

## Procedure for Complaints

*St. Dominic's is a Roman Catholic Sixth Form College committed to the personal and spiritual growth of all of its members based on Christian values, academic excellence and high-quality pastoral care.*

### Context

In line with its Mission to educate its students to the highest standards academically, spiritually and personally, the College will treat all complaints with the consideration expected by the complainant, whoever they may be.

The College will monitor its Complaints Procedure and an annual report will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body. The policy will be overseen by the Director of Finance and HR.

### Procedure

1. If a student, parent, any other user of College facilities, or anyone else with an interest in the College is dissatisfied
  - with the standard of a service provided by the College;
  - by a lack of provision of a service;
  - by the actions or lack of action of an employee of the College;they are entitled both to express that dissatisfaction through a complaint to the College and to expect that complaint to be considered fairly.
2. In most cases, initial causes of concern will be expressed and be resolved by students and/or parents:
  - speaking directly to the staff concerned, the Head of Department, a member of the Student Services team or a senior leader of the College;
  - raising issues and concerns through the Student Executive;These cases will not be regarded as formal complaints, although it is recognised that they may lead to such action if they remain unresolved.
3. Formal complaints should be made in a letter to the Principal, or in a meeting with the Principal. If the complaint is against the Principal, a letter should be sent to the Chair of Governors c/o The Clerk to the Governing Body, Sue Jacobs.

Where there is a formal written or oral complaint this must be recognised, acknowledged and recorded by the P.A. to the Principal. All complaints will be acknowledged within three working days (during term time) of receipt by the Principal.

4. Notes must be taken in any conversations with complainants and checked that they are an accurate record of the discussion. If the complaint is deemed to be of a serious nature, the complainant should be asked to sign the document or put their complaint in a written form.
5. Every complaint will be acknowledged and investigated promptly by a Senior Leader. Complaints made specifically about the Principal or some aspect of governance of the College will be investigated by a Governor, nominated by the Chair of Governors and overseen by the Clerk.
6. The College undertakes to:

- consider all complaints fairly, thoroughly and quickly;
- deal with complaints in confidence as far as this is practicably possible.

### **Right of Appeal**

The complainant should receive written notification of the outcome of the investigation and information about the right to appeal within ten working days (during term time) of acknowledgement. Should it prove necessary to go beyond that time, the complainant must be informed in writing of the reason and given a revised deadline.

Complainants have the right of appeal to the Principal if they remain dissatisfied (or to the Governing Body via the Clerk to the Governors if the complaint is either against the Principal or was investigated by the Principal). Appeals should be received within ten working days (during term time) of receipt of the written notification of the outcome of the investigation.

### **Reporting of Complaints to the Governing Body**

The numbers and causes of complaints will be reported to the Governors' *Quality & Standards Committee*.

**Procedure for complaints against grades and examinations - please see Appendix 1**

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**Originator:** Director of Finance and HR  
**Reviewed:** 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
**Next Review:** February 2023

### **Procedure for complaints about grades and examinations**

1. A complaint by a student about the accuracy or unfairness of a specific grade or examination result should be directed in writing to the Assistant Principal Academic Support stating clearly the reasons for the complaints.
2. The complaint will be acknowledged within three working days, an investigation will be set in motion and the Principal will be informed of the outcome.
3. Within eight working days of the complaint the result of the investigation will be communicated in writing to the student.

### **Right of Appeal**

4. If a student is not happy with the initial investigation then an appeal to the Governors may be made by the student or a parent/guardian on their behalf and with their permission within five working days.
5. The appeal must be addressed to the Chair of Governors and be in writing stating clearly the reasons for the appeal. The reasons for appeal must be within the guidelines laid down by Ofqual, the DfE or any other appropriate authority.
6. The Chair of Governors will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 3 working days and ensure that an appropriate investigation is conducted by a governor nominated by the Chair of Governors.
7. Within ten working days the conclusions of the appeal will be communicated to the complainant by the Clerk to the Governors.
8. There is no further right of appeal to the College. However, if there are further appeal options e.g. to the exam board, then information about this will be sent to the student.