

Student Complaints Policy and Procedure Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The College is dedicated to ensuring that all students receive a high-quality experience and welcomes comments and suggestions throughout the academic year. However, if you are dissatisfied with any service, you may decide to make a complaint.

2. Guiding Principles

- 2.1 Through the Student Complaints Procedure below, the College aims to investigate complaints in a timely, transparent and fair manner.
- 2.2 The College will seek to resolve the matter at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 2.3 Complaints that require particularly swift action will be identified quickly.
- 2.4 The College will investigate fairly and thoroughly.
- 2.5 Each party to a complaint will be given an opportunity to present their case.
- 2.6 If there are allegations of a criminal offence, the College may suspend its own investigations until the outcome of any criminal proceedings are known.
- 2.7 All complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality as far as reasonably practicable.
- 2.8 No student will be disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint. However, if it materialises that a complaint was not genuine, the College may consider disciplinary procedures.

3. Who can complain?

- 3.1 This procedure applies to all registered students.
- 3.2 Where the complaint involves a group of students, all correspondence must be handled by one designated student representative.
- 3.3 Anonymous complaints will not be considered.
- 3.4 Complaints lodged by third parties will not be considered.

4. Academic Appeals are not covered by the Student Complaints Procedure, please refer to the Academic Appeals – Policy and Procedure.

5. Sources of advice and information

- 5.1 Before making a complaint, you may wish to seek advice from one of the following departments who can explain the procedure to you:
 - a) Personal Tutor
 - b) Registry
 - c) Students Conduct Manager's Office.

Procedure

6. Informal Stage

- 6.1 In most cases, it may be possible for issues to be addressed at an early stage by discussing them with a member of staff in the department concerned. For example, if you have an academic concern, this can be discussed with your Personal Tutor, Subject Tutor or Program Director.
- 6.2 If you do not feel able to raise it with one of these staff members, you may wish to discuss it with a member of staff from Student Conduct Manager's Office.

- 6.3 Issues must be raised within one month of taking place and the staff member will aim to resolve the issue, where practicable, within 2 weeks.
- 6.4 Any delay to this timing will be communicated to you by the staff member you have consulted.
- 6.5 You are advised to keep a record of any informal contact with staff.
- 6.6 Staff will keep a record of action taken in response.

7. Formal Stage

If your concerns remain unaddressed after the informal stage, or if resolution is not possible due to the complexity or seriousness of the case, you can lodge a formal complaint as follows:

- 7.1 The Student Complaints Form must be completed and submitted to the Administration office/Student Complaints Officer together with evidence that you have previously raised the issue informally.
- 7.2 The Student Complaints Officer will check the eligibility of the complaint to ensure that the Student Complaints Procedure is applicable.

Eligible complaints:

- 7.3 You will be provided with written acknowledgement by the Student Complaints Officer of receipt of your complaint within 5 days of submitting your form.
- 7.4 The complaint will be delegated to an appropriate member of staff for investigation.
- 7.5 You may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint where an administrator will be present to take notes.
- 7.6 If you wish, a fellow registered student or a member of staff may attend the meeting with you.
- 7.7 The College seeks to resolve all formal complaints **within one calendar month** of receipt of a Student Complaints Form.
- 7.8 Any delay to this timing will be communicated to you.
- 7.9 You will be notified of the outcome by the staff member investigating your complaint in a Completion of Investigation Letter, detailing the decision and an explanation for it.

Ineligible complaints:

- 7.10 You will be directed to the relevant procedure which may include the Academic Appeals – Policy and Procedure
- 7.11 Malicious or vexatious complaints will not be considered.
- 7.12 If a complaint is deemed to be malicious, frivolous, vexatious or ineligible, the Registrar will inform the student.
- 7.13 In such circumstances, the student will have the right of appeal to the Head of College.
- 7.14 Such appeals must be made in writing to the Head of College within 14 days of the decision of the Registrar Director of Professional Services.
- 7.15 Any delay to this timing will be communicated to you.
- 7.16 The decision of the Head of College will be final.

8. Review Stage

- 8.1 If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint, you have the right to ask for a review of your case **within 2 weeks** of receiving your Completion of Investigation Letter.
- 8.2 You will need to complete The Student Complaints Request for Review Form and submit it to the Student Appeals and Complaints Officer.
- 8.3 No new grounds may be raised, but new evidence can be submitted.
- 8.4 You may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint where an administrator will be present to take notes.
- 8.5 If you wish, a fellow registered student or a member of staff may attend the meeting with you.
- 8.6 The Registrar and Director of Professional Services will review the case **within one month**.
- 8.7 Any delay to this timing will be communicated to you.
- 8.8 She may uphold the complaint in part or whole and take appropriate action or dismiss the complaint

- if there is no case to answer.
- 8.9 If the Registrar Director has a conflict of interest, the case will be referred to the Head of College for review.
 - 8.10 You will receive a Completion of Procedures Letter from Registry informing you of the outcome and your right to refer the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) if you are still unsatisfied with the outcome.
 - 8.11 Registry will keep confidential records of all formal complaints that have been lodged.

Student Complaints Form

This form should be used along with the Student Complaints Procedure. If you have raised your concerns informally and they remain unaddressed, you can lodge a formal complaint using this form. If you need help or advice whilst completing this form, you should contact Registry.

This form should be sent to the Student Complaints Officer

Please keep a copy of this form for your records, plus any material you submit.

YOUR DETAILS

Title: Mr / Miss / Ms / Mrs / Other.....	
Forename(s):.....	Family Name:.....
Student Number:.....	Email:.....
Contact Address:.....	
Postcode:	Tel No:

NATURE OF THE COMPLAINT

I have raised the issue informally with.....
On [specify date(s)].....
I have written confirmation of this from the member of staff and attach this (this may be an e mail) <input type="checkbox"/>
I do not have written confirmation but give consent for you to contact the above-named <input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of complaint (continue onto a separate sheet if necessary):

DESIRED OUTCOME

What action would you like to see taken?

DECLARATION

I believe that the above information is accurate. I confirm that details of this complaint can be shared with relevant staff.

Signature:

Date:

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:			
Complaint received:		Complaint forwarded:	
Acknowledgement sent:		Response sent:	
Action required:			

Student Complaints Request for Review

This form should be used along with the Student Complaints Procedure. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint, you can request a review. If you need help or advice whilst completing this form, you should contact Registry.

This form should be sent to the Student Complaints Officer

Please keep a copy of this form for your records, plus any material you submit.

YOUR DETAILS

Title: Mr / Miss / Ms / Mrs / Other.....
Forename(s):..... **Family Name:**.....
Student Number:..... **Email:**.....
Contact Address:.....
Postcode: **Tel No:**

NATURE OF THE COMPLAINT

I remain dissatisfied because (please give reasons):

DESIRED OUTCOME

What action would you like to see taken?

DECLARATION

I believe that the above information is accurate. I confirm that details of this complaint can be shared with relevant staff.

Signature:

Date:

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:			
Original complaint received:		Original complaint forwarded:	
Original acknowledgement sent:		Original response sent:	
Request for review received:		Acknowledgement sent:	
Response sent:			
Action required:			