



Complaints Policy

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March 2024	Vice Principal (Operations)	March 2025

1. Overview Statement

KLDC Sixth aims to provide a high standard of service in all aspects of its provision.

Most people who access the KLDC Sixth's site and courses do not experience any problems. However, KLDC Sixth recognises that sometimes things can go wrong, and when they do, KLDC Sixth would like to know about it so that it can be put right. KLDC Sixth is committed to taking prompt action to ensure that it achieves its aim of providing a high-quality service. The aim of the Complaints Policy is to give a quick yet thorough response that answers all concerns appropriately.

A Designated Complaints Officer (DCO) is responsible for the appropriate handling of all complaints at the college. The DCO will ensure matters are resolved as quickly as possible in line with the KLDC Sixth's Complaints Policy.

KLDC Sixth annually reviews the nature and number of all complaints. The monitoring and review of complaints contributes to the process of self-assessment leading to an improved quality of service.

2. Definition of a Complaint

KLDC Sixth defines a complaint as follows:

“An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more stakeholders about KLDC Sixth’s action or lack of action or about the standard of service provided by KLDC Sixth or on its behalf which has had a negative effect on the complainant’s experience.”

Complaints involving safeguarding matters, additional learning needs (ALN), disclosure of matters of public interest, serious concerns such as alleged fraud, maladministration or unlawful activities should be directed to the DCO immediately for referral to take place under the appropriate policy and be referred to the Vice Principal (Education).

Following initial review, complaints regarding the conduct of a member of staff will be dealt with in accordance with the KLDC Sixth’s policies and procedures if appropriate. For reasons of confidentiality, no information will be provided about any actions, which KLDC Sixth may take in relation to a member of staff.

Complaints that relate to academic content prescribed by the Awarding Body should be addressed by the Awarding Bodies complaints policy and procedures.

A complaint is **not**:

- a routine first time request for a service
- a request for information, or an explanation of policy, or practice
- a disagreement with an academic judgement/ assessment decision
- claim for compensation
- issues that are in court, or have already been heard by a court, or tribunal
- disagreement with a decision where a right of appeal exists, for example the academic appeals process
- a request for information under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts
- a grievance by a member of staff
- an attempt to reopen or reconsider a complaint that has been concluded or given a final decision on

3. Complaints Handling Procedure

Who can make a Complaint?

Anyone who uses KLDC Sixth’s services can make a complaint.

The Timeliness of a Complaint

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All complaints should be submitted no more than four months after the last occurrence of the issue leading to the complaint.

How to make a Complaint

If an individual wishes to make a formal complaint they must detail that complaint in writing to the Vice Principal (Education) who will forward it to the DCO.

Full address, contact number and email address details should be included in the complaint letter. This will ensure that the DCO sends any correspondence to the correct address.

The following Vice Principal (Education)ings should be used in a letter of complaint:

1. What has happened
2. When it happened
3. Who was involved
4. What outcome or remedy will satisfy you

Please ensure that you clearly identify the main points of your complaint.

Contact details:

Laura Griffiths, Vice Principal (Education)

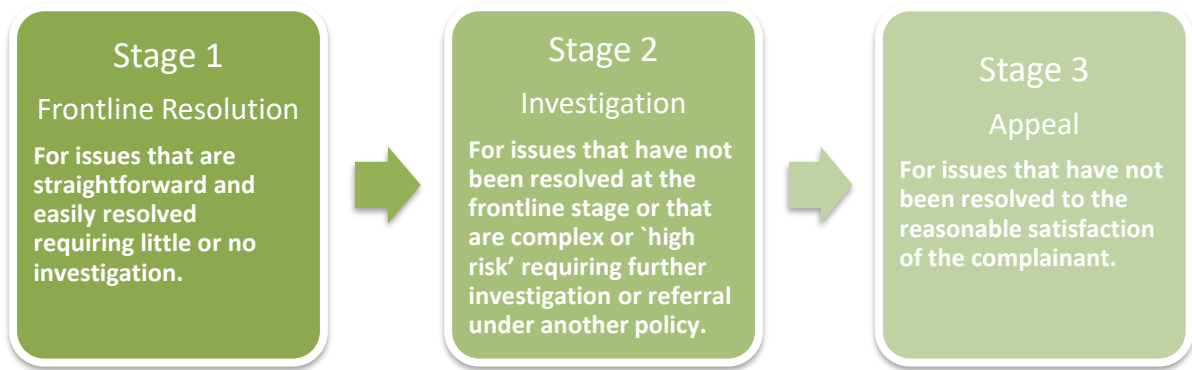
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Three Stage Procedure

KLDC Sixth will adopt a three-stage procedure for dealing with complaints:

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Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution

For issues that are straightforward and easily resolved requiring little or no investigation.

A KLDC Sixth Manager will review the complaint and discuss the issues with the appropriate parties.

KLDC Sixth will aim to resolve the complaint normally within 5 working days.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, they must notify the DCO. The complaint will then progress to Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Investigation

For issues that have not been resolved at the frontline or that are complex or 'high risk' requiring further investigation or referral under another policy.

The complaint will be formally investigated by the DCO who will provide a report with recommendations and findings. For students with additional learning needs (ALN), advice should primarily be sought from the Support for Learning team.

The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter normally within 5 working days.

KLDC Sixth will aim to provide a full written response normally within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. If the investigation is ongoing, the DCO will inform the complainant.

With complaints which are dealt with under Safeguarding procedures, no information will be provided about any actions which KLDC Sixth may take in relation to a member of staff.



Stage 3 – Appeal

For issues that have not been resolved to the reasonable satisfaction of the complainant.

If the outcome of the investigation does not reasonably satisfy the expectation of the complainant, they may opt to appeal. The right of appeal may only be considered:

- if there is new evidence, which was not made available at an earlier stage
- or where the complainant feels that the investigation was not carried out fairly or thoroughly
- and/or the findings were not borne out by the evidence

The complainant must appeal in writing to the Vice Principal (Education) and this must be within 15 working days of receiving KLDC Sixth's response. A member of the Leadership Team will chair an appeal hearing. The hearing will consider all the documentation relating to the Stage 2 investigation and any new evidence provided by the complainant. The person who chairs the appeal will send a written response to the appellant normally within 15 working days of hearing the appeal.

A complainant has the right to bring someone with them to the appeal hearing e.g. a student union representative, a friend, a family member or advocate; however, they are not permitted to bring a legal representative.

Ideally, an appeal meeting will take place normally 10 working days after the appeal notice is received.

In the absence of the complainant, an appeal panel may opt to hear an appeal if suitable notice has been given. The findings must be recorded, and the complainant notified of the outcome.

The outcome of the appeal will be the final decision of KLDC Sixth.

Handling of Anonymous Complaints

KLDC Sixth values all feedback and this means that all complaints including anonymous submissions will be treated appropriately and action taken to consider them further, wherever it is correct to do so. In principle, KLDC Sixth will consider an anonymous complaint if there is sufficient information to be able to make further enquiries. If sufficient information is not available the complaint will be recorded and no further action (NFA) taken. A judgement not to pursue an anonymous complaint will be made by the DCO.

Vexatious Complaints

A vexatious complaint can be defined as manifestly, unjustified, inappropriate, or improper use of a formal procedure.

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Complainants will be advised by the DCO where it is felt that the nature or number of complaints made by them is deemed to be vexatious. The DCO will seek advice on this determination from the Vice Principal (Education).

Recording, Monitoring and Reporting Complaint

KLDC Sixth will record all complaints systematically; this enables KLDC Sixth to carry out management reporting.

The DCO will record and monitor all complaints. The following details will be recorded:

- Date received
- Date closed
- The complainant
- A summary of the complaint
- The category into which it falls
- The complaint's outcome at each stage
- Any other information deemed relevant.

KLDC Sixth produces termly reports on complaints and an annual report. KLDC Sixth will keep copies of complaints for two academic years. In some circumstances, KLDC Sixth may be required to keep records for a longer period e.g., insurance claim.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually.

KLDC Sixth Complaints Process Flow Chart

