



LSI Independent College Complaints Procedure 2023-2024

LSI Independent College prides itself on the quality of the teaching, accommodation and pastoral care.

This quality is monitored through academic and accommodation questionnaires in the first week and at the end of the course, through regular tutorials with students, the student council and an open door policy. As such, we take a proactive approach to ensuring students are happy in their tuition.

Any issues arising from these are identified and a resolution sought by the management team. Parents are informed of any problems as early as possible in the hope of a swift resolution. However, if students or parents are still unhappy, all issues will be treated seriously. The procedure for making and resolving complaints is displayed in the building.

Once a complaint has reached the level of the Principal a written record is kept on file, noting the details of the complaint and the eventual resolution.

This policy is available on the school website and a paper copy is available in school upon request.

LSI College has the following three-stage procedure.

1. Stage One is the process for dealing with informal complaints
2. Stage Two is the process for dealing with formal complaints or complaints that cannot be resolved informally.
3. Stage Three allows for the appointing of a panel of three people for a hearing of the complaint and the evidence if the earlier formal steps have not resulted in a resolution; one of the panel will be completely independent of the management of the College.

Stage One

Parents/guardians may telephone or email the College at any time to raise a concern or make a complaint. They should telephone the College Reception on 0207 794 8111, asking for the student's Director of Studies. Alternatively, the parent/guardian may contact the Director of Studies directly via e-mail. The Director of Studies will respond to the parent by telephone or email as soon as possible. This response would normally be made on the same day. If measures suggested by the Director of Studies cannot immediately resolve the problem or if the matter is more complicated, the Director of

Studies will seek advice from the Vice Principal or the Principal. Communication will continue between the Director of Studies and the parent/guardian until the issue is settled. This stage should be completed within three working days from when the complaint was receipt. Records of informal complaints may be kept confidentially for management purposes to enable patterns of concern to be tracked.

Stage Two

If the procedures outlined above do not result in resolution, if the parents/guardians are dissatisfied with the College's reponse, or if the complaint is of a more serious nature, the parents/guardians will be requested to put the complaint in writing. This would then be submitted to the Vice Principal and/or the Principal. A through investigation of the complaint will be carried out in the College by one or more members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Discussions with the student concerned and teachers involved may need to take place. Discretion and confidentiality should be borne in mind during this process. This investigation will be completed within three working days from receipt of the written complaint. The parents will be informed of any conclusions by telephone or email. Depending on the outcome, the parents/guardians may be invited for a further discussion with the Principal and a member of the SLT.

A formal response to the complaint, detailing how it was investigated and concluded will be written and sent to the parents. A copy, along with the original complaint, will be kept securely and confidentially in the student's file and the Complaints Log. The Stage Two process will be completed within 10 working days of the formal written complaint being received. The SLT will consider if any steps could be taken to prevent or guard against the problem arising again. Giving due care to confidentiality and if it is appropriate, other members of staff and the student body will be notified of any resulting changes to College policies or procedures.

Stage Three

If parents/guardians remain dissatisfied with the formal written response to the original complaint, the Principal may appoint a panel of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint; one of the panel will be totally independent of the management of the College. Parents will be invited to attend a panel hearing to discuss the issue. They may be accompanied by a third party if they so wish. A panel hearing will follow the procedure below:

- The complainant will be invited to outline their complaint;
- Witnesses may be called in to support the complainant;
- The Principal will have the opportunity to question the complainant and/or witnesses;
- Witnesses may be called to support the Principal;
- The complainant may question the Principal and/or witnesses;
- The panel may ask questions at any point;
- Both parties leave while the panel deliberates in confidence;
- The meeting will be minuted.

The panel will make its conclusions known and may make recommendations. The panel will decide whether the complaint has been adequately dealt with by the College at Stage Two or whether further measures are necessary. Copies of the findings of the panel will be sent to the complainant and, if applicable, to the person complained about. Findings and recommendations will be stored confidentially and securely in the student's file and in the Complaints Log. Any subsequent response from the Principal to the complainant may include any of the following:

- An apology;
- A clear acknowledgement that the College has been at fault;
- An explanation of the steps that are being taken to avoid such a problem in the future;
- An explanation of any misunderstanding on the part of the complainant about what may have happened;
- A clarification of College policy, if necessary;
- Any actions that may help in providing the complainant with redress. If this response is given verbally, it should be followed up with a written reply.

The maximum timescale for resolution of complaints involving a panel hearing is 20 working days from a request being received for a complaint to proceed to Stage Three. Any correspondence, statements, initial minutes or panel hearing minutes, along with any other written record at any stage of the complaint, will be stored confidentially and securely in the student's file and in the Complaints Log.

Details of the complaint may have to be shared with inspectors from Ofsted, if this information be requested as part of a College inspection. It will be recorded whether the complaint is resolved at the formal stage or whether it proceeded to a panel hearing.

Further Action

There may be times when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to revisit the same issue, the Principal will inform them in writing that all the procedures have been and that the matter has been resolved at College level.

Reviewed by Seán P Buckley: June 2023

Next Review: August 2024