



1. Principles

- 1.1. We know that sometimes we get things wrong and so we see complaints as an opportunity to learn and develop. This Policy allows us to ensure we have listened to any concerns you have and to respond in a timely and proportionate way.
- 1.2. Our approach to complaints is:
 - a. Clear and accessible. This means this Policy is widely available and written in such a way that you should not need additional support in understanding what a complaint is, how to make a complaint, your responsibilities, and our responsibilities. Despite this, you may seek support from the Student Experience and Wellbeing team by emailing ASK@Regents.ac.uk.
 - b. Confidential, impartial, and fair. This means that we will treat concerns raised using this Policy as being serious and ensure that those considering complaints have no reasonable perception of bias or conflict of interest. We will not share your complaint with anyone unless there is a good reason to do so. You will not be treated less favourably as a result of making a complaint.
 - c. Timely, flexible, and proportionate. This means that we will work as quickly as we can to investigate complaints as far as is reasonably possible. We will follow the process outlined below unless we think there is a better way of handling your complaint. If this is the case, we will tell you that we intend to use a different process, and the reason why. For example, as our handling of your complaint will be proportionate, we may allocate increased resources to more serious complaints. We aim to complete both formal complaint stages within ninety days of a Formal Complaint being received.
 - d. Embedded and informative. This means we will use the complaints we receive to inform enhancements and improvements to your student experience. We do this through our formal committees and through annual monitoring of our service and delivery.
- 1.3. We understand that complaints can highlight strong emotional reactions. However, we reserve the right to close – without further action - complaints that are deemed to be malicious or vexatious (as defined below).
- 1.4. Throughout this Policy, we refer to courses and modules. However, our collaborative partners may use different terminology such as programmes and/or units. Schedule A details Collaborative Partners' exemptions.
- 1.5. If you have a disability, you may make a request for a reasonable adjustment to the process of handling a complaint set out below. This may include requesting additional time to make or respond to a complaint.
- 1.6. Unless because of an agreed reasonable adjustment due to a disability, or being part of a group complaint, we expect you to act on your own behalf in making a complaint. This means we will normally communicate only with you, and not a representative. However, we may allow you to nominate a representative to act on your behalf: in such circumstances we require your express permission to communicate with your named representative and, thereafter, will communicate only with them, not with you directly.
- 1.7. In accordance with UK legislation (Higher Education we protect the right to free speech. We take as a starting point that all speech is lawful, i.e. 'within the law', unless restricted by law. This includes provisions of the Equality Act 2010 prohibiting discrimination. It also includes common law on confidentiality and privacy. Therefore, whilst freedom of speech within the law is protected, unlawful speech is not. Free speech includes lawful speech that may be offensive or hurtful to some. Speech that amounts to unlawful harassment or unlawful incitement to hatred or violence (for instance) does not constitute free speech within the law and is not protected.

- 1.8. You are allowed to have one companion with you at any meeting you are invited to attend related to your complaint. Normally, your companion cannot be someone acting in a legal capacity. This is because this Policy is clear and easy to follow, and we expect you to speak for yourself in any meeting. At our discretion, your companion may help you if you have trouble engaging. However, you are responsible for the conduct of your companion at all times. If your companion's conduct is abusive or threatening, they will be excluded from the meeting and all future meetings. In such cases, we may continue with the meeting or reschedule. If the meeting is rescheduled, we will expect you to identify a new companion.
- 1.9. We normally expect you to provide evidence in support of your complaint: your evidence must be in English (whether originally, or an independently certified translation). We reserve the right to request originals of all evidence you provide and to undertake reasonable checks to authenticate evidence. The provision of false or misleading evidence may be taken forward as a misconduct matter.
- 1.10. We do not routinely record complaint meetings. However, meetings are attended by a notetaker, and you will receive a copy of these notes. If you have agreed reasonable adjustments in place and require a meeting to be recorded, you must tell us at least three working days before any meeting. Where we decide to make an audio recording of a meeting, you will be provided with a copy of the recording for your own personal use.
- 1.11. You are required to read and understand this Policy, including being familiar with any updates made during your studies.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. We define a complaint as: *dissatisfaction about something we have done or not done, whether the service was provided directly or on our behalf*. This means that the remedies you may ask for include: an apology and/or a practical remedy and/or a financial remedy.
- 2.2. Only current students may make a complaint using this Policy. This means that only those who are currently enrolled on a course of study with the University or who have recently completed a course of study may complain. Specifically:
 - a. '*Currently enrolled*' means having completed their enrolment. Anyone that has not completed enrolment is not considered to be a current student and therefore cannot complain using this Policy.
 - b. A '*currently enrolled*' student does not have to be currently studying at Regent's University London: anyone currently enrolled but on an Interruption of Studies, or undertaking a period of Study Abroad may make a complaint using this Policy.
 - c. '*On a course of study*' means any module or modules, whether credit-bearing or not at any level of the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#). This includes inbound Study Abroad students that are primarily registered with one of our partner organisations.
 - d. '*With the University*' means any course or module that is validated or conferred by the University, whether study is directly at Regent's University London or through one of our partner organisations. Complaints about course delivery, teaching, or administration related to our academic provision delivered by one of our collaborative partners should complete the formal stages of that partners' complaint process before being escalated to the Second Formal Stage of our policy. Collaborative Partner student complaints about any other matter will be handled solely through that partner's complaint policy with no recourse to Regent's University London.
 - e. '*Recently completed a course of study*' means anyone that has been withdrawn from the University within the previous twenty working days (whether or not having been granted an award) or within twenty working days following graduation (whether or not attended).
- 2.3. '*No reasonable perception of bias*' means that anyone making a decision about your complaint will have no previous involvement in the complaint or have been the subject of a formal complaint you have made. They will also not have any close personal connection to you or anyone involved in your complaint.

- 2.4. *'No conflict of interest'* means that anyone making a decision about your complaint will have no personal interest in the outcome of any decision being made.
- 2.5. Complaints may be made individually, or as a group. If a group complaint is made, all students included in the complaint must clearly indicate their wish to be involved in the complaint. Where a group complaint is made, we will communicate with the group complaint leader as defined in the submitted complaint.
- 2.6. You may make an anonymous complaint or withhold your identity, but this is likely to limit the scope of any investigation we can carry out and the remedy we might offer. Where a complaint relates to safeguarding or a risk of harm to others, we may pursue a complaint in line with any legal or other reasonable duty of care.
- 2.7. Some complaints may be referred to other processes as follows:
- Complaints about the conduct of another student may be taken forward using either the Academic or General Misconduct Regulations. Although we will tell you if we refer your complaint to another process, we may not be able to tell you the outcome of any action taken, or if any action will be taken. This is because of the right to privacy per current data protection legislation. However, we will balance this against any legitimate interest you may have in receiving information to mitigate harm or distress.
 - Complaints about the conduct of staff may be taken forward by Human Resources. Although we will tell you if we refer your complaint to another process, we may not be able to tell you the outcome of any action taken, or if any action will be taken. This is because of the right to privacy per current data protection legislation. However, we will balance this against any legitimate interest you may have in receiving information to mitigate harm or distress.
 - Complaints relating to an academic outcome may be referred through the Academic Appeals Regulations.
 - Complaints about the Students' Union may be referred through the Students' Union complaints process.
- 2.8. A complaint may be deemed vexatious or malicious as follows:
- A vexatious complaint is one where we believe you are doing so primarily to cause harassment; or makes repeated complaints related to a matter that we have formally concluded. This may include making unreasonable and/or unrealistic demands of an individual.
 - A malicious complaint is one where we believe you are attempting to insult, offend or make a false statement about a member of the University or its representatives; or where the remedy requested is disproportionate or not possible.
- Vexatious and/or malicious complaints will be closed and any right of escalation or appeal removed.
- 2.9. Admissions complaints must be made using our Admissions Complaint Policy.
- 2.10. Complaints from members of the public (i.e. not a student and not in relation to an Admissions matter) should be made in writing to Governance@Regents.ac.uk.

3. Responsibilities

3.1. We will:

- Give you clear information about the Policy, the stage your complaint is at, who is handling your complaint, the timescales relevant to each stage and required actions, and the sources of support available to you.
- Handle your complaint at a local level. This means that the person/ department/ organisation responsible for delivery of a service will be expected to handle the complaint at the informal stage. This ensures effective service delivery that embraces continuous improvement.

- c. Investigate, as far as possible, all complaints. If we cannot investigate your complaint, we will tell you this and tell you why. For example, we cannot investigate complaints about the conduct of staff at other organisations (e.g. placement/partner staff or visitors), but we may request a response on your behalf.
- d. Attempt to put in place a practical remedy if we find we have not met our usual high standards of delivery.

3.2. We expect you to:

- a. Be familiar with this Policy, including understanding and meeting the timescales and deadlines set out below. If, for good reason, you cannot meet the timescales set out below, we expect you to provide a comprehensive explanation and independent evidence covering the period of the delay.
- b. Be respectful and courteous, and to respond to requests for information promptly and accurately.
- c. Let us know as soon as possible if you require any reasonable adjustments to be made because of a disability to the way we process or handle your complaint under this Policy. If required, you should provide evidence to support any request for reasonable adjustments that you have made.
- d. Attend all meetings you are invited to in connection with your complaint.
- e. Tell us in advance of all meetings the name and their relationship to you of your companion.

3.3. You have the right to access our Students' Union (StudentUnion@Regents.ac.uk) for support and guidance at any stage of this Policy.

3.4. There are one Informal and two Formal stages to this Policy: Informal Stage (Concern)> First Formal Stage (Formal Complaint)>Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal).

4. Informal Stage (Concern)

- 4.1. At the informal stage, complaints are referred to as 'concerns'. Concerns must be made informally, and within fifteen working days of a single incident or the last of a series of instances.
- 4.2. Your concern should be raised with the most relevant person. Where possible, (e.g. unless making a complaint of sexual misconduct, harassment, and/or violence), you should speak to the person your concern relates to in order to attempt to resolve the matter locally. The Student Experience and Wellbeing team may be able to help you with this.
- 4.3. Complaints about sexual misconduct and/or violence should skip the Informal Stage and move straight to the First Formal Stage (below) within fifteen working days of a single incident or the last of a series of instances.
- 4.4. The person responding to a concern should do so within fifteen working days. The concern outcome should be copied to Registry to facilitate monitoring and to determine eligibility to move to the next stage.
- 4.5. The Informal Stage ends when an outcome is issued or if you have not received an outcome within fifteen working days of raising your concern.
- 4.6. If you have not received the outcome to your concern within fifteen working days or you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may be able to make a Formal Complaint.

5. First Formal Stage (Formal Complaint)

- 5.1. Formal Complaints must be made within ten working days of the end of the Informal Stage or in the case of complaints about sexual misconduct and/or violence within fifteen working days of a single incident or the last of a series of instances.

- 5.2. All Formal Complaints must be made using the form provided (unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed). You should provide all evidence relevant to your complaint when you submit your completed complaint form. If some of the evidence you want to rely on in your complaint is not available, you must make this clear when you submit your complaint and indicate when you expect to be able to provide it.
- 5.3. All Formal Complaints are subject to an initial assessment by Registry. Initial assessment includes consideration of:
 - a. Whether the Formal Complaint is eligible (received in time, using the appropriate form, has completed the Informal Stage, is supported by evidence, is seeking a reasonable remedy).
 - b. Whether the matter complained about should be referred to another process.
- 5.4. Within five working days of receiving a Formal Complaint, Registry staff will contact you:
 - a. To confirm receipt and eligibility of your Formal Complaint and to confirm next steps (which may include agreeing a deadline for you to provide any outstanding evidence). This receipt will include who your complaint is being considered by, and the deadline for them to issue an outcome on your complaint. The person identified as being responsible for considering your complaint may request a meeting with you (see below).
or
 - b. To confirm receipt of your complaint and to explain that the matter is being referred through another process. Where known you will be given the name of the person looking at the matter and the expected timescale for responding to you and (if relevant) a deadline for you to provide outstanding evidence.
or
 - c. To confirm that your Formal Complaint is ineligible for any consideration. If this happens, we will tell you the reason why and tell you if you can make an appeal.
- 5.5. Eligible Formal Complaints must be completed within twenty working days of confirmation of receipt.
- 5.6. Formal Complaints will normally be considered by the relevant manager of the area responsible for delivering the service that is being complained about. As part of this consideration, you may be invited to a meeting to discuss your complaint in more detail. However, it may be possible to conclude consideration of your Formal Complaint without such a meeting: it is the decision and discretion of the person considering your Formal Complaint to determine.
- 5.7. If a Complaint meeting is to be held, you will be given:
 - a. The date, time, location of the meeting, and your right to bring a companion with you. If to be held online, you will be given a link to the meeting.
 - b. Instructions on what to do if you cannot attend the meeting on the set date and time.
 - c. The names of all those attending the meeting, including their purpose at the meeting (e.g. notetaker, observer).
 - d. Information about how to alert the University to any potential bias in relation to the meeting attendees.
 - e. An outline agenda for the meeting.
 - f. Copies of (or access to) all documents being considered during the meeting.
- 5.8. Within five working days following a Complaint meeting you will be provided with a copy of the meeting notes. You will be asked to confirm the notes as an accurate reflection of the Complaint meeting. We will add a record of any disagreement/comments to the meeting notes.
- 5.9. The First Formal Stage ends when an outcome is issued or if you have not received an outcome within twenty working days of confirmation of receipt of your Formal Stage Complaint.

- 5.10. Your Formal Complaint outcome will explain:
- a. Our understanding of your complaint (sometimes referred to as 'heads of complaint').
 - b. Who considered your Formal Complaint.
 - c. What evidence was considered and if relevant, any weight given to that evidence.
 - d. Whether your Formal Complaint has been upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld. Different decisions may be reached for each of the heads of your complaint. For example, we may uphold one head of complaint but no others. If all heads of complaint have been upheld the outcome of your Formal Complaint will be Upheld. If no heads of complaint have been upheld the outcome of your Formal Complaint will be Not Upheld. If at least one head of complaint has been upheld, and at least one head of complaint is not upheld the outcome of your Formal Complaint will be Partially Upheld.
 - e. The reason for the outcome for each head of complaint.
 - f. Any remedy being offered, and how you can accept that offer. Even if your Formal Complaint is Not Upheld, we can make an offer to put things right.
 - g. Your right to escalate your complaint to the Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal) and the timescale for doing so.
- 5.11. If you have not received the outcome to your Formal Complaint within twenty working days or you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Formal Stage Complaint, you may submit a Complaint Appeal.

6. Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal)

- 6.1. Complaint Appeals must be made within ten working days of the end of the Formal Stage.
- 6.2. Complaint Appeals will not normally consider the matter afresh or involve an investigation. To be eligible, your Complaint Appeal must demonstrate any one of the following grounds:
- a. There is evidence of a mistake at an earlier stage of the complaint that – if it had not occurred – would have resulted in a different, more favourable outcome.
or
 - b. There is new evidence that was not reasonably available at an earlier stage and which would have made a difference to the outcome reached.
or
 - c. The outcome of an earlier stage was not reasonable.
- 6.3. All Complaint Appeals must be made using the form provided (unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed). You should provide all evidence relevant to your complaint when you submit your completed complaint appeal form. If some of the evidence you want to rely on in your complaint appeal is not available, you must make this clear when you submit your appeal and indicate when you expect to be able to provide it.
- 6.4. All Complaint Appeals are subject to an initial assessment by Registry. Initial assessment includes consideration of:
- a. Whether the Complaint Appeal is eligible (received in time, using the appropriate form, has completed the Formal Stage, is supported by evidence, is seeking a reasonable remedy, has established any of the chosen appeal grounds).
 - b. Whether the matter complained about should be referred to another process.
- 6.5. Within five working days of receiving a Complaint Appeal, Registry staff will contact you:
- a. To confirm receipt and eligibility of your Complaint Appeal and to confirm next steps (which may include agreeing a deadline for you to provide any outstanding evidence). This receipt will include who your complaint appeal is being considered by, and the deadline for them to issue an outcome on your complaint appeal.
or
 - b. To confirm receipt of your Complaint Appeal and to explain that the matter is being referred through another process. Where possible you will be given the name of the person looking at the matter and the expected timescale for responding to you and (if relevant) a deadline for providing any outstanding evidence.

or

- c. To confirm that your Complaint Appeal is ineligible for any consideration. If this happens, we will tell you the reason why and tell you about making a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.
- 6.6. Complaint Appeals will normally be considered by the Head of Registry or their nominee and be completed within twenty working days following confirmation of receipt. If eligible, we may hold a Complaint Appeal Panel to hear your Complaint Appeal.
 - 6.7. If a Complaint Appeal Panel is to be held, you will be given:
 - a. The date, time, location of the meeting, and your right to bring a companion with you. If to be held online, you will be given a link to the meeting.
 - b. Instructions on what to do if you cannot attend the meeting on the set date and time.
 - c. The names of all those attending the meeting, including their purpose at the meeting (e.g. notetaker, observer).
 - d. How to alert the University to any potential bias in relation to the meeting attendees.
 - e. An outline agenda for the meeting.
 - f. Copies of (or access to) all documents being considered during the meeting.
 - 6.8. Within five working days following a Complaint Appeal Panel you will be provided with the outcome of the Complaint Appeal Panel.
 - 6.9. The Complaint Appeal Stage ends when an outcome is issued or if you have not received an outcome within twenty working days of confirmation of receipt of your Complaint Appeal.
 - 6.10. Your Complaint Appeal outcome will explain:
 - a. Our understanding of your complaint.
 - b. Who considered your Complaint Appeal.
 - c. What evidence was considered and if relevant, any weight given to that evidence.
 - d. Whether your Complaint Appeal has been upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld. Different decisions may be reached for each of the heads of your complaint.
 - e. The reason for the outcome for each head of complaint.
 - f. Any remedy being offered, and how you can accept that offer. Even if your Complaint Appeal is Not Upheld, we can make an offer to put things right.
 - g. The outcome of the Complaint Appeal is final and will result in a Completion of Procedures Letter being issued.
 - 6.11. If you have not received the outcome to your Complaint Appeal within twenty working days or you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Complaint Appeal, you may request a Completion of Procedures Letter.
 - 6.12. Once you have completed the Complaint Appeal stage you may be entitled to ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) as the independent ombuds service, to review your complaint about the outcome of your disciplinary case. Any complaint you make to the OIA must be submitted within twelve months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter. Further information is available at: www.oiahe.org.uk.

7. Schedule A

This Policy (set out above) applies to Regent's University London provision delivered directly at Regent's University London or through our Collaborative Partners except as detailed below:

DOMUS Academy

7.1. TBC

Istituto Marangoni (London)

7.2. TBC

Istituto Marangoni (Paris)

7.3. TBC.

Liverpool Media Academy (LMA)

7.4. TBC.

MACROMEDIA

7.5. TBC.