

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Document Summary

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1. Our Commitment to You

1.1 The City College is committed to providing quality academic and personal support. We value your feedback and understand that sometimes things can go wrong. This policy is designed to be open, fair, and unbiased, ensuring that any complaints are addressed promptly. We encourage you to try to resolve any concerns informally first.

1.2 This policy is guided by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), which defines a complaint as: "An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about a college's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of, the provider."

2. Who Can Complain and What You Can Complain About

2.1 This policy applies to registered students or individuals who have recently been registered. You must submit your complaint within 30 calendar days of the issue arising.

2.2 Complaints can be made about:

- The delivery of a programme of study.
- Misleading or incorrect information in writing.
- Poor quality of facilities or services.
- Inefficiencies in administration.
- An action or inaction on the part of the College.
- A complaint about free speech at the College.

2.3 Complaints must be made directly by the student(s) concerned. A group of students can nominate a representative to act on their behalf.

3. What This Policy Does NOT Cover

Some issues are handled through other procedures. This policy does not cover:

- Appeals against assignment grades or progression decisions.
- Appeals against decisions made by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
- Allegations of academic malpractice.
- Complaints about the outcomes of disciplinary proceedings.
- Anonymous or third-party complaints.
- Allegations regarding the behaviour of a student or staff member (these should be raised through the appropriate channels).

4. Our Complaints Procedure

Our procedure has three internal stages before a potential external review by the OIA. This process is in line with the OIA's Good Practice Framework.

4.1 Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Try to resolve the issue as soon as possible by speaking directly with the staff member or Programme Leader most immediately concerned. This should be done within 10 working days of the issue arising.

The staff member should attempt to resolve the issue within a further 10 working days.

4.2 Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If you are not satisfied with the informal outcome, you can submit a formal complaint. This must be done using the appropriate complaints form, which can be downloaded from our website.

Formal complaints must be submitted within 10 working days of a failed informal resolution or 30 calendar days if there was no informal attempt.

A formal complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days and will be investigated by the Principal, Managing Director or Director of Student Records.

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to you in writing within 10 working days, along with clear reasons for the decision.

4.3 Stage 3: Appeal (The Final Internal Stage)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of Stage 2, you may request a review. This request must be made on the appropriate form within 10 working days of receiving the formal complaint report.

You can only appeal on one of three grounds:

- The correct procedure was not followed.
- The outcome was unreasonable.
- There is new, material evidence that was unavailable at an earlier stage.

The appeal will be handled by senior staff not previously involved. The decision will be communicated to you in writing within 30 calendar days.

5. External Review by the OIA

5.1 Once you have completed all three internal stages, we will issue you with a Completion of Procedures (COP) Letter. This letter confirms that you have exhausted our internal processes.

5.2 You can then take your complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA is an independent body that reviews student complaints. You must apply to the OIA within 12 months of the date on your COP Letter.

5.3 If you choose not to appeal at Stage 3 but still want to go to the OIA, you can request a COP Letter. You must do this within one month of the Stage 2 decision.

5.4 In addition, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and the Office for Students (OfS) have a complaints scheme for matters relating to freedom of speech. Although any such complaint should initially be raised internally with the institution, if the complainant is unhappy about the outcome, they can complain externally once they have undergone the internal process.

6. Submitting a Formal Complaint

To submit a formal complaint, you must use the Complaints Form available on the College website. Please send the completed form and any supporting documentation to: sriaz@citycollege.ac.uk

7. Further Information and Resources

For additional details on the regulations that inform this procedure, please refer to the following sources:

- Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA): This is the independent body that reviews student complaints.
- <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>
- Office for Students (OfS): As the regulator for higher education, the OfS sets out conditions of registration related to quality and student protection.
- [Consumer protection for students - Office for Students](#)
- Pearson: As an awarding body for your qualifications, Pearson has its own guidance on complaints and appeals.
- [Feedback and complaints | Pearson qualifications](#)
- Jisc: This body provides guidance on a range of digital issues in education, which can be relevant to some complaints.
- [Complaints - Jisc](#)