



Compliments, Comments & Complaints Policy & Procedure

Reviewed
July 2024
(MU)

Thurrock Adult Community College is committed to delivering provision of the highest quality. By listening to the views of our users we aim to continue to improve our performance. TACC aims to deal with compliments, comments and complaints promptly and fairly. Any action taken as a result of comments and complaints will help improve the quality of the learners' experience.

Principles

- there is a clear procedure on how to comment and complain
- any comment and complaint is taken seriously and is answered as well as we can
- the comment or complaint will be dealt with promptly and courteously
- a full explanation will be given and an apology where we have got something wrong
- we will tell you of action taken to try and prevent the same thing happening again
- there is an appeals process if you are unhappy with our response or how your complaint has been handled
- the final appeal will be heard by the Governing Body of the College (For complaints regarding assessment, examination and verification decisions Awarding Bodies may hear an appeal once the College's complaints and appeals process has been exhausted.)

TACC operates a four level complaints procedure and follows Thurrock Councils comments and complaints procedure (2 stages at TACC level and 2 at Thurrock Council Level). You may enter your complaint at the level you feel is most suited. The majority of complaints that the college receives are dealt within levels 1 and 2.

Level 1: Speak to your tutor	
If your comment or complaint or concern directly relates to your learning experience speak to your tutor in the first instance. An honest conversation about the problem could lead to a quick and satisfactory end result.	Your tutor may keep a record of your comment or complaint and any action taken as a result of your discussion.
Level 2: Speak to the Programme Manager	
If your comment or complaint or concern directly relates to your learning experience and you have already spoken to your tutor the next stage is to speak with the Programme Manager for that area.	The Programme Manager will keep a record of your comment or complaint and any action taken as a result of your discussion.
Level 3: Complaint to the Council – Stage 1 (for full details go to: Overview How to complain Thurrock Council)	
If your complaint has not been dealt with at stages 1 or 2, the complaint is not about your learning or you feel your complaint is particularly serious, or if you have been unhappy with the way your complaint has been dealt with so far, or if your complaint is about a member of the management team you may wish to complain to	Once received, your complaint it will be reviewed and acknowledged within 5 working days. Then, within 10 working days of the acknowledgement being sent, your complaint will be investigated by a member of staff from the service you complained about. Our complaints team will track your complaint.

Thurrock Council.	<p>If you are not happy with the response, you may ask that it be escalated to stage 2. You must ask for this no later than 28 calendar days from our initial reply.</p> <p>To make a complaint follow this link: Make a complaint How to complain Thurrock Council</p> <p>You can also email complaints@thurrock.gov.uk.</p>
<p>Complaint to the Council – Stage 2 (for full details go to: Overview How to complain Thurrock Council)</p>	
Escalating your complaint	<p>When you ask for your complaint to be escalated you must explain why. The response at stage 1 will tell you how to do this.</p> <p>Once received, your escalation request will be reviewed and acknowledged within 5 working days.</p> <p>Then, within 20 working days of the acknowledgement being sent, your complaint will be investigated by an officer of our Complaints team.</p>
<p>Appeals Process – after stage 2</p>	
<p>Normally, if you are still not satisfied after your complaint has been through all stages of our complaints procedure, you can refer it to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.</p> <p>However, with TACC if you are still unhappy with what we have done to deal with your complaint you can write to the Chair of the Governing Body who will set up an appeals panel of members of the governing body. However, you must make it clear why you do not think your complaint has not been dealt with properly. This may take the form of a written or verbal statement but will probably include a discussion with the appeals panel at the formal hearing. A senior officer from Thurrock Council will be involved at this level of complaint.</p> <p>We aim to complete all appeals within 28 working days.</p> <p>You also have the right, if your complaint refers to an externally accredited course, to appeal to the relevant awarding body. The Clerk to the Governing Body will supply details of each awarding body's process.</p>	
<p>Appeals – Education and Skills Funding Agency</p>	
<p>You can also complain about the college as a provider to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Their publication Complaints About Providers of Education and Training can be found https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure#complain-about-a-post-16-training-provider-college-or-employer-we-fund or ask Student Services for a hard copy.</p>	

Monitoring

Complaints are reviewed at monthly Leadership Team meetings to ensure timely response, appropriate investigation and to identify “lessons learnt”. Complaints always generate “lessons to be learnt” even when the college is not found to be at fault.

The Governing Body receives a termly report outlining any emerging themes and the outcomes. An annual report is also presented to the Governors that has detailed analysis. The policy has an annual review.