



Regent College Higher Education

Student Complaints Procedure

Guidance Notes for Students

1. These guidance notes are intended to provide you with a user-friendly guide to how you can raise a complaint about any aspect of Regent College Higher Education's educational provision, facilities or services. Regent College has many ways in which you can raise a concern and should not result in you using the formal Complaints Procedure. For example, you can raise concerns with your lecturers, through your Student Representatives, through your Programme Leader, Cohort Leader or Unit Leader, Assistant Principal HE, Director for Students or Principal. You should try your best to resolve any concern you have at an informal level first. Only when you feel that this has not worked or that the matter is very serious should you use the formal Complaints Procedure.
2. These notes give you some guidance about how to raise a complaint, however, you must carefully read Regent College Higher Education's Complaints Policy which can be found on the website (<http://www.regentcollegelondon.com/our-college/policies/>) , and the College's VLE (HELP).
3. There are a number of circumstances under which you cannot use the Complaints Procedure. If your dissatisfaction is something to do with grades or marks you have been awarded for coursework, dissertation or an examination, or to do with an academic award you have been made, then you will need to use the Academic Appeals Procedure. This can be found on Regent College Higher Education's website, the VLE (HELP) or you can obtain a copy from the Director for Students.
4. If you are enrolled on a programme awarded by Buckinghamshire New University you are advised to use Regent College Higher Education's complaints policy and procedure at Stage 1 to attempt to resolve the matter informally. If you wish to lodge a formal complaint this may be done either through Buckinghamshire New University (<https://bucks.ac.uk/search?query=complaints%20policy>) or Regent College Higher Education's complaints procedure, depending on the nature of your complaint. The Director for Students will advise you on the appropriate course of action to follow.
5. All students registered on Pearson programmes should use Regent College Higher Education's complaints policy and procedure.
6. The guidance and advice given below relates to Regent College Higher Education's complaints policy and procedure.
7. If you are dissatisfied with services or facilities that are outside of Regent College Higher Education's control you cannot use this Complaints Procedure. However, staff at Regent College Higher Education might be able to help you with identifying how to make a complaint and to whom in such circumstances.
8. It is not possible for someone else to raise a concern or complaint on your behalf, even if they are your parent, spouse, brother or sister. Regent College has a clear formal relationship with you, it does not have any formal relationship with anyone else on your behalf, even if, for example, your parent or spouse is paying your fees for the programme you are studying at



Regent College HE. Consequently, while you can obtain whatever advice and support you wish in formulating your complaint it must be you who personally who raises the complaint.

9. The complaints procedure encourages you to try to resolve your complaint at an informal level (Stage 1) first. If you do wish to make a formal complaint this must be done in accordance with the Complaints Procedure and you are required to complete the Complaints Form for any Stage 2 complaint. If you write to or e-mail any member of staff without completing the Complaint Form this will not be regarded as a formal, Stage 2 Complaint. Where the issue you raise is potentially serious, staff at Regent College HE will be advised not to respond to your written communications until you have completed and submitted the Complaint Form. Similarly, if a member of staff has tried to resolve a complaint at Stage 1 or informally with you, but after an exchange of correspondence, has not managed to achieve resolution with you, Regent College HE staff have been advised not to respond further unless you raise the complaint at Stage 2. In both cases, the member of staff will say to you what they are doing and refer you to the formal Stage 2 Complaints Procedure and the need to fill in the Complaints Form.
10. If you wish to raise an issue in confidence you are able to do so. In fact, if you raise an issue with a member of staff, they need your permission before they can discuss it with anyone else. However, you should be aware that there is often little that can be done if you do not give this permission. In any event, all concerns and complaints will remain confidential to those people who are directly involved in any investigation into a complaint that you make.
11. It is a breach of both the staff and student disciplinary procedures for anyone to harass or victimise¹ you for raising and/or submitting a complaint. Your complaint does not have to be found to be justified; you simply have to be raising it in good faith, that is, believing it is a valid complaint. On the other hand, if you make or support a complaint that you know is untrue or unfounded, you are liable to be disciplined.
12. While, in general, making a complaint will not and should not have any noticeable impact on the day-to-day working relationship between you and any members of staff, there are circumstances and types of complaints that could adversely affect your relationship with one or more members of staff, for example, if you have specifically complained about them. While Regent College Higher Education is confident that no member of staff would victimise, in any way, any student who has raised a complaint, whatever the circumstances, we understand that you may not be confident that this is the case. Regent College HE, therefore, has to balance the need to avoid unnecessary disturbance to you of your existing teaching, supervision and assessment arrangements with the need to demonstrate beyond doubt that you have not been victimised as a consequence of raising your complaint. If you have concerns over these matters you are advised to discuss the issues with the Director for Students.
13. If you only have a general working relationship with the relevant member of staff (for example, the member of staff teaches on a module you are studying), it is expected that both you and the member of staff will continue the relationship in a professional manner and allow matters that you are complaining about to be progressed through the Complaints Procedure. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Director for Students or Assistant Principal HE consider agreeing to alternative working arrangements while your complaint is being investigated. On the other hand, if you have to work more directly with the relevant member of staff (for example, he or she closely supervises your work, or would normally assess and mark your work before the investigation into the complaint is likely to be completed) the Director for Students

¹ See *Regent College Higher Education's Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy*



or Assistant Principal HE will endeavour to make alternative arrangements if you make such a request or it is deemed appropriate given the circumstances.

14. To make a formal Stage 2 Complaint in line with the Complaints Procedure you must fill in each section of the Complaints Form and submit it to the Director for Students. The Director for Students will first ensure that the complaint you are making is most appropriately dealt with through the Complaints Procedure or is more appropriately dealt with through the Academic Appeals procedure. If the latter, your complaint will be dealt with through this procedure and you will be informed of this in writing. If your complaint is appropriate to the complaints procedure you will receive an acknowledgement letter within five working days of your submission of the Complaints Form.
15. The Director for Students will appoint an appropriate member of staff to investigate your complaint. The appointed person will, in most circumstances, want to speak to you about your complaint to clarify matters to do with the issues that you have raised. The investigating officer will submit a report to the Director for Students. The report will provide a summary of the evidence gathered about the complaint and make one of three general recommendations:
 - a. to dismiss the complaint
 - b. to suggest an amicable settlement to you, as the complainant
 - c. to find the complaint justifies and suggest an offer of redress
16. You will receive a letter from the Director for Students within 15 working days of the Complaint Form being received. The letter will address each complaint made and justify the grounds upon which decisions have been made. A copy of this letter will also be given to the Principal.
17. If you are not satisfied with the response you may move to Stage 3 and lodge an appeal to the Assistant Principal Higher Education. This must be done using the Appeal Against the Outcome of a Complaint Form. Within 10 working days the Assistant Principal Higher Education will decide if there is a prima facie case to refer to matter to the Complaints Review Panel. You can expect to receive a letter within 10 working days of submitting the Appeal Against the Outcome of a Complaint Form informing you of whether or not a Complaints Review Panel will be convened to look into your appeal. A Complaints Review Panel will be convened within 15 working days of submission of your appeal and you should expect to receive a letter detailing the outcome within 5 working days of the Complaints Review Panel having met. If your appeal is upheld the letter will inform you of what action has been taken or is proposed in the light of the Panel's recommendations.
18. The decision and outcome of the Complaints Review Panel is final. You will be issued with a Letter of Completion which will state that you have exhausted Regent College's internal procedures for investigating your complaint. There is no further recourse within Regent College further to consider your complaint. We hope that matters would not get to this stage and that the College is able to respond to your complaint at any of stages in the Complaints Policy and Procedure to your satisfaction.
19. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint following the informal and formal procedures of Regent College Higher Education you may refer your complaint to an independent external body called the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>. The OIA is an independent body set up to review student complaints. It is a free service for students and deals with individual complaints against higher education institutions in England and Wales. For the OIA to consider your



complaint you must present the Letter of Completion with a completed OIA Complaint Form (<http://oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia/oia-complaint-form.aspx>) to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Guidance on eligibility and the rules of the IOA is given at <http://oiahe.org.uk/media/42281/guidance-note-scheme-eligibility-march-2013.pdf>

20. The flow chart summarises the various stages and timescales of the complaints procedure at Regent College. Regent College's Student complaints procedure is available on the website (<http://www.regentcollegelondon.com/our-college/policies/>) and our virtual learning environment HELP.

Revised DoQE January 2018
Version V3.1

Author	Director of Quality Enhancement
Version	Version 3.1
Update	January 2018
Approval	Academic Board January 2018
Review Date	August 2018