

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Audience: X College

Requirement: Essential

Policy Owner: Executive Team

Review Delegation: Corporation

Review Cycle: Every 2 years

Last Review: November 2025

Due for Review: November 2027

SOUTH HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE GROUP COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

1.0 Statement of Principles

At South Hampshire College Group we work hard to provide the best possible service. However, if you feel that this service has not met your needs, we will make every effort to deal with your concerns.

South Hampshire College Group prides itself in putting its customers first and does its very best to ensure their time at college is enjoyable and that they succeed. Sometimes though, we make mistakes and we want to know when we do. By letting the College know when things go wrong you can help us put them right and we can often improve our services as a result of your observations. It is our expectation that all complaints will be raised with the person concerned in a prompt and reasonable manner.

2.0 Scope

This policy encompasses the procedure to complain about the College Group, its staff, students or Governors with reference to complaints raised within the current academic year only. It is available to all current students, parents, employers and members of the public.

Members of SHCG staff wishing to raise a complaint about the College Group, staff, students or Governors should follow internal People and Culture Grievance policy and procedures.

3.0 Detail

If you wish to make a complaint, please pursue the **informal** procedure in the first instance. If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed, you may wish to use the **formal** procedure outlined in this policy.

The **College's Complaints Procedure** is designed to bring problems to our attention and make sure that:

- Every effort is taken to resolve your complaint at an early stage
- There is a clear procedure to deal with all complaints
- You are kept informed at every stage
- Your complaint will be dealt with in confidence
- All formal complaints are recorded and investigated

PROCEDURE

Informal Complaints Procedure

- If you are a student, discuss your concerns with your lecturer. If you find this difficult or inappropriate, the person you should speak to is the Curriculum Area Manager or Curriculum Director.
- If you are a member of the public/ a parent/ employer, please email feedback@shcg.ac.uk and your complaint will be forwarded to the relevant department.

We hope that, by this stage, you have had your concerns appropriately and adequately dealt with and any actions taken have been to your satisfaction. If not, you may wish to make a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints (relating to the College's, staff or students)

Your complaint should be sent via email: feedback@shcg.ac.uk marked "FAO Executive Office", whilst stating the college and/or campus your complaint is referring to.

You should have an initial response within **two working days** and any further investigation should take no longer than **ten working days** (term time only. Complaints made during school holidays may take longer to investigate but we will do our best to respond in a timely manner).

Formal Complaints (relating to the Corporation, Governors or the Governance Professional)

Your complaint should be sent via email: chair@shcg.ac.uk marked "FAO Director of Governance". Complaints of this nature will usually be reviewed by the Senior Postholder (SPH) Remuneration Committee or a panel of up to 3 Governors.

You should have an initial response within **two working days** and any further investigation (including time to review any findings) should take no longer than **fifteen working days** (term time only. Complaints made during school holidays may take longer to investigate but we will do our best to respond in a timely manner)

Formal Complaints (relating to Higher Education)

For Higher Education complaints, if unresolved through the informal process, please proceed with the formal process. The process depends on your programme:

For University of Portsmouth (UoP) Programmes:

Service Issues: Your complaint should be sent via email: feedback@shcg.ac.uk marked "FAO Executive Office", whilst stating the college and/or campus your complaint is referring to.

You should have an initial response within **two working days** and any further investigation should take no longer than **ten working days** (term time only. Complaints made during school holidays may take longer to investigate but we will do our best to respond in a timely manner).

Other Issues: For other issues, please follow the University of Portsmouth's Complaints procedure found here: [Student complaints 2025](#)

Other SHCG HE Programmes:

Your complaint should be sent via email: feedback@shcg.ac.uk marked “FAO Executive Office”, whilst stating the college and/or campus your complaint is referring to.

You should have an initial response within **two working days** and any further investigation should take no longer than **ten working days** (term time only. Complaints made during school holidays may take longer to investigate but we will do our best to respond in a timely manner).

Formal Complaints (other)

For complaints directly to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) please find details here:

[Complaints procedure - Education and Skills Funding Agency - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency)

For complaints relating to apprenticeships please find details here:

www.help.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb or call 08000 150 600.

Right to Appeal

Should you make a formal complaint and feel that your concerns have still not been appropriately and adequately dealt with, you have the right to appeal.

Formal Complaint Appeals (relating to the College's, staff or students)

Your appeal of complaint should be sent via email: feedback@shcg.ac.uk marked “FAO Chief Executive - Appeal of Complaint”, within **five working days** of the original complaint response, outlining the reasons why you are not satisfied with the investigation and/or the outcomes.

An appeal will only be considered if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Evidence of a material administrative error or deviation from published policy and procedure.
- Evidence of some other material irregularity.
- New evidence not available at the time of the investigation that could materially affect the complaint investigator's decision.

The Chief Executive, or a nominated delegate, will confirm receipt of the appeal within **five working days**.

The Chief Executive, or a nominated delegate, will investigate the issues raised by consulting with those concerned in the initial procedure. You should hear the outcome of this investigation within a further **ten working days** (term time only. Complaints made during school holidays may take longer to investigate).

The Chief Executive or nominated delegate's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Formal Complaint Appeals (relating to the Corporation, Governors or the Governance Professional)

Your appeal of complaint should be sent via email: chair@shcg.ac.uk marked "FAO Chair of Corporation-Appeal of Complaint", within **five working days** of the original complaint response, outlining the reasons why you are not satisfied with the investigation and/or the outcomes.

An appeal will only be considered if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Evidence of a material administrative error or deviation from published policy and procedure.
- Evidence of some other material irregularity.
- New evidence not available at the time of the investigation that could materially affect the complaint investigator's decision.

The Chair of the Corporation will confirm receipt of the appeal within **five working days**. The Chair of the Corporation, and or a panel of up to 3 Governors will investigate the issues raised by consulting with those concerned in the initial procedure. You should hear the outcome of this investigation within a further **ten working days** (term time only. Complaints made during school holidays may take longer to investigate).

The Chair of the Corporation or the Governing panel's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Formal Complaint Appeals (relating to Higher Education)

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint please see the below routes of appeal:

- SHCG students may use the internal appeals process. Your appeal of complaint should be sent via email: feedback@shcg.ac.uk marked "FAO Chief Executive - Appeal of Complaint", within **five working days** of the original complaint response, outlining the reasons why you are not satisfied with the investigation and/or the outcomes.

An appeal will only be considered if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Evidence of a material administrative error or deviation from published policy and procedure.
- Evidence of some other material irregularity.
- New evidence not available at the time of the investigation that could materially affect the complaint investigator's decision.

The Chief Executive or nominated delegate's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

For University of Portsmouth (UoP) Programmes:

University of Portsmouth students must follow the University of Portsmouth's appeals route which can be found here: [UoP Appeals](#).

All HE students can appeal externally to either the **Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)** or the **Office for Students (OfS)** once you have exhausted the College and University's Appeal processes.

Once you have exhausted the college complaints process in full you will receive a 'Completion of Procedures' letter from us. You will need this if you wish to complain to the OIA.