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## **Complaints Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Foresight puts learners first. We will do our very best to ensure that all our learners have a successful and enjoyable experience. We are also committed to continuous improvement in all our work.

We recognise, however, that sometimes problems arise and we aim to resolve disputes, misunderstandings and complaints promptly, fairly, efficiently and effectively.

We will make clear to learners and to other stakeholders such as parents or employers, how to make a complaint and we will set ourselves deadlines to respond to complaints. We will regularly analyse and report on the complaints that we receive. We recognise that complaints can be used actively to improve our performance.

### **Information & Communication**

Learners are informed of Foresights Complaints procedure and where to get help in the process via:

- Learner handbooks
- Learner diary
- 'How to make a complaint' leaflet (available at reception and advice and guidance)
- Posters, on display at reception, information advice and guidance centre.
- Induction (either formally, by the personal tutor during a tutorial session, or informally, by a lecturer during the start of a course)
- The Back of the Complaint Form which is available at key points around Foresight.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all staff at Foresight to respond promptly, fairly, efficiently and effectively to any complaint that they receive.

All Staff should encourage the amicable and timely resolution or mediation of most learner complaints without recourse to unduly formal proceedings. This may be best achieved by encouraging or supporting the learner to discuss the problem with the member of college staff most directly concerned or connected with the problem. However, no one likes being passed from person to person, especially when they are already unhappy, so staff need to be prepared to take the initial responsibility for dealing with a complaint, even if it is not about their area of work. Where appropriate, verbal complaints should be logged in the same way as formal complaints received either by a letter or by completion of a complaints form.

All Staff are expected to treat legitimate complaints seriously, with due confidentiality where appropriate, recognising that other members of Foresight may need to be consulted to resolve the matter, and to seek as speedy and as full a resolution as is reasonably practicable

Certain staff have particular responsibilities in dealing with complaints. These include:

- Tutors are responsible for ensuring that all new learners are informed about Foresights complaints procedure during induction (either formal, during full time course induction, or informally at the start of a part time course)
- Reception staff are responsible for giving out complaints forms and ensuring that they are displayed in a prominent place in reception. They are responsible for ensuring that a learner can easily access a complaints form in an appropriate format. Reception staff are responsible for supporting a learner in completing a complaints form, where this is appropriate or requested. Reception staff are also responsible for logging verbal complaints (see next section) and passing complaints forms to the College Operations manager
- Staff in the information, advice and guidance centre are responsible for supporting a learner in making a complaint. This may involve liaison with appropriate members of staff or helping a learner complete a complaint form
- Foresights Operations Manager is responsible for responding to a complaint form. S/he will acknowledge the complaint within 10 working days of receiving it, clarify the nature of the complaint and set out the timetable for dealing with the complaint (normally within 10 working days). The complainant may be invited to come in and discuss the issue further.
- Foresights Operations manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that all formal complaints are responded to.
- Foresights Operations manager is responsible for monitoring and analysing reports and reporting to Senior Management on a term basis
- Foresights Operations manager is responsible for analysing the above reports and providing an annual summary report for Trustees
- Foresights Operations manager is responsible for providing an update to all staff and to all learners on the number and type of complaints received and the action that has been taken

## **Monitoring**

### (i) verbal complaints

The above section identifies specific roles and responsibilities of post holders within Foresight. All staff should record all verbal complaints on a complaints Form. This should record the date, time and description of the complaint and the action taken. Where appropriate, a formal report should accompany the Form (if for example during the quality reviews process, a complaint has been made on more than one occasion or trends are apparent).

### (ii) Formal complaints

The above section identifies specific roles and responsibilities in the response to formal complaints. Complaints will be analysed by race, gender, disability and age as well as category of complaint to determine any trends. Analysis will also be made of the above at department level as well as College wide. Complaint reports will include the number of complaints received in the following categories:

- Resources
- Teaching and learning
- Accommodation
- Health & safety/Equal opportunities

- Customer services
- Miscellaneous

Actual response times to complaints will be reported to allow monitoring of performance against the deadlines identified in Foresights procedure

Any identified trends will be included within self-assessment and development plans to ensure that weaknesses are noted and appropriate action to remedy them are planned.

The main complaints together with the action that Foresight has taken, will be made available to staff and learners through a newsletter, twice a year (placed on notice boards around Foresight).

A sample number of learners will be asked, annually, for specific feedback on the complaints process to help improve the procedure. The sample will contain learners who have made a complaint as well as those who have not. The sample will represent Foresights community, as far as possible, in terms of race, gender and age. Learners with a disability or learning difficulty will be specifically asked for feedback on the complaints process including the ease of completion of the form, availability or otherwise of support etc. Feedback will be used to improve the procedure.

If you are unhappy with the outcome or way in which Foresight has investigated your complaint, you may ask the [Local Government Ombudsman](#) to investigate the matter on your behalf. We welcome helpful criticism by the Local Government Ombudsman. In addition our objective must be to identify our own failures and resolve them reasonably and quickly.

For complaints around issues in North Lincolnshire, Foresight will adhere to the policies and procedures of the North Lincolnshire authority.

For advice on **making a complaint**, or **to make a complaint over the telephone**, please call the **Local Government Ombudsman Advice Team** on **0300 061 0614** or **0845 602 1983**.

This information is also available in other formats, languages and picture format upon request.