

Data Protection Complaints Procedure



Responsible Manager:	Data protection Officer (DPO)	Date:	August 2026
Approved by:	Leadership Team	Approval Date:	September 2026
GDPR Lead:	DPO	Review Date:	August 2028

Accessible to Clients/ Students:	Yes
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1. Applicability to Organisation

This procedure applies to:

The Trafford and Stockport College Group (TSCG).

This procedure applies to all personal data processed by or on behalf of TSCG including information relating to students, applicants, employees, governors, contractors, alumni and members of the public.

2. Scope and Purpose

This procedure sets out the process for individuals to raise complaints relating to how TSCG collects, uses, stores, or otherwise processes their personal data.

This procedure ensures that concerns about the handling of personal data are addressed fairly, transparently and in accordance with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act. It is intended to provide a clear process for individuals to raise data protection complaints directly with TSCG and to support compliance with the statutory complaints-handling requirements introduced by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

This procedure also ensures that individuals have access to a clear internal complaints process before escalating concerns to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

3. Approach

The Trafford and Stockport College Group is committed to protecting personal data and ensuring that all processing activities are carried out lawfully, fairly and transparently.

If an individual believes that the College has not complied with data protection law or has mishandled their personal information, they have the right to make a complaint.

Complaints may relate to issues such as:

- The collection or use of personal data
- Inaccuracies in personal information
- Failure to respond appropriately to a data subject rights request
- Inappropriate disclosure of personal data
- Concerns about how personal information is stored or retained
- Failure to comply with the College's data protection policies

All complaints will be handled in a timely and transparent manner and will be investigated by the DPO or an appropriate delegated officer.

4. Who Can Make a Complaint

A data protection complaint can be made by:

- Students or apprentices
- Prospective students or applicants
- Parents, carers or guardians
- Employees or former employees
- Governors
- Contractors or suppliers
- Members of the public

Complaints may also be submitted by an authorised representative acting on behalf of the individual concerned.

5. How to Submit a Complaint

Complaints relating to data protection may be submitted using the contact details below or through any established College complaints route. Complaints should be submitted in writing where possible, but TSCG will also recognise and respond to data protection complaints received verbally or through other channels, provided the complaint can be identified and properly recorded.

Data Protection Officer
 Trafford and Stockport College Group
 Altrincham Campus
 Manchester Road
 West Timperley
 Altrincham
 WA14 5PQ

dpo@tscg.ac.uk

If a complaint is made verbally or through another informal channel, the College will record the complaint and may ask the complainant to confirm or clarify details where this is necessary to investigate the matter properly.

To assist the investigation, complainants should include:

- Their name and contact details
- A description of the issue or concern
- Details of the personal data involved (if known)
- Dates or circumstances relevant to the complaint
- Copies of any relevant correspondence or documentation

6. Acknowledgement of Complaints

Upon receipt of a complaint, the College will normally acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and, in any event, within 30 days of receipt.

The acknowledgement will confirm:

- Receipt of the complaint
- Who is responsible for investigating the complaint
- The expected timescale for a response

7. Investigation of Complaints

The Data Protection Officer will review the complaint and determine the appropriate course of action.

The investigation may involve:

- Reviewing relevant policies and procedures
- Examining systems or records
- Speaking with staff involved in the matter
- Requesting additional information from the complainant

Where appropriate, the College may consult with relevant internal departments such as IT, Human Resources or Student Services.

All investigations will be conducted in a proportionate and impartial manner.

Staff who receive or identify a data protection complaint must refer it promptly to the Data Protection Officer or other designated officer so that it can be recorded, acknowledged and handled in accordance with this procedure.

8. Response to Complaints

The College will take appropriate steps to investigate and respond to data protection complaints without undue delay. This will include making appropriate enquiries, keeping the complainant informed where necessary and notifying the complainant of the outcome of the complaint without undue delay.

The College will aim to provide a formal written response within one calendar month of receiving the complaint. Where the complaint is complex or requires further investigation, the College may take longer to respond. If this occurs, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and, where possible, the expected timetable for a response.

The response will explain:

- The outcome of the investigation
- Whether the complaint has been upheld or not upheld
- Any actions taken by the College
- Any steps taken to prevent reoccurrence

9. Outcomes and Remedies

Where a complaint is upheld, the Trafford and Stockport College Group will take appropriate corrective action.

This may include:

- Correcting inaccurate personal data
- Restricting or ceasing certain processing activities
- Improving procedures or controls
- Providing additional training to staff
- Issuing an apology where appropriate

Where necessary, the College may also consider whether the matter constitutes a personal data breach and whether this should be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office.

10. Escalation to the Information Commissioner's Office

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the College has responded to the complaint, they have the right to raise the matter with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

The ICO is the UK's independent authority responsible for upholding information rights.

Contact details for the ICO are as follows:

Information Commissioner's Office
 Wycliffe House
 Water Lane
 Wilmslow
 Cheshire
 SK9 5AF
 ico.org.uk
 0303 123 1113

Individuals are normally expected to raise their data protection complaint with the organisation first and allow the organisation an opportunity to respond before asking the ICO to consider the matter.

11. Record Keeping

The College will maintain a record of all data protection complaints received.

This record will include:

- The date the complaint was received
- The nature of the complaint
- Actions taken to investigate the issue
- The outcome of the complaint
- Any corrective measures implemented

Maintaining a complaints record supports compliance with accountability obligations under UK data protection legislation.

12. Linked Policies

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Data Protection Policy
- Records Retention and Disposal Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Data Breach Reporting Procedure

13. Equal Opportunities Statement

The College is committed to ensuring that this procedure is applied fairly and consistently. No adverse impact on equality has been identified.

14. Responsibility

This procedure is available on the Trafford and Stockport College Group website and will be maintained by the Corporation Secretary and the Data Protection Officer.