



PROCEDURE: COMPLAINTS AGAINST SENIOR POSTHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION BOARD 2026-2027

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 A complaint against the Corporation Board, a member of the Corporation Board, a senior postholder, or the head of governance may be made by any individual, business or an organisation.
- 1.2 Senior postholders within the college are the principal and chief executive officer (“the principal”), the finance director, the vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience, and the vice principal: curriculum and quality.
- 1.3 Executive team members who are not senior postholders are the director: IT, estates and learning resources and the director: human resources and organisational development. Although these individuals are line managed by the principal, they are not within scope of this policy, and complaints against these individuals should be submitted directly to the principal, as follows:
 - General complaints will be handled via the college’s usual Complaints Policy (available here: <https://wnc.ac.uk/About-Us/Policies-and-procedures/>).
 - Complaints involving potentially fraudulent, corrupt or irregular activity will be handled via the college’s Whistleblowing Policy, also available via the above link).
- 1.4 Complainants should note that, in certain circumstances, the deadlines and timeframes stated throughout this procedure may need to be extended to enable a thorough and proper investigation to be conducted. This may particularly be the case outside of college term-time, when key staff required as part of the investigation may be unavailable. In these circumstances, the employee will be informed of the reason(s) for the delay, and the timescale in which a decision can be expected.
- 1.5 Complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Section 2: Complaints against the Corporation Board or a member of the Corporation Board

- 2.1 Complaints against the Corporation or a member of the Corporation (including the chair) should be made to the head of governance via either of the following methods:
 - Sent via hard copy to Eloise Hopkinson, West Nottinghamshire College, Derby Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BH.
 - Sent via email to Eloise.Hopkinson@wnc.ac.uk.
- 2.2 The complainant will be expected to state clearly the nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, provide copies of any related documentation.
- 2.3 The head of governance will:
 - acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days of receipt
 - investigate the complaint

- endeavour to provide a response to the complaint within ten working days and, if this is not possible, provide the complainant with an interim statement. An adjusted timeframe will be provided when the complainant can expect to receive an outcome to the complaint.
- 2.4 The head of governance will provide the Corporation with a written statement of the nature of the complaint and the response. Such a report will be circulated to members within ten working days of the response to the complainant so that members are aware of the situation. Names and identifying information will not be included within this statement. If the complainant has concerns about anonymity, they will be welcome to discuss this with, and seek assurance from, the head of governance.
- 2.5 When carrying out an investigation in relation to a complaint against the Corporation or an individual member of the Corporation, the head of governance will have the authority to refer issues to the Corporation's auditors (external and/or internal) or other appropriate advisers. The involvement of a third party shall be made known to the Corporation unless the advice of the third party (e.g. the police) is not to do so.
- 2.6 The written response to the complaint will include details of the arrangements for pursuing the matter with an independent body, if this is appropriate.

Section 3: Complaints against the principal

- 3.1 Complaints against the principal should be made to the chair of the Corporation Board via the head of governance:
- Sent via hard copy addressed to the chair of the Corporation Board, c/o Eloise Hopkinson, West Nottinghamshire College, Derby Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BH.
 - Sent via email to Kate.Truscott2@wnc.ac.uk, cc. Eloise.Hopkinson@wnc.ac.uk.
- 3.2 The complainant will be expected to state clearly the nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, provide copies of any related documentation.
- 3.3 The head of governance will:
- acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days of receipt
 - ensure the chair is aware of the complaint
 - provide any administrative support required in relation to the investigation of the complaint and liaison with the complainant.
- 3.4 The chair of the Corporation Board will:
- investigate the complaint
 - endeavour to provide a response to the complaint (either directly or via the head of governance) within ten working days and, if this is not possible, provide the complainant with an interim statement.
- 3.5 The chair of the Corporation Board will provide the Corporation with a written statement of the nature of the complaint and the response. Such a report will be circulated to members within ten working days of the response to the complainant so that members are aware of the situation.
- 3.6 When carrying out an investigation in relation to a complaint against the principal, the chair of the Corporation Board and the head of governance will have the authority to refer issues to the Corporation's auditors (external and/or internal) or other appropriate advisers. The involvement of a third party shall be made known to the Corporation unless the advice of the third party (e.g. the police) is not to do so.

- 3.7 The written response to the complaint will include details of the arrangements for pursuing the matter with an independent body, if this is appropriate.

Section 4: Complaints against the head of governance

- 4.1 A complaint against the head of governance should be marked as “private and confidential” and submitted in **hard copy only**, addressed to the chair of the Corporation Board, c/o the principal, West Nottinghamshire College, Derby Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BH.
- 4.2 The approach to be adopted by the chair of the Corporation Board in investigating and responding to a complaint will be the same as that outlined above regarding complaints against the principal, but the head of governance will not be involved in the process and the complaint will be acknowledged by either the principal or the chair.

Section 5: Complaints against any other senior postholder

- 5.1 Complaints against any other senior postholder, as described in section 1, should be made to the principal via the following methods:
- Sent via hard copy addressed to the principal, West Nottinghamshire College, Derby Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BH.
 - Sent via email to Andrew.Cropley@wnc.ac.uk, cc. Freya.Stokoe@wnc.ac.uk.
- 5.2 The complainant will be expected to state clearly the nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, provide copies of any related documentation.
- 5.3 The principal’s personal assistant will:
- acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days
 - ensure the principal is aware of the complaint
 - provide any administrative support required in relation to the investigation of the complaint and liaison with the complainant.
- 5.4 The principal will:
- investigate the complaint
 - endeavour to provide a response to the complaint (either directly or via his personal assistant) within ten working days and, if this is not possible, provide the complainant with an interim statement. An adjusted timeframe will be provided when the complainant can expect to receive an outcome to the complaint.
- 5.5 The principal will provide the Corporation with a written statement of the nature of the complaint and the response. Such a report will be circulated to members within ten working days of the response to the complainant so that members are aware of the situation.
- 5.6 When carrying out an investigation in relation to a complaint against a senior postholder, the principal will have the authority to refer issues to the Corporation’s auditors (external and/or internal) or other appropriate advisers. The involvement of a third party shall be made known to the Corporation unless the advice of the third party (e.g. the police) is not to do so.
- 5.7 The written response to the complaint will include details of the arrangements for pursuing the matter with an independent body, if this is appropriate.

Section 6: Appeals

- 6.1 Due to the high level at which complaints against members of the Corporation Board, the principal, senior postholders and the head of governance are already considered at first submission, there is limited scope for internal appeal.
- 6.2 Should a complainant not be satisfied with the resolution proposed or the outcome of the complaint, they may appeal as follows:
- For complaints against a member of the Corporation Board (excluding the chair), appeals should be submitted to the head of governance to be reviewed and considered by the **chair of the Corporation Board**.
 - For complaints against the chair of the Corporation Board (excluding the chair), appeals should be submitted via the head of governance to be reviewed and considered by the **chair of the Audit Committee**.
 - For complaints against the principal, appeals should be submitted via the head of governance to be reviewed and considered by the **chair of the Audit Committee**.
 - For complaints against the head of governance, appeals should be submitted **in hard copy** to West Nottinghamshire College, Derby Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BH and should be marked 'private and confidential' and addressed care of the principal, to be reviewed and considered by the **chair of the Audit Committee**.
 - For complaints against any other senior postholder, appeals should be submitted via the head of governance to be reviewed and considered by the **chair of the Corporation Board**.
- 6.3 In all cases, appeals should be made in writing (either by email or, where specified, by hard copy) within ten working days from the receipt of the original response letter.
- 6.4 The recipient or, where appropriate, the individual providing administrative support will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within three working days. The recipient of the appeal will then consider the original investigation, any evidence that was not considered as part of the original complaint, and the reasonableness of the proposed resolution. They will determine whether the appeal has grounds and will respond in writing within ten working days from the date of receipt of the appeal.
- 6.5 The response will outline whether the appeal has been upheld in full, partially, or not at all and may suggest an alternative resolution to that proposed in the original response. Once again, in certain circumstances, the deadlines stated above may need to be extended to enable a thorough and proper follow-up investigation to be conducted. This may particularly be the case outside of college term-time, when key staff required as part of the investigation may be unavailable. If such an extension is necessary, this will be communicated to the complainant in writing. However, any such delays or alterations to the timescale will be communicated to the complainant in writing.
- 6.6 The decision of the individual reviewing the appeal is final and, as such, internal procedures for complaints are deemed to have been exhausted at this stage. In all instances, information about how the complainant can seek external review of matters will be provided.

Section 7: Continuing a complaint beyond college

- 7.1 Individuals have the right to contact the Department for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>. The DfE will want to satisfy itself that the internal complaints processes of the college have been exhausted prior to acting upon complaints.

Policy owner: Head of Governance

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