

Procedure - Talkback

Scope

This Procedure applies to all stakeholders of City College Plymouth including collaborative partners (students / parents / guardians / employers / visitors).

The College aims to make this an easy process. Talkback submissions should be made as soon as possible after the event, action or issue which prompted the feedback.

If the stakeholder has been unable to resolve any issue informally they may wish to use the Talkback Procedure.

Statement

The College is committed to providing a quality service and achieving the highest standard of conduct. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our customers.

The aim of the Talkback Procedure is to ensure a speedy solution to the issues raised and where necessary make service improvements that will benefit all our customers.

Key Points

Separate Procedures apply for the following:

- Internal Verification / Moderation Appeals Procedure. When the matter relates to internal assessment decisions.
- Student Disciplinary Procedure / Harassment Policy. When the matter relates to issues or concerns between students.
The College expects that individuals will not engage in frivolous or malicious complaints and this intent may prove grounds for disciplinary actions against the complainant.
- Student Anti Bullying Policy and Procedure. When the matter relates to Bullying, which is deemed unacceptable within the College.

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Process

Stage One - Informal

Any person with a talkback issue are invited to discuss the matter first with an appropriate member of staff. In the case of students this would be their Personal Tutor, Lecturer or Student Services. They will respond with advice and guidance as how to proceed from this point to resolve the issue raised.

The College encourages stakeholders to try and resolve their dissatisfaction through open and informal procedures in the first instance.

Stage Two - Formal

If the person is not satisfied with the outcome or does not wish to discuss the matter first with an appropriate member of staff, they should contact the Talkback Coordinator via one of the below methods;

- Telephone 01752 305119
- Fax 01752 305341
- Email Complaints@cityplym.ac.uk
- Letter addressed to the Talkback Coordinator
- In person to office K025
- Talk Back Form which can be found at various points throughout the College (Reception / Student Services) and the College website www.cityplym.ac.uk

Receipt of the Talkback form will be acknowledged within 5 working days from when we receive the details.

The Talkback correspondence will then be copied to the relevant manager responsible for the area within which the feedback has arisen and a full investigation will be carried out.

We shall reply within 10 working days with a full response outlining the outcomes of the investigation. If it is not possible to give a full reply within this time – for instance, because a detailed enquiry is still taking place – we will issue an interim response, explaining what is being done to deal with the issue, when a full reply can be expected and from whom. Where a concern or complaint is not upheld reasons will be given as to why this is so.

In particular cases we may think it beneficial to arrange a case conference in order to try to manage and resolve issues in a quicker manner for all parties involved.

- If the issue is about a member of staff and has the potential to lead to implementation of the Staff Disciplinary or Capability Procedures, then the Talkback Coordinator will discuss the issues with the Human Resources team, who may then carry out the investigation under their provisions.

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- If the issue is regarding Equality and Diversity then the matter will be referred to the College's Equality Assurance Steering Group.
- If the issue is regarding a Safe Guarding issue then the matter will be referred to Phil Smale, Safe Guarding Coordinator.
- If the issue relates to any legal issues then Tracey Walters, Legal and Risk Officer, will be informed.

In general the subject of a complaint has the right to know what is being claimed and who is making the complaint. There are on occasion's exceptions to this rule (eg. Where there are valid concerns as to personal safety)

Where feedback is put in writing a copy will be supplied to the person who is the subject of the concern.

All staff are under an obligation not to allow feedback by a student to have any impact on the way that student is treated, marked or assessed

Stage Three - Appeals

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome noted in the response letter they should appeal the decision in writing to the Director of Quality, within 20 working days from the date of the letter received. Closure will not be reversed if we do not hear any response after this time.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome noted in the response letter from the Director of Quality they should appeal the decision in writing to Mrs Viv Gillespie, Principal, within 20 working days from the date of the letter received. Closure will not be reversed if we do not hear any response after this time.

NB. If the issue relates to one of the people outlined in this process it will be dealt with by another person of equal or greater status assigned by their direct Line Manager.

The information from complaints is passed to the policy makers in the form of reports to Principalship, Senior Management, Academic Board, and the Corporation

Author(s): Talkback Coordinator
Enquiries to: Talkback Coordinator

GUIDANCE

Title: Talkback Procedure

Context

This Procedure supports the standards and practices identified in the College Vision, Mission, and Values Statement, College Charter and Strategic Plan. It identifies the College's commitment to fulfilling the requirements of the Learning and Skills Act and takes particular account of relevant legislation and Government ministries

Common Inspection Framework reference:

How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement? (Question C5)

“To make their judgements, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which;

- The provider implements and monitors an effective strategy to involve learners and employers in the decision making of the organisation.
- The views of different user groups are sought and acted upon to plan, manage and improve the provision.
- External partnerships are promoted to ensure the needs of learners at all levels are met.”

Inspectors will look for:

- The extent to which all groups of learners and individuals have the opportunity to give their views on the provision they are receiving.

Supplementary Documentation

Internal:

- College Charter
- Student Guide
- Quality Improvement Policy
- Talkback Form
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Internal Verification / Moderation Appeals Procedure
- Guidance on the Learner Experience Intranet site - Talkback
- College website

External:

- 'How to deal with complaints' - Service First, Cabinet Office
- Common Inspection Framework 2009
- Handbook for Inspecting Colleges 2009
- Framework for Excellence

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Implementation

The Director of Quality is responsible for the implementation of this policy

The processes involved will include:

- Changes in procedure communicated to staff via the Staff Bulletin and College Management Team
- Procedures plus information and guidance for staff placed on the intranet
- Staff development activities including staff induction to raise awareness
- Support and monitoring activities to facilitate implementation
- Review meetings at all levels will include implementation of procedures
- Reports to the Senior Management Team

POLICY CONTROL

Policy Title: Talkback Procedure

Author(s):	Talkback Coordinator
Approving Body:	Senior Management Team
Monitoring Officer:	Director of Quality
Review & Evaluation Body:	Senior Management Team

Targets for Continuous Quality Improvement:

- To respond to all complaints received within 10 working days
- To resolve all complaints in a satisfactory manner for the complainant
- To implement improved services in order to reduce repeat complaints

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation:

This policy will be monitored and reviewed through:

- Reports to CMT
- Complaints Service Standard monitoring / Self Assessment process

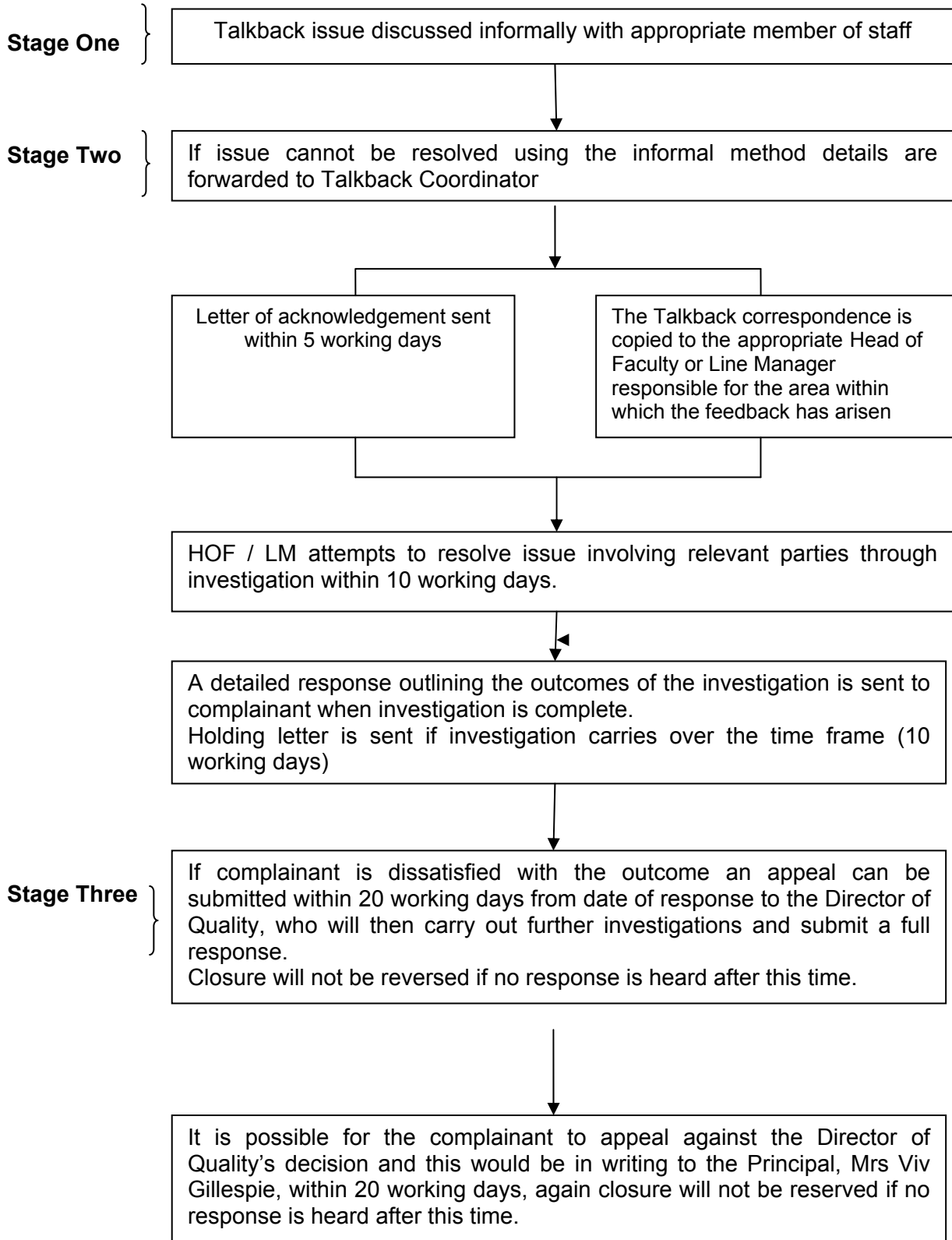
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Dates of review:

Issue Date	November 2000
First Review	2002
Second Review	February 2006
Third Review	May 2008
Fourth Review	August 2010
Fifth Review	September 2011
Next Review Date	September 2012

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Talkback Flow Chart identifying the three stages of the investigation



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INITIAL SCREENING - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Name of strategy, policy, procedure, practice or provision

Talkback Procedure

2. The person responsible for this screening? This should be the person able to make changes to the strategy, policy, procedure, practice or provision

Name: E Ball	Telephone: 5119
Roles: Talkback Coordinator	E-mail: Complaints@cityplym.ac.uk
Team: LET	Date of screening: N/A

3. Briefly, what is the purpose of this strategy, policy, procedure, practice or provision?

The College is committed to providing a quality service and achieving the highest standard of conduct. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our customers

4. Who will implement this item?

All College staff to varying degrees

5. Is this a new or existing strategy, policy, procedure, practice or provision?

NEW / EXISTING (please highlight or circle the one applicable)

6. Who is likely to be affected by it?

Students who wish to comment on any aspect of the College's provision

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7. Who has been consulted on this?

	Yes	No
Trade unions		√
Students	√	
Representatives of disadvantaged groups.	Only those within the student body	
External bodies	√	
Other – if so who		√

8. What evidence have you used for this screening? Consider internal and external data

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External validation of the policy and processes • Views of students past and present • Best practice in DDA compliant presentation • Self assessment and external assessment • Statistics of take-up
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9. What impact would this item have on different groups?

		Positive	Negative	Neutral	No or insufficient Evidence
Could any group be adversely affected?	Age		√		
	Disability			√	
	Ethnicity		√		
	Gender			√	
	Religion/belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
Could it help promote equal opportunities for any of these groups?	Age	√			
	Disability	√			
	Ethnicity	√			
	Gender	√			
	Religion/belief	√			
	Sexual orientation	√			
Would it	Age			√	

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affect good relations between groups?	Disability			√	
	Ethnicity			√	
	Gender			√	
	Religion/belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
Would it eliminate harassment of individuals from these groups?					
Would it encourage participation in public life?	Age	√			
	Disability	√			
	Ethnicity	√			
	Gender	√			
	Religion/belief	√			
	Sexual orientation	√			

10. If you have identified that this item might have a negative impact on any group you need to carry out a full impact assessment. Should a full assessment be carried out?

YES / NO (please highlight or circle the one applicable)

11. If you have identified a negative impact in question 9 please complete this section

Are there any related strategies, policies, procedures, practices or provision that need to be assessed alongside this screening?	YES	NO
If so, which ones?		

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We have carried out an initial screening of this policy and procedure and a full Impact Assessment is required

Signed by:

Date: August 2010

Name E Ball

Role: Talkback Coordinator

Countersigned by:

Date: August 2010

Name / Role: Director of Quality

Date for Next Review: August 2012

The Complaints policy was reviewed in September 2010 and the EIA was considered to still be a current document relevant to the policy.

An electronic copy must be sent to Equality Assurance Officer and will be published on the College webpage and intranet

The original signed paper copy and an electronic copy should be kept by the signatory

Equality Impact Assessment – Full Assessment Template

This template can be used to record your progress in completing a full equality impact assessment of a policy, procedure or project for one equality group and will be useful when you come to write your report.

<p>What is the policy (name and brief description)? Talkback Procedure The College is committed to providing a quality service and achieving the highest standard of conduct. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our customers</p>
<p>What equality group(s) is this full equality impact assessment for? Age ✓ Disability ✓ Gender ✓ Race ✓ Religion Sexual Orientation</p>

Step	Activity		
1	<p>The College is committed to providing a quality service and achieving the highest standard of conduct. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our customers</p>		
	<p>Examples of relevant issues</p>		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Policy is required by the LSC / College ➤ Who implements the policy? All staff to varying degrees ➤ Who is responsible for the policy? Talkback Coordinator ➤ What are the specific outcomes you hope to see from the policy? Hearing and responding to the views of clients, improving our service ➤ What criteria will you use to measure progress towards these outcomes? Self assessment data including information from feedback system and survey surveys 		
	<p>Comments</p>		
2	<p>Consider the evidence (See Q&A on monitoring in Appendix C)</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What information do you have to assess that the policy benefits all groups? Statistics are reported in Self Assessment and Improvement Reports ➤ Is the available information sufficiently detailed to permit analysis of disparities between individual categories? Yes ➤ Is the information up to date, relevant and reliable? Yes ➤ Do you need to hold an informal consultation exercise internally or externally at this stage? Yes internally ➤ Are there other Units or organisations that might want to join you in commissioning new data or research or consultation exercises? No 		
	<p>Comments</p>		

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3	<p>Assess likely impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does your analysis of the policy indicate possible adverse impact on some groups Yes those with learning difficulties and disabilities, international students, partnership and part-time students ➤ Are any disparities in the data statistically significant, and not due to chance? No ➤ Are there other factors that might help to explain the adverse impact? Level of understanding, cultural differences, access to College information ➤ Could the policy be amended to better promote equality of opportunity or meet the positive duties? Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) by providing a simpler version and one in widgets, by increasing the means of publicising the policy to include posters at entrances and in Learning Resources Service areas plus inclusion on the Student Union moodle site and a dedicated moodle site with a complaints forum b) Partnership Manager to improve information for these students c) International Office to action and evidence its extra support to enable international students to understand the policy and procedure
	<p>Comments</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Talkback Coordinator to take the actions forward for each academic year.</p>
4	<p>Consider alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Would changes to the policy, or the way it is put into practice, remove or substantially reduce the impact? Changes proposed in 3. above ➤ What changes could be introduced to reduce the adverse impact identified above? Changes proposed in 3. above ➤ What changes could you introduce to promote equality of opportunity? Changes proposed in 3. above ➤ Are there aspects to your proposals that could be changed, or could you take additional measures, to reduce or remove adverse impact on a particular group, without affecting the policy's overall aims? Yes ➤ Could this unintentionally result in disadvantaging another group? No because it widens the audience and helps understanding ➤ Would you be able to justify this, on balance? N/A
5	<p>Consult formally</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you identified all the groups affected by the policy, directly and indirectly? Yes ➤ Which organisations and individuals are likely to have a legitimate interest in the policy? Students, the College, the LSC, employers, inspectorate ➤ What methods of consultation are most likely to succeed in attracting the people you want to reach? Focus groups and questionnaires plus moodle sites ➤ Have previous attempts to consult particular communities been unsuccessful? If so, why, and what can you do to overcome any obstacles? No ➤ Have you made resources available to encourage full participation by groups that have proved hard to reach? Yes <p>How will information, pre and post consultation, be made available Through the Improvement Reports and Complaints Moodle site</p>
6	<p>Decide whether the policy needs to be revised or amended in the light of the consultation</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does the consultation show that the policy will have an adverse impact on a particular group (or groups)? Yes ➤ Is it likely to make it difficult to promote equal opportunities or good relations between different groups? Individuals rather than categories of people ➤ Can the policy be revised or additional measures taken, so that it achieves its aims, but without risking any adverse impact? Yes ➤ What are the main findings of your consultations, and what weight should they carry? Some student groups may be disadvantaged. Increased means of dissemination and feedback should address these concerns
7	<p>Make monitoring arrangements (You are required to monitor the impact of all equality relevant policies.)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How will the policy be monitored Through an annual review, Improvement Report and Learner Feedback ➤ What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed? (Annually is recommended) Annual Complaints Survey ➤ Will the monitoring include qualitative methods, such as surveys, or follow-up consultations? Yes ➤ How will the effects of the policy on equality of opportunity and good relations be monitored? See above and at review ➤ What criteria will be used to assess these? See above <p>How will any concerns be taken into account in any review of the policy? See above</p>
8	<p>Publish assessment report</p>

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Responsibility of the Complaints and Administration Officer to pass the completed policy and assessment documents to the Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) for uploading onto the College website and intranet
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Any other information or comments:

Relevant dates:

Complaints survey September 2007

Stakeholder Satisfaction Improvement Report January 2008 / April 2008 / July 2008

Name and contact details for responsible person: Emily Ball

email eball@cityplym.ac.uk

telephone: 01752 305119

Please retain a copy of this form and any data you used to undertake the exercise as it may be required for quality control and compliance monitoring purposes. The information will help you to write up your impact assessment report for publishing.

Completed impact assessment reports should be published internally in your intranet site in the same place as the published policy or procedure and you should forward a copy to the Equality and Diversity Office for external publishing