

LINK19 College LTD



COMPLAINTS & FEEDBACK POLICY

Date: Autumn 2025
Review Autumn 2027

LINK19 College LTD

Complaints & Feedback Policy

SUMMARY: This policy outlines how LINK19 College deals with complaints and feedback from learners, representatives, employers, and the community. It includes informal and formal resolution stages, review procedures, and escalation to the Department for Education (DfE) if needed.

This policy is reviewed by the LINK19 College Board and feedback on the policy can be submitted to secretary@link19college.ac.uk.

Key Terms:

- Learner Representative: A person acting on behalf of a learner, such as a parent, carer, or advocate.
- Feedback: A comment or suggestion intended to improve services or experiences.
- Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction about a service, action, or lack of action.

1. The LINK19 College Complaints & Feedback Policy contains procedures to gather and act upon feedback and complaints from learners and/or learners' representatives, employers and the wider community. The procedures for making complaints are clear and accessible, enabling complaints to be dealt with promptly and thoroughly.
2. LINK19 College will ensure that Learners are made aware of the Complaints & Feedback Policy. It is published on LINK19 College's website and provided to learners on induction.
3. Complaints relating to:
 - LINK19 College Directors
 - Admissions
 - Examinations
 - Safeguarding
 - Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
 - Staff Employment
 - Whistleblowing
 - Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruptionare dealt with by separate procedures.

Feedback

4. Feedback helps LINK19 College to get things right by securing continuous improvement. Comments and suggestions can be sent to enquiries@link19college.ac.uk. All comments and suggestions will be logged and passed on to the relevant LINK19 College team.

Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – INFORMAL COMPLAINT RESOLUTION.

5. Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally. Complaints by learners can be made directly to the learner's allocated teaching staff or team leader by requesting a meeting. Complaints by employers or other stakeholders can be made directly to the relevant LINK19 College team leader. If informal complaint resolution is not possible or appropriate, **Stage 2 – FORMAL COMPLAINT**

RESOLUTION should be followed.

Stage 2 – FORMAL COMPLAINT RESOLUTION.

What needs to be provided to make a formal complaint?

6. A complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. The attached complaint form may be used if preferred. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if deemed appropriate.

The complaint should explain whether informal resolution has been attempted (pursuant to **Stage 1**) and what should happen to put things right.

Complaints should be made in a timely manner and normally within 20 (twenty) working days during academic term time (excluding weekends and holidays) of the situation giving rise to them.

Where to send a Stage 2 Complaint?

7. Stage 2 complaints should be sent to complaints@link19college.ac.uk. Alternatively, they can be made in person, or by telephone to Complaints Officer.

How will Stage 2 complaints be decided?

8. **Stage 2** complaints about LINK19 College should be dealt with by the LINK19 College Lead. Complaints specifically involving the LINK19 College Lead are to be dealt with by the LINK19 College Chair. Complaints involving the LINK19 College Chair, or other LINK19 College Directors, or the LINK19 College Lead, are to be dealt with at **Stage 2** by an impartial and unconflicted LINK19 College Director, *excluding* the LINK19 College Deputy Chair.
9. **Stage 2** complaints will be considered by establishing what has happened, and who has been involved. The person making the complaint may be contacted should further information be required. Meetings may be arranged with the person making the complaint and other relevant individuals, enabling them to be accompanied, if required.
10. The **Stage 2** decision-maker can, with supporting reasons:
 - Uphold or reject the complaint in whole/part
 - Provide an explanation, acknowledgement, assurance (to avoid recurrence) or apology
 - Put things right, if possible
 - Recommend action to be taken under another policy
 - Provide a commitment to review policies and procedures.

How long will it take for complaints at Stage 2 – FORMAL COMPLAINT RESOLUTION to be resolved?

11. Complaints at Stage 2 will normally be decided within 20 (twenty) working days during academic term time (excluding weekends and holidays) of receipt. Where a complaint at Stage 2 is expected to take longer than 20 (twenty) working days during academic term time (excluding weekends and holidays) to decide, the person making the complaint will be notified accordingly.

Stage 3 – REVIEW

12. If there is dissatisfaction with a Stage 2 decision, a Stage 3 – REVIEW may be

requested within 20 (twenty) term-time days: by email to complaints@link19college.ac.uk, in person, or by telephone to Complaints Officer, stating full details of any of the following grounds for dissatisfaction with the decision at Stage 2:

- the decision does not consider a) relevant information or b) additional important information not previously available
- the decision considers irrelevant information
- the decision appears not to be based on clear reasoning
- unfairness in the decision-making process.

13. The LINK19 College Chair (or other agreed LINK19 College Director) will consider whether there are sufficient **Stage 3** grounds and notification provided accordingly. If there are no **Stage 3** grounds, **Stage 4 – DfE** can be used.


14. If there are grounds for a Stage 3 – REVIEW, an appropriate LINK19 College Director will be appointed as complaint investigator by the LINK19 College Chair (or by another LINK19 College Director, as required), with the LINK19 College Chair (or another LINK19 College Director, as required) deciding upon the complaint investigator's findings and recommendations. The substantive decision upon a Stage 3 Review will normally be provided within twenty (20) working days during academic term time (excluding weekends and holidays). It may be necessary for meetings to be arranged with the complaint investigator, and/or further information to be submitted.

15. Where a complaint involves the LINK19 College Lead, the references in paragraphs 13 & 14 to the LINK19 College Chair, are to be replaced by "*the LINK19 College Deputy Chair (or other LINK19 College Director)*". Complaints concerning the entire LINK19 College Board or both the LINK19 College Chair and the LINK19 College Deputy-Chair should be sent to secretary@link19college.ac.uk.

Stage 4 – DfE

16. A complaint can be made withing 12 (twelve) months after the issue happened to the DfE about how the complaint has been handled by LINK19 College:

 Customer.Complaints@education.gov.uk

 Complaints Team

DfE

Cheylesmore House

Quinton Road

Coventry, CV1 2WT.

Legal Representation & Personal Support

17. Legal representation is not normally permitted at any complaint meetings or discussions, but the person making the complaint can be accompanied by family, friends or others if helpful to them.

Notes

18. Brief notes of meetings and telephone calls may be taken and kept securely.

Legal Proceedings

19. The complaints procedure may be suspended should relevant legal proceedings be underway.

Withdrawal

20. A complaint may be withdrawn at any time.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

21. Confidentiality of complaint information will be maintained by LINK19 College. Information processed includes personal information, e.g., address details, and information regarding the complaint (including sensitive information, e.g., health, if relevant to the complaint). For more information, please refer to LINK19 College's Privacy Policy available on the website.
22. Complaint information is used for contact purposes, to investigate and resolve the complaint. It is collected and used in the public interest for complaint investigation. Complaint information is provided voluntarily and processed in complaint investigation. Information is securely stored for the time it takes for complaint resolution. Once the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information will be retained for 6 (six) but not used.
23. Complaint information will only be processed within LINK19 College to the extent required to comply with the LINK19 College Complaints & Feedback Policy. Where safeguarding risks or unlawful actions arise, information may be shared with the police or other authorities.
24. Concerns about the processing of personal data should be raised directly with LINK19 College in the first instance. Alternatively, the Information Commissioner's Office may be approached.

Prior Involvement & Conflicts of Interest

25. Persons from, or engaged by, LINK19 College with a prior involvement in a complaint, or who are subject to a conflict of interest, should not take part in the complaints process. If there is any reasonable doubt as to a person's ability to act impartially, they should withdraw from the process.

Mediation

26. Mediation may be offered at any stage.

Serial & Persistent Complaints

27. If despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, there remains dissatisfaction and there is an attempt to re-open the same issue, the matter will be treated as closed and subsequent correspondence on the same issue may be considered serial or persistent and a response may not be provided.

Vexatious Complaints

28. 'Frivolous' or 'vexatious' complaints are: obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious, unmeritorious and/or unrealistic beyond all reason, meritorious complaints pursued in an unreasonable manner, complaints designed to cause disruption or annoyance, demands for redress lacking any serious purpose or value.
29. LINK19 College may cease to respond to correspondence from an individual if every reasonable step has been taken to address concerns, a clear statement of LINK19 College's position and options has been given, and there has been repeated contact with substantially the same points made each time. A decision to

cease to respond may also be taken if contact is often or always abusive or aggressive, insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff are made or if contact results in disruption or inconvenience.

Monitoring

- 30.** Complaints data is anonymised and reviewed quarterly by the Board. It is included in annual reports and used to inform service improvements.
- 31.** All complaints are recorded and monitored by the LINK19 College Board. Complaints data will be used to inform LINK19 College improvements, including improvements to complaints procedures.

CONFIDENTIAL

Please indicate your preferred method of communication and any language or accessibility needs.

LINK19 COLLEGE COMPLAINT FORM

Completed form to be sent to complaints@link19college.ac.uk

Name of person making complaint	First Name: Surname:
Name of person on behalf of whom the complaint is made	First Name: Surname:
Is the person making the complaint/on behalf of whom the complaint is made a LINK19 College Learner/parent/carer/other?	Learner/parent/carer/other:
Contact details of the person making the complaint	Postal Address: Email Address: Telephone:
Please provide details of any support or reasonable adjustments required	
Please provide full details of the complaint, attaching any relevant documents e.g., what is the complaint about? Include details of who/what is involved, events, dates, & personal impact	
Please give details of attempts to resolve the complaint e.g., Who/what was involved, with dates?	
What should happen to put things right?	

I consent to: a) the complaint being made on my behalf as contained on this form & b) my personal data being used to decide the complaint.

Signed by the person on behalf of whom the complaint is made:

Dated:

I confirm that, to my knowledge and belief, the information provided on this form is correct.

Signed by the person making the complaint:

Dated: