

## **Student Complaints Procedure - for students studying a non-award-bearing programme**

### **1) Local Resolution**

The purpose of the complaints procedure is to resolve problems. It is therefore very important to voice concerns or to register the nature of a complaint as soon as possible, and normally within 28 calendar days of the issue, as it often enables the problem to be resolved quickly and informally. In the first instance, students should contact their Course Administration team, Tutor, or the [Quality Governance team](#).

The person the student contacts may be able to solve the problem directly or offer suitable advice about how to proceed or where to go for assistance or advice.

### **2) Formal Resolution**

A student may make a complaint under the Formal Resolution stage of the Complaints Procedure if they feel the complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily at the local level or if the issue is so serious that it cannot be resolved informally.

To submit a formal complaint, the student should contact the Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration in writing by completing the online [Student Complaints Form \(Stage 2 - Formal Resolution\)](#) within 28 calendar days of receiving a response under the Local Resolution process. If students require procedural advice on completing the form or have any queries on the Complaints Procedure they are advised to contact the [Quality Governance team](#).

The Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration (or delegate) will acknowledge the complaint when received.

The Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration may terminate consideration of a complaint if it is deemed to be frivolous or vexatious. Examples of vexatious complaints are those which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive: insist on pursuing unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes and/or requests which are designed to cause disruption and annoyance.

If a complaint is eligible for formal review the Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration will consider the complaint formally in consultation with those concerned in the provision of the service, e.g. the Course Tutor, Head of Academic Centre Administration, Director of Academic Centres, Director of International Summer Programmes and Lifelong Learning or other Service Manager.

The Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration will provide the student with a response in writing, normally within 28 calendar days of the initiation of the formal procedure.

If the Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration upholds the complaint, they will provide such remedy as is considered fair and impartial in all the circumstances, which may include:



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- a full explanation;
- an apology (which is not an admission of liability);
- the matter put right if possible;
- if appropriate, some kind of financial recompense (for example if the student has paid for something which s/he did not receive).

If the Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration rejects the complaint, the written response will give a clear explanation of the decision and guidance on the student's options at this point.

### **3) Review process**

If the student is not satisfied with the Formal Resolution decision, the student can submit a request for Review within 14 calendar days of the Formal Resolution decision being communicated.

The Review will not usually consider issues afresh or involve a further investigation.

A Review can only be requested on the following grounds:

- a. procedural irregularities that occurred during Formal Resolution, which were material or potentially material to the decision reached: and/or
- b. the Formal decision is unreasonable, in that no reasonable person could have reached the same decision on the available evidence; and/or
- c. the availability of new evidence, which materially impacts the complaint outcome and which, for valid reasons, could not have been submitted at an earlier stage.

To request a review the student should complete the online [Student Complaints Form \(Stage 3 - Review process\)](#).

If the request for Review is eligible under the specified grounds and is within the timeframe, as determined above, ICE will appoint an independent Reviewer.

The independent Reviewer will consider the student's request, the information considered during Formal Resolution, the decision, and any new information. The independent Reviewer may also request further information.

Following investigation, the independent Reviewer will have the power to either:

- a. uphold the complaint in whole or in part and will recommend such remedies as necessary; or
- b. dismiss the request for Review and confirm the Head of Human Resources, Governance and Administration's decision.



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The student will receive the independent Reviewer's decision and the reasons for the decision, in writing, normally within 28 calendar days of submitting the Complaints Review Form. This is the final stage of ICE's complaints procedure for non-award bearing courses.