

MORLEY COLLEGE LONDON

Higher Education Complaints Policy and Procedure

POLICY OWNER:	Chair of HE Subcommittee
FINAL APPROVAL BY:	Governing Body
Policy Category:	Student
Approved by Policy Committee:	01 April 2019
Approved by Governing Body:	13 July 2020
Review Date:	31 July 2024

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Morley College London (“the College”) is committed to providing the highest quality services and facilities to all its students, whatever course they are studying at whatever centre (or online). We hope you will find that this is so throughout your time within the College. However, if there are areas of our provision which concern you, or about which you wish to complain, these pages tell you how to go about it. The College is always looking to identify any shortcomings and improve its procedures and practices, and we take legitimate complaints very seriously. An important part of the outcome of every formal complaint, whether it is upheld or not, is the action taken to prevent the recurrence of the complaint in the future.
- 1.2. It needs to be noted this policy does not cover academic appeals or disciplinary issues; there is separate documentation for those within the chapters of the College’s

- 1.11. In respect of point 1.9, nor does the College preclude a Third Party Complaint made on behalf of a student (such as by a carer or relative of the student concerned), but no investigation will be undertaken in such circumstances without the student's written agreement to the concerns raised and written consent for an investigation to be carried out.

2. Policy implementation
 - 2.1. This policy deals with situations relating to concerns and complaints by students undertaking Higher Education studies at the College. It applies only to acts or omissions which take place at a time when the complainant is an enrolled student of the College and does not, therefore, apply to applicants prior to admission with the College, or to former students of the College whose complaint refers to an act or omission which took place after their enrolment has ended.
 - 2.2. It is expected that the majority of complaints will be resolved as part of normal, informal communication with members of staff, such as your tutor, Head of Service or Centre Principal or another relevant member of staff. In all instances, the College welcomes and encourages approaches designed to bring about an informal resolution. Any individual who thinks that they have a justified cause for concern or complaint should feel able to raise the matter without fear of subsequent victimisation, as should any individual providing supporting evidence or representation. Whether the complaint is eventually upheld or not, the student has a right to raise it as long as they do so in good faith.
 - 2.3. It is expected that all individuals will exhaust this policy before taking legal action, although this cannot and does not purport to remove the right of any individual or the College to seek a legal remedy for their dispute.
 - 2.4. Complaints will be handled sensitively and with full confidentiality for both students and staff.

complainant and the relevant staff only have a general working relationship (e.g. the relevant member of staff teaches on a unit that the complainant is studying), it is expected that both parties will continue that relationship in a professional manner and t

form HECF, but will not be accepted as an alternative.

- 4.3. It is expected that, where a complainant is dissatisfied about a minor issue that relates to a specific member of staff that they are willing to raise with that member of staff, they should do this either orally or in writing without resorting to the procedure stated in Section 5.
- 4.4. It is expected that if a concern relates primarily to minor aspects of the behaviour of one or more members of staff, the complainant will normally and informally approach the person(s) directly concerned either orally or in writing without resorting to the procedure stated in Section 5.
- 4.5. It is expected that, where a complainant is dissatisfied about a minor issue that relates to a specific member of staff that they are not willing to raise with that member of staff, they should raise a concern with the person with immediate superior administrative authority as stipulated in their course handbook either orally or in writing without resorting to the procedure stated in Section 5.
- 4.6. In response to a minor concern raised with a member of staff, if a complainant remains dissatisfied, then the complainant should raise the matter with a person with immediate superior administrative authority for the area of work, for example a Centre Principal or Head of Service as stipulated in their course handbook without resorting to the procedure stated in Section 5.
- 4.7. Asid0ID 23 >>BDCd ()Tj -0.04 100.1.2 (t)(t)-6.0 Td ()[(A)-1 (s)hg(8e)10.5 Tw9c0ID 23 >>BDCd4.37 (

the relevant Centre Principal or Head of Service (or their nominee) if the matter has not already been raised with a person with administrative authority within the Centre.

- 5.1.6. The Centre Principal or Head of Service (or nominee) shall respond to the complainant in writing within ten working days of receipt of the referral from the College Complaints Coordinator.
- 5.1.7. If the complaint has already been seen by the Centre Principal or Head of Service, the complaint will automatically be referred to Stage 2 of the procedure.
- 5.1.8. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the Centre Principal or Head of Service (or with elements of it) or if a response is not received within the timescale identified, they may refer their complaint to Stage 2 of the procedure.
- 5.1.9. To do this the complainant must write to the College Complaints Coordinator clearly setting out:
 - x the elements of the response that they are not satisfied with;
 - x the reasons why they believe that the response is unsatisfactory;
 - x the remedy that they are seeking; and
 - x that they wish the matter to be referred to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

5.2. Stage 2

5.2.1. ~~the~~ wish

action.

- 5.2.6. For both Stage 1 and Stage 2 proceedings, at the point where institutional procedures have been completed, the person complaining should expect to be provided by the College with a clear written statement, confirming that its internal procedures have reached completion and the outcome that has been reached. This is widely referred to as a 'completion of procedures letter' and is a requirement of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

6. Appeals

- 6.1. Following the Stage 2 procedure if, in the view of the complainant, the matter has not been dealt with in a reasonable manner and appropriately resolved, they may appeal in writing to the Principal. This appeal must be served (served meaning posted using recorded delivery) within ten working days of receiving the College's original reply. The Principal will acknowledge the complaint within five working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 6.2. Any appeal the

7. Monitoring

- 7.1. In all circumstances the College is committed to expediting a concern or complaint in the most efficient way possible and in a manner that is appropriate to the level of investigation required. All concerns and complaints are treated with appropriate seriousness in a fair and understanding manner.
- 7.2. Monitoring and evaluating complaints enables the College to satisfy itself that the policy is working satisfactorily for all students, and to take appropriate action where this is not the case. Additionally, collecting information on the focus of complaints provides valuable feedback on all the aspects of support for students' learning. The identification of consistent themes among complaints - or a disproportionate number of complaints from one part of the College - might, for example, point to positive improvements which could be made to the student experience and the quality of the College's offer.
- 7.3. The College Complaints Coordinator will ensure that all records show the nature of the complaint, how it was dealt with, the time taken for a resolution to be reached and the outcome.
- 7.4. Termly complaints reports will be made to the Student Journey Sub-Committee and Programme Boards with an annual report to the Governing Body setting out the key features, the outcomes and any changes that have been made in response to all the formal complaints that have been initiated during the previous academic year. In order to monitor themes or trends across the College's Higher Education offer and subsequently improve on its services and provisions, the categories shall include:
 - x the number of formal complaints lodged;
 - x the number of those formal complaints upheld and rejected;
 - x the number of formal complaints divided by age, ethnic origin, gender and disability type;
 - x mode of attendance, programme and level of study; and
 - x a concise and anonymous summary of the issues raised and of any action recommended and/or taken.
- 7.5. This policy and the procedures therein will be subject to an annual review for the purposes of continuous quality improvement. Any changes to the content of this policy and any procedures shall be communicated to all relevant stakeholders as soon as is practicably possible with all changes clearly specified from previous versions of this policy.

Appendix 1 Higher Education Complaints Form

Name
Address
Postcode
Email
Telephone/Mobile
Student Number (if applicable)

Course on which enrolled

Year or level of study

Please give details of your concern or complaint below - you may include an additional statement attached to this form

Please indicate which category your communication relates to – please tick one

 Concern Complaint Incident

The concern has been raised with – Please Circle
(If not

substance of the complaint and will have the right to reply to the complaint. Information contained within the complaint will be made available to those members of staff involved in the investigation. The relevant line managers will also be informed. Beyond this complaints are confidential.

APPENDIX 2: HE COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART