Complaint Procedure for Students

Introduc on

Some mes, despite its best endeavours, the University does not get things right for you, and this Complaint Procedure is one of the ways the University can correct mistakes when the University needs to. Most complaints can be resolved easily and quickly when the University knows something has not been done in the way it should and, when this happens, the University welcomes the opportunity to put things right.

You can take your complaint straight to your College, academic department, or support service to explain what has gone wrong (see sec on 21). If you are not sa sfied with the outcome or if you do not want to contact your College, academic department, or support service, you can s II go on to make a writ en complaint under this Procedium (see sec on 22 A aou nt (O ce to be dealt with.

Every complaint that the Student Conduct O ce receives is given to a named Case Manager, who will be in contact with you and keep you informed of the way your Complaint is being dealt with. You can ask your Case Manager ques ons and ask for updates.

inves gator to look at (see sec on 23).

The Student Conduct O ce will send your complaint directly to the department of the University you are complaining about. (This is called 'The Early Resolu on Stage'.) The department will have 21 days to try and resolve the mat er (sec on 24). If you are not sa sfied with the outcome, you can then ask for your complaint to be invesigated formally by an invesigator. In excep onal cases, your complaint may be sent to an invesigator without going through the Early Resolu on Stage.

Your inves gator will have 42 days to write a report into your complaint. Occasionally in the case of complicated complaints, it may take longer than 42 days to get the report to you - but inves gators do try very hard to keep to the deadline. We will let you know if there is likely to be a delay and we will give you an es mate of how long we think the delay will be.

4. Complainants are expected to adhere to the University's Code of Prac ce on <u>Student</u> <u>Behaviour in Appeals and Complaints</u>

Whom is this Procedure for?

(1) This Procedure may be used by

(a) Individual Students; or

(b) Groups of *Students* who wish to complain about the same mat er and who jointly submit a complaint.

(2) When a group of *Students* submits a complaint, the University will ask the group to nominate one of the *Complainants* to act as a group representa ve. The University will communicate only with the group representa ve and expects the group representa ve to liaise with the other *Complainants* in the group.

What is this Procedure for?

(3) Complaints may be about

(a) The University's (or lack of) in rela on to a mat er concerning the *Student*; or

(b) The Student's experience of the standard of Service provided by or on behalf of the University

(c) An academic department, college, finance service, or professional support service

(d) The adequacy of supervision, the arrangements for teaching, or the arrangements for summa ve assessments.

What is this Procedure not for?

(4) This Procedure does not cover the following (for which other University procedures exist, as shown in the links below):

(a) Appeals relaing to Board of Examiners or other relevant commities or or cers' decisions relaing to examination ons, assessments, or academic progress or against expulsion or exclusion on academic grounds (including decisions about Academic Progress No ces <u>Academic Appeals Procedure</u>

(b) Complaints involving an allega on of *Misconduct* by a *Student* <u>Student</u> <u>Discipline</u> <u>Procedure</u>

(c) Complaints rela ng to the behaviour of an individual

- (d) Complaints involving an allega on of sexual violence
- (e) Complaints about admissions dec mis

(6)

(18) Complainants will not be disadvantaged, penalised, or vic mised for making a complaint.

(f) Take such other ac on which, in the opinion of the Student Conduct O ce, is helpful or reasonable for addressing the complaint;

(g) Ini ate an inves ga on of the complaint.

Early Resolu on Stage

(24) Where the *Complaint Form* is sent to an appropriate person (or, if the complaint is about more than one issue, to appropriate people) in the college, academic department, administra ve or support service which is the subject of the complaint (see 23 (e) above):

(a) An - k is the complaint is to be conducted with the aim of seeking a resolution of the complaint;

(b) The *Complainant* may be invited to discuss the complaint as part of the - k io ;

(c) Within 21 Days, the college academic department, or administrative support service will by email no fy the *Complainant* and the Student Conduct O ce (student.cases@durham.ac.uk) of the outcome of the - k o and the reasons for the outcome.

(25) On comple on of the - k o if *Complainants* are dissa sfied with the outcome, *Complainants* may inform the Student Conduct O ce (student.cases@durham.ac.uk) that they would like their complaints to be investigated under the 7 o of this Procedure.

(26) The Student Conduct O ce will not usually ini ate an invesiga on of a complaint under the 7 o of this Procedure unless the - k o has been completed.

Formal Stage

(27) When the Student Conduct O ce ini ates the invesign on of a complaint under the *Formal* o of this Procedure, the Student Conduct O ce will:

(a) Appoint and then refer the complaint to an @ who is independent of the *Complainant* and the subject-mat er of the complaint; or

(b) Refer the complaint to a *h* @ whose members shall be independent of the *Complainant* and the subject-mat er of the complaint.

(28) The @or h`@or (on behalf of the @or Panel of@the Student Conduct Oce may:

(a) Ask to interview the *Complainant* and other relevant par es as part of the 7 o

(b) Take other appropriate ac on to invest gate the complaint expedition ously and fairly, taking into consideration on the nature of the complaint.

(29) The Student Conduct O ce will use its best endeavours to ensure that the *Complainant* receives an *@ k* within 42 *Days* of the Student Conduct O ce ini a ng a *Formal o* inves ga on under paragraph 27 of this Procedure. If there is likely to be a delay, the *Complainant* will be informed of the reason and a revised mescale given.

(30) Possible outcome recommended in the @ k include:

(a) The complaint (or part of it) is upheld or dismissed;

(b) A resolu on reached in co-opera on with the department, college, finance or professional support service which is the subject of the complaint;

(c) Compensa on may be recommended;

(d)

(40) If a *Reviewer* upholds one or more aspects of a *k* the

- 'Review Report' is a *Reviewer's* report of a Review.
- 'Service' is a *Student's* experience of the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the University.
- 'Student' means a currently registered student or student who has le the University within the preceding 28 *Days*. Students on programme validated by the University have the right to request a *Review* under this Procedure, provided they have first completed the informal and formal procedures for complaints in their home ins tu ons.
- 'Third Party' is any party who is not a *Student* or a member of the University community.

Student Complaints Procedure Flow Chart