



# Complaints and Compliments Policy

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Approving Directors		J. Booth, D.Pheasey, B.Swallow	
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## **Introduction**

Beltane College is committed to providing holistic education and wellbeing, of the highest quality and this policy is underpinned by the college culture and values.

**Confidence**– We are enthusiastic, we act authentically and with purpose

**Fairness** – Showing care through our interactions and tackling inequalities

**Integrity** – We are honest, trustworthy and dependable; we do what we say we will do

**Teamwork** – We achieve more together and remain mindful of everyone’s wellbeing.

## **Policy intent and scope**

This policy is intended to guide students, parents and carers, and visitors to understand the process in making a complaint or compliment regarding any aspect of Beltane College practice, and what they can expect from us at each stage.

Staff members who wish to make a complaint should refer to the staff grievance policy.

## **Audit and Governance**

Complaints are tracked by college managers and reported to Governors on an annual basis. A Governor will be invited to sit on the panel hearing for formal complaints or complaints that have been escalated to the formal stage, as part of the appeals process.

## **The process**

### **Stage 1 – Informal Complaints**

Informal complaints refer to routine comments, concerns, or compliments raised in relation to day-to-day experiences. These matters are typically addressed through constructive dialogue and prompt action. The process aims to foster a positive educational environment and ensure individual wellbeing and academic progress.

### **Resolution Approach**

- Informal complaints are resolved through verbal feedback and by agreeing on a mutually acceptable course of action.
- Such conversations may acknowledge effective practices that contribute to student progress and wellbeing.

### **Record-Keeping**

- Where appropriate, comments and outcomes that inform an action or relate to an individual student's progress are documented on the student's record.

### **Handling Feedback on Staff or Practice**

- Concerns or commendations regarding individual staff members or institutional practices will be addressed by the directors.

Outcomes of the informal complaints will not be reported back to the complainant but will be reported to Governors to ensure that responses have been reasonable and proportionate.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Complaints**

Formal complaints represent serious concerns that require a structured and documented approach to resolution. This process ensures transparency, fairness, and timely communication.

#### **Submitting a Formal Complaint**

- Formal complaints must be submitted in writing and addressed to the Campus Manager via email.
- Students and parents may request support to draft a formal complaint; however, the content must be expressed in the complainant's own words, free from external influence or embellishment.

#### **Escalation Pathways**

- If the complaint concerns the Campus Manager, it should be addressed to The Directors and submitted via: [ContactUs@BeltaneCollege.co.uk](mailto:ContactUs@BeltaneCollege.co.uk)
- If the complaint involves a director, it should be addressed to The Chair of Governors using the same email address.

#### **Acknowledgment of Receipt**

- Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Campus Manager (or relevant recipient) will acknowledge receipt within 24 hours by email. This acknowledgment will include information about the next steps in the process.

#### **Investigation Process**

The resolution process may involve the following steps:

- A phone call to clarify the nature of the complaint and better understand the concern.
- Meetings with relevant parties to explore the context and gather information.

- A period of review to evaluate all perspectives before determining the appropriate course of action.
- A written response (via email or letter) outlining whether the complaint has been upheld or not.
- Where applicable, an outline of any actions or next steps resulting from the decision will be shared.

Please note: In line with our confidentiality practice, outcome details will only be shared on a need-to-know basis. Sensitive or personal information will not be disclosed.

### **Timeline**

- It is expected that the process will be completed within **ten (10) working days** of receipt.
- Should a more thorough investigation be required, the complainant will be informed of the delay and provided with a revised timeline

### **Final Stage – Right to Appeal**

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint, they have the right to appeal the decision. This stage ensures that any overlooked or unresolved elements of the original complaint may be reviewed fairly and objectively.

### **Submitting an Appeal**

- Appeals must be submitted in writing via email or letter within **five (5) working days** of receiving the outcome.
- Appeals should be addressed to the College Directors at:  
[ContactUs@Beltane.co.uk](mailto:ContactUs@Beltane.co.uk)
- The appeal should clearly outline the grounds for reconsideration, focusing specifically on points that were not addressed or adequately considered during the original investigation.

### **Acknowledgment and Review**

- Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged within **five (5) working days**.
- A full review will be conducted, which may involve re-examining evidence, consulting with relevant parties, and determining whether the initial decision was fair and reasonable.

### **Outcome and Timeline**

- A decision on the appeal will normally be communicated within **ten (10) working days** of acknowledgment.

- If additional time is required to ensure a thorough and fair evaluation, the complainant will be informed of the delay and provided with a revised timeframe.
- The final response will state whether the appeal is upheld or not upheld, along with a brief explanation of the decision and what can be expected moving forward, where relevant.

### **Conclusion**

- The appeals decision is final, and no further internal recourse is available.