



South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

Complaint and Feedback Policy

If you would like this document in an alternate format

Please contact the Human Resources Department

Prepared by:	Gavin Murray
Job Title/Role:	Deputy Principal
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Approved by:	SGS Further Education Corporation
Date:	22 January 2026

MANDATORY INITIAL IMPACT SCREENING	
I have read the guidance document: Completing a Policy Impact Assessment?	✓
If this policy raises equality, diversity or inclusion concerns, the Inclusion Committee has been consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If this policy raises environmental or sustainability issues, the Estates Team have been consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If this policy has been up-dated, please tick to confirm that the initial impact screening has also been reviewed:	✓



Please list each College Strategic Priority that this policy is designed to address/implement:	Community & Enjoyment
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EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
Characteristic	This policy seeks to:
Age	No appreciable impact
Disability	No appreciable impact
Faith or Belief	No appreciable impact
Gender	No appreciable impact
Race or Ethnicity	No appreciable impact
Orientation	No appreciable impact
Gender reassignment	No appreciable impact
Economic disadvantage	No appreciable impact
Rural isolation	No appreciable impact
Marriage	No appreciable impact
Pregnancy & maternity	No appreciable impact
Carers & care leavers	No appreciable impact
Vulnerable persons	No appreciable impact
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to maximise opportunities to improve diversity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:	
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to improve equality of opportunity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:	
Is there any possibility that this policy could operate in a discriminatory way?	<input type="checkbox"/> x
If you have ticked yes (red), which characteristic will be most affected? Choose an item.	
If yes please confirm that the Policy has been sent for a full Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment, and note the date:	✓ 10/09/2025

Note: if the policy does not seek to increase diversity or improve equality you should go back and review it before submitting it for approval.

MAPPING OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	
Which United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Right does this policy most protect:	Art. 40. Right to justice Art. 42 Right to know your rights Choose an item.
Which Human Right (HRA) does this policy most protect:	Choose an item. Choose an item.

DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY BY DESIGN SCREENING	
Tick to confirm that you have considered any data protection issues as part of the design and implementation of this policy; and that implementing this policy will <u>not</u> result in the collection, storage or processing of personal data outside of official College systems:	✓
Tick to indicated that this policy has or requires a Data Privacy Impact Assessment:	<input type="checkbox"/>

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT		
Does this policy relate directly or indirectly to any legal, regulatory environmental or sustainability standard(s)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If so, please list them:		
Will any aspects of this policy result in:		
Reduced miles travelled or provide / improve / promote alternatives to car based transport (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling car sharing, the use of low emission vehicles, community transport, environmentally friendly fuels and/or technologies)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduced waste, environmental hazards and/or toxic materials for example by reducing PVC, photocopier and printer use, air pollution, noise pollution, mining or deforestation? Or increase the amount of College waste that is recycled or composted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduced water consumption?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduced instances of single use plastic?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduced use of natural resources such as raw materials and energy to promote a circular economy?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Improved resource efficiency of new or refurbished buildings (water, energy, density, use of existing buildings, designing for a longer lifespan)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will this policy improve green space or access to green space?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please list the sections of this policy which specifically target an improved environment:		

Will any aspects of this policy result in:		
The promotion of healthy working lives (including health and safety at work, work-life/home-life balance and family friendly practices)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Greater employment opportunities for local people?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The promotion of ethical purchasing of goods or services for example by increasing transparency of modern slavery in our supply chain?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Greater support for the local economy through the use of local suppliers, SMEs or engagement with third sector or community groups?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The promotion of better health, increased community resilience, social cohesion, reduced social isolation or support for sustainable development?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mitigation of the likely effects of climate change (e.g. identifying proactive and community support for vulnerable groups; contingency planning for flood/snow, heatwaves and other weather extremes)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The promotion of better awareness of sustainability, healthy behaviours, mental wellbeing, living independently or self-management?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please list the sections of this policy which specifically target improved sustainability:		

What is the *estimated* carbon impact of this policy (in terms of tCO2e)	Increased (+tCO2e) <input type="checkbox"/>	Decreased (-tCO2e) <input type="checkbox"/>	Net Zero CO2 ⚙️
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Mandatory initial impact screening completed by:	Gavin Murray
Date	10/09/2025
Initial impact screening supported by (Please list everyone)	Jane Davis

Complaint Policy

1 Policy Summary

- 1.1 This Policy aims to ensure that complaints are handled fairly, confidentially, and promptly. Issues should be resolved locally first, then formally if needed, through a simple 3-step process, with a final appeal option always available. The policy excludes certain complaints but guarantees equal, respectful treatment for all. Feedback is used to improve services, and unresolved complaints can be escalated to external agencies.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 At South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, we believe that feedback is a powerful tool for safeguarding, improving, and building trust and transparency with those who use our services.
- 2.2 While we always strive to deliver the highest standards, we recognise that sometimes things go wrong. When they do, our aim is to investigate and resolve complaints in a fair, independent, and reasonable manner.

3 Principles we apply to the investigation and resolution of complaints

- 3.1 Our approach is inclusive. We will support individuals to ensure their voice is heard, investigate complaints in a proportionate and timely way, and communicate clearly using plain English. If you need help submitting a complaint, please email us at talktous@sgscol.ac.uk
- 3.2 Throughout the complaints process, we will act with fairness, independence, and confidentiality.
- 3.3 Whatever the outcome of a complaint, we will always seek to identify actions or recommendations that could improve the experience of our staff and learners.

4 Complaints covered by this policy

- 4.1 Anyone can use this policy to raise concerns about the standard of service we provide, the behaviour of our staff, or an action or lack of action by the College.

5 This policy does not cover

- 5.1 Complaints made anonymously.
- 5.2 Complaints about issues that occurred more than three months ago, except in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.3 Complaints based on covert recordings or conversations made without the informed consent of those involved.
- 5.4 Complaints about the subject matter or content of our curriculum (we can only accept complaints about how the curriculum is delivered)
- 5.5 Contractual or commercial disputes raised by individuals who are not learners.

- 5.6 Complaints about qualifications, assessments, exams, or tests (these should be made through our academic appeals process).
- 5.7 Matters subject to legal action.
- 5.8 Issues that are more appropriately investigated by the police (we will assess this on a case-by-case basis and explain our decision).
- 5.9 Safeguarding concerns (these are handled through the College's Safeguarding Procedures).

6 How to make a complaint – the procedure

Step 1 Early resolution at a local level

Most complaints should be resolved informally and as close to their point of origin as possible, either face-to-face or over the phone. You can find our contact details on [SGS College's contact page](#).

- If you're a student, speak to your teacher, tutor or assessor.
- If you're an SGS Create pupil, speak to your Head of Year or Pastoral Lead.
- If you're a parent, guardian, visitor, employer or prospective student, contact us and we'll connect you with the right member of staff.

All complaints will be listened to and taken seriously. We'll make every effort to help you resolve the issue.

If your complaint isn't resolved within ten College days, refer it to a Learning Area Manager (for curriculum-related matters) or the relevant Head of Department (for other College services).

If it remains unresolved after a further ten College days, you can move to Step 2 and submit a formal complaint.

Step 2 Raising a formal complaint.

If you feel your complaint hasn't been resolved through early local resolution, you can make a formal complaint.

However, if you've skipped Step 1 entirely, we may choose to reject your complaint and refer you back to the appropriate Learning Area Manager or Head of Department.

Formal complaints must be submitted in writing, ideally using our [Formal Complaint Form](#). You can collect a copy from any College reception desk or complete it online. You can also submit your complaint by email to talktous@sgscol.ac.uk, or by post to:

Complaints
SGS College
Filton Avenue

Bristol
BS34 7AT

Please provide clear and detailed reasons for your complaint, the outcome or resolution you are seeking, and include copies of any documents you wish to rely on.

All complaints are logged by our complaints team and we aim to acknowledge receipt within five College days.

In the first instance, your complaint will be forwarded to the relevant manager, usually a Learning Area Manager or Head of Department, to see if it can be resolved quickly.

If your complaint requires further investigation, which we will assess at our discretion, it will be assigned to an impartial manager appointed by the College.

We aim to provide a full written response within 30 College days. In more complex cases, this may take longer. If we need to extend the timeframe, we will explain why and keep you updated on our progress.

Step 3 Appeal, a review of your Formal Complaint

Whilst our aim is to resolve all complaints fairly and reasonably, we understand that you may still be dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint.

Once you have received the outcome letter, you have the right to request an appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

- You believe we did not follow the complaints procedure correctly.
- You believe part of your original complaint was not investigated fully.
- You have new, important evidence that was not available during the original investigation.
- You believe the findings of the investigation do not match the outcome provided.

Please note: You cannot appeal simply because you disagree with the outcome.

Your appeal should clearly explain the reasons for your appeal, based on at least one of the grounds listed above. You should not repeat your original complaint but instead highlight any part of the investigation or outcome that you believe to be inadequate.

If you wish to appeal (take Step 3), you must notify us within five College days of receiving your formal complaint outcome letter (Step 2).

A member of the College's Senior Leadership Team, who was not involved in the original investigation, will be appointed to conduct the Step 3 appeal and review your complaint.

You will be informed in writing of the outcome of your appeal within 20 College days. This decision is final and marks the end of the College's internal complaints process. There is no further right of appeal.

7 Expectations

- 7.1 We will not treat you less favourably because you made a complaint, and we will not treat you differently because of your sex, marital status, family status, gender (including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, ethnicity or nationality, disability, religious or political beliefs, trade union affiliation, or other characteristics such as age or communication difficulties.
- 7.2 Your wellbeing is important to us. If you feel the need to make a complaint, we will treat you with courtesy, fairness and respect, and we trust that you will do the same in your interactions with the College.
- 7.3 If a complaint is made in a rude or disrespectful manner, the College may choose to stop considering it. We will also stop considering complaints that we believe are frivolous or vexatious. If this happens, we will explain our decision.
- 7.4 Complaints will not usually be considered from people who have outstanding fees owed to the College.

8 External Agencies

- 8.1 In the unlikely event that you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, once you have completed the 3 Steps as outlined above, you may be able to take the matter further with one of the following external agencies:

Complaints concerning a further education course, may be directed to the Department for Education (DfE): <https://customerhelpportal.education.gov.uk/>
The DfE will not consider complaints unless they have been fully considered by the College first.

Complaints concerning our higher education courses, can be directed to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator
<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/how%20to-complain-to-us/>

If you are an adult learner on a West of England Combined Authority (WECA) funded course, a complaint may be directed to [WECA follow on page](#)

9 Confidentiality

- 9.1 All complaints received by the College will be handled confidentially, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, however we may share complaint details and personal data internally to help investigate the issue.

- 9.2 In some cases, we may need to share complaint information and personal data with the police or other relevant agencies. If this is necessary, we will do so in accordance with our Safeguarding and other procedures.
- 9.3 If a complaint involves a member of College staff, the investigation may follow our Disciplinary Procedures and other relevant policies. Outcomes of disciplinary proceedings are confidential and will not be shared with the complainant.

10 Recording and monitoring feedback

- 10.1 We record all feedback we receive to help us understand what we're doing well and where we can improve. This information is shared annually with our Governing Body, Executive Team, and Senior Leadership Team, who oversee and monitor the College's performance.

11 Compliments and Suggestion

- 11.1 If you have any other feedback you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you.
- 11.2 If you're a current student or member of staff, you can ask your Learner or Staff Representative to raise your feedback at a Voice of the Learner or Staff Forum meeting. If you're not a current student or staff member, you can contact us by emailing talktous@sgscol.ac.uk, or by completing our [Compliments and Suggestions](#) form online.