

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. You may seek support from the Student Experience team by emailing ASK@Regents.ac.uk.
 - b. Confidential, impartial, and fair. This means that we will treat concerns raised using this Policy seriously 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 is reasonably possible to investigate complaints. 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 How this Policy applies to students under the University's Collaborative Provision arrangements is detailed in Schedule A at the end of this document.
- 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 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 will communicate only with them, not directly with you. We do not normally agree that your representative may be someone acting in a legal capacity. We may communicate with a representative if this is part of an agreed reasonable adjustment or because you are part of a group complaint.
- 1.7 In accordance with UK legislation (Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023), 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. 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 expected to read and understand these Regulations, including familiarising yourself with any updates made during your studies.
- 1.12 Any designated role (e.g. Head of School or Director of Programme) will be taken to include 'or nominee'.

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. We define these terms below.
- 'Currently enrolled' means having completed their enrolment. Anyone who has not completed enrolment is not considered to be a current student and therefore cannot complain using this Policy.
 - 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.
 - '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.
 - '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.
 - For doctoral students, the opposite applies which means that for complaints about course delivery, teaching or administration you can use our early resolution and

- formal stages of this policy and then the second formal stage (the appeal stage) of the validating partner university.
- f. '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](#).
 - Complaints about the conduct of staff may be taken forward by Human Resources.
 - Complaints relating to an academic outcome may be referred through the [Academic Appeals Regulations](#).
 - Complaints about the Regent's Student Union may be referred through the Student Union complaints process.
- 2.8 We will tell you if we refer your complaint to another process and we will tell you if your complaint has been upheld. The information we share with you about the outcome of your complaint will be limited in accordance with current data protection legislation. However, we will balance this against any legitimate interest you may have in receiving information to mitigate harm or distress, including in accessing your study environment. Where information about the outcome of your complaint is shared in these circumstances, you will be asked to respect the confidential nature of this information.
- 2.9 A complaint may be deemed vexatious or malicious as outlined below. Vexatious and/or malicious complaints will be closed and any right of escalation or appeal removed.
- A vexatious complaint is one where we believe you are complaining primarily to cause harassment, or you make 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.
- 2.10 Admissions complaints must be made using our [Admissions Complaint Policy](#).

- 2.11 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 and Expectations

3.1 We will:

- a. 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.
- b. 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 early resolution 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 Student Union (StudentUnion@Regents.ac.uk) for support and guidance at any stage of this Policy.

- 3.4 This Policy has one Informal and two Formal stages. These are: Early Resolution (Informal)> First Formal Stage (Formal Complaint)>Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal). There is also the opportunity, in appropriate cases, to consider mediation as part of any early resolution.

4. Early Resolution (Informal)

- 4.1 We expect you to seek to resolve any early complaint within fifteen working days of a single incident or the last of a series of instances. We describe this as 'early resolution.' There are some exceptions to this, particularly where your complaint concerns behaviour such as harassment or sexual misconduct and we address these separately below in Section 6.

- 4.2 Your early complaint should be raised with the most relevant person. Where possible, you should speak to the person your early complaint relates to in order to attempt to resolve the matter locally. The Student Experience team may be able to help you with this.

- 4.3 The person responding to your early complaint should do so within fifteen working days. The early resolution outcome should be copied to Registry to facilitate monitoring and to determine eligibility to move to the next stage.

4.4 The Early Resolution Stage ends when an outcome is issued or if you have not received an outcome within fifteen working days of raising your early complaint.

4.5 If you have not received the outcome to your early complaint within fifteen working days or you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may be able to make a Formal Complaint (see Section 7 below).

5. Mediation

5.1 Depending on the nature of your complaint, it is possible that mediation might be an appropriate option to resolve the issue. Mediation is a facilitated conversation with a trained mediator through which both parties will be supported to reach mutually agreed satisfactory outcomes. If harm or offence has been caused by the behaviour of another individual's words or actions, mediation may provide a positive opportunity to find resolution.

5.2 Mediation will not be advised for incidents of serious harm, sexual misconduct or violence.

5.3 In mediation, where there are disputing parties, they may seek to resolve their differences with the assistance of a trained mediator acting as an impartial third party. Mediation is voluntary and aims to offer the disputing parties the opportunity to be heard fully, to hear each other's perspectives and to decide how to resolve their dispute themselves.

5.4 Mediation is entirely confidential and no record of the contents of the mediation process is held on any student file. The contents of all mediated conversations are not shared with anyone unless explicitly agreed (and confirmed in writing by the mediator) by the parties involved in those discussions. Mediation may be recommended as an option for appropriate cases where solutions can be negotiated with support.

5.5 If mediation is entered into at any point in the management of a complaint the usual timescale within one or more of Regent's procedures will be suspended until mediation is concluded. If mediation is successful, the complaint may be considered resolved. If not, the complaint will continue through the procedure and the timeframes will resume.

6. Complaints concerning serious harm, sexual misconduct or violence

6.1 Where the matter you raise concerns serious harm, sexual misconduct or violence, it is unlikely to be appropriate to consider this at an early resolution stage or through mediation.

6.2 Complaints of this nature will move straight to the First Formal Stage (below) where submitted within fifteen working days of a single incident or the last of a series of instances.

6.3 As outlined above, these may be addressed through other relevant procedures, such as General Misconduct (for students) or through HR procedures (for staff) depending on the circumstances of your complaint.

6.4 You will be notified of the outcome to your complaint, even if it is not possible to share detailed information to manage data protection obligations.

7. First Formal Stage (Formal Complaint)

7.1 Formal Complaints must be made within ten working days of the end of the Early Resolution 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.

- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 All Formal Complaints are subject to an initial assessment by Registry. Initial assessment includes:
- whether the Formal Complaint is eligible (received in time, using the appropriate form, has completed the Early Resolution Stage, is supported by evidence, is seeking a reasonable remedy);
 - whether the matter complained about should be referred to another process.
- 7.4 Within five working days of receiving a Formal Complaint, Registry staff will contact you:
- 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
 - 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
 - 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.
- 7.5 Eligible Formal Complaints must be completed within twenty working days of confirmation of receipt.
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 If a Complaint meeting is to be held, you will be given:
- the date, time, location of the meeting (including any link for an online meeting), and your right to bring a companion with you, usually with five working days' notice in advance of the meeting being held
 - instructions on what to do if you cannot attend the meeting on the set date and time
 - the names of all those attending the meeting, including their purpose at the meeting (e.g. notetaker, observer)
 - information about how to alert the University to any potential bias in relation to the meeting attendees
 - an outline agenda for the meeting
 - copies of (or access to) all documents being considered during the meeting.
- 7.8 Up to 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.

- 7.9 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 Complaint.
- 7.10 Your Formal Complaint outcome will explain the following matters.
- Our understanding of your complaint (referred to as 'heads of complaint').
 - Who considered your Formal Complaint.
 - What evidence was considered and if relevant, any weight given to that evidence.
 - 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.
 - The reason for the outcome for each head of complaint.
 - 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.
 - Your right to escalate your complaint to the Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal) and the timescale for doing so.
- 7.11 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 Complaint, you may submit a Complaint Appeal.

8. Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal)

- 8.1 Complaint Appeals must be made within ten working days of the end of the Formal Stage.
- 8.2 For doctoral students, your final right of appeal in matters concerning teaching and learning will be to the relevant validating university under its procedures. You will be directed to the relevant information once you receive the outcome of your First Formal Stage. You can request details and links to the relevant regulations and procedures from partner universities at any time from casework@regents.ac.uk.
- 8.3 Complaint Appeals will not normally consider the matter afresh or involve an investigation. You can expect to receive a written response which will state whether your appeal is upheld, partly upheld or not upheld and provide reasons for this.
- 8.4 To be eligible, your Complaint Appeal must demonstrate any of the following grounds.
- 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
 - 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
 - The outcome of the earlier stage was not reasonable.
- 8.5 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 appeal 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.

- 8.6 Within five working days of receiving your Complaint Appeal, the Head of Registry will appoint someone with no previous involvement in your case to acknowledge receipt and determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met. If any of the grounds have been met, a review will be conducted. This will usually be concluded within twenty days of confirming receipt of your appeal.
- 8.7 If the facts of the case indicate that the complaint decision did not take into account all the relevant information which you had provided, you may be issued with an Amended Outcome Letter which details any new or additional action that we propose to take.
- 8.8 If the person handling your complaint appeal considers it necessary, they can convene a Complaint Appeal Panel to consider your appeal. The Complaints Appeal Panel is composed of:
- a. A Head of School who will chair the Panel;
 - b. A senior member of staff;
 - c. An optional member of the Student Union;
 - d. A member of Registry staff will be in attendance to clerk the meeting.
- 8.9 The Complaint Appeal Panel will consider the information you have provided and may conduct its business by meeting or by correspondence. They may ask to speak to you in order to reach a decision and you will be provided with details of the meeting, an agenda and relevant information for that meeting. You will usually be given at least five working days' notice of the Complaint Appeals Panel meeting.
- 8.10 The Second Formal Stage: Complaint Appeal 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.
- 8.11 Your Complaint Appeal outcome will explain:
- a. Our understanding of your Complaint Appeal.
 - 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.
 - e. The reason for the outcome for each element of your Complaint Appeal.
 - 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.
- 8.12 The outcome of the Complaint Appeal is final and will result in a Completion of Procedures Letter being issued.
- 8.13 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.
- 8.14 Once you have completed the Second Formal Stage: Complaint Appeal 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 formal complaint. 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.

9. Student Death

- 9.1 If a student submits a complaint (at any stage) and we subsequently receive formal notification of their death before that stage has been concluded, we will immediately stop all related communications and close the matter.

10. Schedule A

- 10.1 The applicability of this Policy under the University's Collaborative Provision arrangements is detailed below.
- 10.2 Where the Regent's University London Policy applies, collaborative partners may use different terminology, e.g. 'programmes' and 'units' instead of 'courses' and 'modules'.

DOMUS Academy

- 10.3 The Regent's University London policy applies. The Domus Student Handbook will provide details of which department to contact and where the forms can be located.
- 10.4 Upon receipt of a First Formal Stage (Formal Complaint), if the matter relates to the learning and teaching of the course(s) the matter may be referred to Regent's University for the investigation to be completed. If the matter does not relate to the learning and teaching, the matter will normally be investigated by Domus.
- 10.5 Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal) will be overseen by Regent's University where a complaint relates to teaching and learning. The complaint appeal will be considered by Domus in respect of all other matters. Students should contact casework@regents.ac.uk should they wish to request a complaint review.

Istituto Marangoni (London)

- 10.6 Students who wish to make a complaint at the Early Resolution or First Formal Stage should refer to Istituto Marangoni London's Student Complaints Policy. Istituto Marangoni London's policy also applies where there is a request to review a complaint outcome that is unrelated to teaching and learning. However, for matters relating to teaching and learning, requests for review should be directed to Regent's University London, who will consider the complaint under this policy at Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal). Students should contact casework@regents.ac.uk should they wish to request a complaint review.

Istituto Marangoni (Paris)

- 10.7 Students who wish to make a complaint at stage one or two (early resolution or first formal complaint) should refer to Istituto Marangoni Paris' Student Complaints Policy. Istituto Marangoni Paris' policy also applies where there is a request to review a complaint outcome that is unrelated to teaching, learning and/or academic standards. However, for matters relating to teaching and learning, requests for review should be directed to Regent's University London, who will consider the complaint under this policy at Second Formal Stage (Complaints Appeal). Students should contact casework@regents.ac.uk should they wish to request a complaint review.

Liverpool Media Academy (LMA)

- 10.8 LMA students who wish to make a complaint at the Early Resolution or First Formal Stage should refer to LMA's Appeals and Complaints Policy. LMA's policy also applies where there is a request to review a complaint outcome that is unrelated to learning, teaching and academic standards. However, for matters relating to teaching and learning, requests for review should be directed to Regent's University London, who will consider the complaint under this policy at Second Formal Stage (Complaints Appeal). Students should contact casework@regents.ac.uk should they wish to request a complaint review.

MACROMEDIA

- 10.9 The Regent's University London policy applies, with the following variations:
- At section 4.1 a student should contact zpa@macromedia.de at the Early Resolution stage.

- b. At section 3.3 students can contact the Local Academic Affairs Office and the site Welcome desk for support and advice.
- c. Upon receipt of a First Formal Stage (Formal Complaint), if the matter relates to the learning and teaching of the course(s) the matter should be referred to Regent's University for the investigation to be completed. If the matter does not relate to the learning and teaching the matter will normally be investigated by Macromedia. The matter may be allocated to a senior member of staff of Macromedia, for example Campus Director, Local Head of Faculty or Head of Department to which the matter relates.
- d. Second Formal Stage (Complaint Appeal) will be overseen by Regent's University where a complaint relates to teaching and learning. The complaint appeal will be considered by Macromedia in respect of all other matters. Students should contact casework@regents.ac.uk should they wish to request a complaint review.