investigations will be considered in terms of whether any of these conditions are met:

- There were procedural irregularities in the investigation of the complaint or;
- Fresh evidence can be presented which was not made available to the College Manager at stage 2 or;
- The finding of the investigation was against the weight of the evidence

If the Senior Manager is satisfied that any of the above conditions apply, a further investigation will be undertaken of the complaint. You will be notified of the result of the investigation in writing within 15 working days of receipt of the request for review.

### **Stage 4 (Appeals)**

If you are still unhappy with the outcome of your complaint you may appeal in writing to the Principal of the College. You will be invited to attend a meeting with the Principal to express your appeal within 15 working days within receipt of your request.

The Principal's decision is final.



**Please note:** if your complaint directly concerns the College Principal you should send your complaint form directly to:

Clerk to the Corporation  
Bridgend College  
Cowbridge Road  
CF31 3DF