



Grievance procedure for students

1. Introduction

It is recognised that grievances can arise when a student is unhappy about their personal situation regarding their course, or in their dealings with other students or with staff, and that a speedy resolution of such grievances is in the interests of all concerned.

This procedure aims to bring about the rapid resolution of grievances, without recourse to formal proceedings wherever possible. It applies to all students of the College.

Nothing in this procedure impinges on the legal rights or obligations of staff and students.

Grievances will be regarded as confidential but you must be aware that individuals concerned will need to be interviewed if the grievance is to be resolved.

Grievances which are anonymous or based on rumour cannot be investigated.

The College reserves the right to take disciplinary action against any student whose grievance is found to be based on false allegations.

2. Equality and Diversity Statement

Bedford College is committed to the promotion and development of equality and diversity. We aim to provide a working and learning environment which values individuals equally regardless of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious belief or trade union membership.

This procedure is implemented in accordance with our policies on equality and diversity, disability and race equality, and is subject to an equality and diversity impact assessment. Decisions/actions taken in relation to a student grievance are not influenced by the student's background or situation, and each case is dealt with on its own merits.

3. Every Child Matters

The College has regard to the general health and well-being of our students. It seeks to follow the principles enshrined in the Government's Every Child Matters agenda, and this procedure is underpinned in particular by the 'enjoy and achieve' and 'stay safe' outcomes.

4. Informal procedure

If you have a grievance, before invoking the formal procedure every effort should be made to resolve the issue informally by raising your concerns with the person(s) involved, with your personal tutor or with a member of staff from Student Services who will help and advise. If this does not lead to a satisfactory outcome, or if you feel unable to discuss the matter with the person(s) involved, you may opt to invoke the formal grievance procedure.

If the grievance has been resolved informally, no record will be kept on file unless both parties wish to have a note of what has been agreed.

Issues relating to bullying/harassment should be raised in the first instance with the Student Services. A Student Counsellor will work with you to resolve the situation through mediation.

5. Formal procedure

You may proceed from one stage of the procedure to the next only within the time scales detailed in each stage. If, other than by mutual agreement, the time allowed for any stage has elapsed and no decision has been taken to proceed to the next stage, then the matter is closed.

Stage 1

If the matter has not been resolved informally to your satisfaction, you should arrange to see a member of the Student Services team who will establish with you the nature of your grievance. The Student Services Adviser will make a written record of the grievance on the Grievance Form (see attached), to be signed by you to confirm that this is an accurate representation. The form will be passed to the Director of Student Services for action.

Stage 2

If your grievance is against another student

The Grievance Form will be submitted within two working days to the appropriate Centre Director or Assistant Director. The Director/Assistant Director will send you a letter of acknowledgement within five working days and conduct an investigation.

Following investigation, written notification of the outcome will be given as soon as possible, normally within ten working days of the grievance being notified. The written notification will include reasons for the outcome, your right of appeal and an explanation of the appeal procedure.

If your grievance is against a member of staff

Your grievance will be referred immediately to the Director of Quality and Marketing who will investigate the matter through the College complaints procedure. All subsequent dealings will be with the Quality Department, to whom enquiries should be addressed.

6. Appeals

If you wish to appeal against the outcome of your grievance you should do so in writing within ten working days of the decision being notified. Your letter will explain who to write to.

The outcome of the appeal will be notified to you in writing within a further five working days.

It is your right to seek advice from outside the College at any stage of the proceedings.

7. Monitoring

The conduct of investigations and responses to grievances will be monitored by the Director of Student Services and reported quarterly to the Director of Quality and Marketing.

8. Further information

You may also find the following leaflets helpful. They are available from Student Services:

- Dealing with bullying and harassment – a guide for students
- Complaints – how to let us know what you think
- Racial harassment is a crime
- Bedford College equality and diversity, disability and race equality policies.

Lesley Ferguson
Director of Student Services
December 2006

Issued December 1999
Revised December 2006
(Student)



Student Services

Grievance Form

Full details of complaint

**Issued December 1999
Revised December 2006
(Student)**