



LONDON SCHOOL  
OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Document title: Student Complaints Procedures		
Owner: Head of Registry		
Approving body: Executive Committee	Date of approval: September 2017	
Version: 3.6	Next review date: September 2018	
Supersedes: 3.5	Previous review dates: September 2015, September 2016, January 2017	
Public use: Yes	Staff use: Yes	Student use: Yes

Contents:

1. General Principles .....	3
Mapping of Policy against the QAA UK Quality Code:.....	4
3 Scope of the Complaints Procedure .....	4
4 Stage I: Early (Informal) Resolution.....	5
5. Stage II: Formal complaints procedure .....	5
6. Stage III: Review Stage .....	6
7. Other Procedures/External Review .....	7
Notes: .....	9

## 1. General Principles

1.1 The College seeks to maintain high standards in its provision of courses, services and facilities to students. The College has established its student complaints procedures to deal with legitimate complaints from students in a fair, prompt and efficient manner, and has adopted and incorporated the standards and guidelines set out in the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)'s *Good practice framework for handling complaints and appeals*.

1.2 Complaints will be addressed through a three stage process.

Stage I: Early (informal) Resolution;  
Stage II: Formal Complaints Procedure;  
Stage III: Review Stage

The College aims to resolve all Stage I and II complaints within a period of 90 calendar days from the initiation by the student of the Stage III procedure.

1.3 All complaints will be dealt with without recrimination and no student will be disadvantaged on account of raising a complaint. Students may complain individually or collectively, where appropriate. Complaints will be investigated objectively. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

1.4 Where a complaint made by a student is believed to be frivolous, vexatious or motivated by malice, the College reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the student for breach of the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure. This will be investigated as a potential breach of Section 2.2. (c) of the Code: Respect other members' basic rights to work and live in a safe, secure environment, free from anxiety, fear, intimidation and harassment.

1.5 All complaints will be dealt with constructively and the student will be informed of the outcome. Where a complaint is upheld, the College will make an appropriate response including taking any necessary corrective action. Means of redress include an explanation of actions taken or planned and written or oral apologies.

1.6 All complaints will be dealt with in confidence with the provision that any person about whom a complaint is made shall be supplied with a copy of the complaint. A student may be asked to attend an interview with the member of staff investigating their complaint.

1.7 A record of Stage II and Stage III complaints received from students and the means of resolution will be kept by the Registrar and reported to the Academic Board as part of the College's monitoring and quality assurance processes.

1.8 A student may seek advice from the Student Support Team when making a complaint and may be accompanied by another student or a representative, in any meeting that takes place in connection with a complaint he/she has lodged. However, under no circumstances may the student be represented by an external organisation and professional legal representation.

## **Mapping of Policy against the QAA UK Quality Code:**

2.1 This policy and procedure has been written with regard to the QAA Quality Code Chapter B9: Academic appeals and student complaints which require higher education providers to meet the following expectation:

*Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.*

2.2 As a provider of higher education courses designated for public funding, LSST has been a member of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator scheme ('OIA') since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015. Accordingly, LSST has adopted (and mapped this procedure against) the OIA's "Good Practice Framework". LSST will attempt to resolve all complaints at Stage II and III within 90 calendar days of the formal Stage II complaint being made by the student, and where this is not possible will explain to the student in good time where there is a delay.

## **3 Scope of the Complaints Procedure**

3.1 This procedure is designed to deal with complaints arising from:

- i) provision of academic services described in the College's publications including teaching, content of courses and support for learning;
- ii) incorrect or misleading information about services provided by the College;
- iii) provision of other College services described in literature published by the College;

3.2 The student complaints procedure does not cover the following:

- i) any matters relating to examination and assessment procedures or academic appeals which is otherwise dealt with through the Academic Appeals process;
- ii) disciplinary issues which is otherwise dealt with through the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations;
- iii) admissions procedures prior to enrolment as a student of the College which is otherwise dealt with through the Admissions Policy, Procedure and Regulations;
- iv) complaints about the behaviour of other students which is otherwise dealt with through the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure as per paragraph 3.3 below;
- v) unacceptable behaviour of College staff which is otherwise dealt with through the Staff Disciplinary Procedure as per paragraph

3.3 below;

3.3 If a student wishes to make a complaint about the behaviour of another student or about unacceptable behaviour of College staff, this should be addressed to the Registrar in the first instance. The Registrar shall consult as appropriate and shall determine the correct student or staff procedure or policy to be followed. Such determination shall be final. The student may seek guidance from the Student Support Team and / or the Principal.

3.4 If a complaint has been linked to a particular request (i.e. change of class) the request will not be processed until the complaint has been investigated and closed.

#### **4 Stage I: Early (Informal) Resolution**

4.1 If a student requires advice or wishes to discuss the matter before making a complaint he/she should consult his/her personal tutor, a student representative or the Student Support Team.

4.2 The complaint may be made orally or in writing, normally within ten working days of the incident or action from which the complaint arises, or in any event as soon as possible.

4.3 Most complaints will be resolved informally by an appropriate member of staff.

4.4 The member of staff to whom the complaint is made will investigate or refer the complaint and a response will be made to the student either orally or in writing, normally within 10 working days.

4.5 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of this informal procedure, then they should follow the procedures described in the formal complaints procedure below.

#### **5. Stage II: Formal complaints procedure**

5.1 A complaint under this procedure should be made to the Registrar, in writing (letter or email), normally within 20 working days of the incident or action from which the complaint arises, or the outcome of the informal resolution.

The following details must be provided:

- a full statement of the complaint;
- brief details of the steps already taken to resolve the complaint;
- reasons for the student's dissatisfaction with the attempts to resolve the complaint;
- what the student would like to be done;
- what remedy the student is seeking;
- a copy (not original documents) of any documentary evidence the student wishes to submit;
- the student's name and the College student ID number;
- full contact details for the student(including preferred method of contact eg email);

- whether the student has representation and if so whom.

The complaint should be addressed to the “Registrar, London School of Science & Technology, Alperton House, Wembley, HA0 1EH” or by email to [sajjad.zaidi@lsst.ac](mailto:sajjad.zaidi@lsst.ac).

5.2 The Registrar will determine whether all the necessary information has been provided and may contact the student requesting additional details and evidence. In all cases the Registrar will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by letter/email.

5.3 The Registrar will forward the complaint to the appropriate area(s) who will investigate the complaint using the information provided by the student in their written statement of the complaint. A response will be sent to the student in writing within twenty working days of the full complaint being received by the College. The response sent to the student must be copied to the Registrar and all relevant parties.

5.4 In instances where it has not been possible to resolve the complaint within 20 working days for a legitimate reason, the relevant area investigating the complaint shall write to the student and inform them of:

- The name of the person investigating their complaint
- The reason for the delay
- The date by which the student will be notified of the outcome
- The letter sent to the student must be copied to the Registrar and all relevant parties.

5.5 Where the complaint is directly against the Registrar, then the complaint, as outlined in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.4, should be made direct to the Principal.

## **6. Stage III: Review Stage**

6.1 If a student has reason to believe that his/her complaint has not been handled fairly, objectively or in accordance with the procedures described above, he/she should write to the Principal within 20 working days of the date of the outcome letter, setting out his/her reasons. On the instruction of the Principal, his/her nominee will act as College Ombudsman and review the handling of the complaint in the light of the student’s written statement and report in writing to the Principal within 10 working days. The Principal may confirm or rescind an earlier decision in the light of this report. The Principal will send a written reply to the student within 20 working days of receiving the request for the review of the handling of the complaint from the student.

6.2 Dissatisfaction with the outcome of a complaint will not in itself constitute grounds for a review.

6.3 Following review, there will be no further opportunity to pursue the complaint within the College, however in some cases an appeal may be brought to the awarding body (i.e. the university or Edexcel) under its own complaints procedures, and thereafter to the OIA, as set out in 7.1 - 7.5 below.

6.4 Where a complaint has been made against the Principal, or against the Registrar under paragraph 5.5, the Review Stage will be undertaken by the CEO (or the CEO's nominee not previously involved in the complaint).

## 7. Other Procedures/External Review

7.1 After the conclusion of the review as per 6.1, students may refer the decision to the appropriate awarding body for their course:

- a) for UWL Students: in accordance with their Student Complaints Procedure set out in their Student Handbook, as a Stage II complaint;
- b) for London Metropolitan University students: refer the matter for a further reconsideration by the University Secretary under regulation 6 of their Academic Regulations (Complaints Procedure).
- c) Students on Edexcel awarded courses may request a review by the awarding body only where the LSST complaints procedure has been fully exhausted, or the allegation is of malpractice as defined in the Edexcel complaints procedure.

7.2 Where no external review is possible under the awarding body's student complaints procedure, LSST will state the reasons why, and issue a Completion of Procedures Letter within 28 days of its decision.

7.3 After receipt of a Completion of Procedures Letter (either from LSST or the awarding body), students on higher education courses (HND level or above) may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Guidance on the circumstances in which complaints can be made to the OIA is available here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia/can-the-oia-look-at-my-complaint-complaints-wizard.aspx>

A complaint to the OIA must be made within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter, and should be made on their complaints form <http://oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia/oia-complaint-form.aspx> Other than in fully evidenced *exceptional* circumstances complaints cannot be made to OIA until our full complaints process is exhausted.

7.4 Students on further education courses (e.g. HNC courses) that are not publicly funded cannot appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

7.5 Should the student raise a complaint that falls within paragraph 3.2 (ii) or (iii) above or should the investigation of any complaints reveal information which appears to show that staff or students have acted in breach of College regulations, the matter will be investigated through the:

- Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure/Staff Disciplinary Procedure (Employee Handbook); and/or
- Assessments Regulations and Procedures

This includes, but is not limited to, assault or threatening behaviour, victimisation, sexual harassment or abuse, racist, sexist, homophobic or anti-disabled activity or behaviour; actions likely to cause injury or threaten safety; and unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.

7.6 If a complaint results in a hearing under another procedure or policy, the complainant may be asked to give evidence at a hearing. In instances where the complainant is not willing to give evidence, the College may not be able to proceed with the case.

7.7 Where the complaint results in a hearing under another procedure or policy, the College must comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act. This means that the College may not be able to disclose full details of this procedure and any outcomes to the student. Legally, there is a recognised expectation that internal disciplinary matters of an individual will be private. If the College is unable to disclose the details of the outcome to the student, the student will be informed of the reasons for non-disclosure.

#### 7.8 Prevent Duty:

Under the 'Prevent duty' introduced by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, relevant higher education bodies will need to assess the risks of people being drawn into terrorism and ensure they have plans in place for mitigating these risks. The College is committed to providing a secure environment for all of our students, staff and stakeholders.

It is imperative that our students have a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this. As a college, we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for our students. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our students.

Our college, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. The SPOC at LSST will be the Deputy CEO, Mr Mohammad Zaidi. If Mohammad Zaidi is unavailable, the substitute SPOC will be the Principal. The SPOC will engage with external organisations where necessary. These include the Police, Local Authorities (through Channel) and/or other relevant source of advice.

If any student wants to raise a concern regarding extremism, he/she can officer download the hard 'LSST Radicalisation and Extremism Concern Form' from the VLE, and leave it with a student support either by hand to or by email. If they want to do so anonymously, they can also post the form to:

The Deputy CEO / The Principal  
London School of Science & Technology  
Alperton House  
Bridgewater Road  
Wembley, HA0 1EH



**Notes:**

1 In these procedures a working day is any day when the College's offices are normally open. This excludes Sundays and all Bank Holidays and any other designated periods of closure.

2. The member of staff responsible for investigating a complaint at any stage described in the procedure may request the student to attend an interview as part of the investigative procedure. The member of staff will agree a date, time and location with the student and confirm this in writing. The student has the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative, and must give notification in advance of the meeting of the name of the person who will accompany them at the interview.

3. Any member of staff involved in the complaint who is also to attend the interview must be identified in advance to the complainant. The member of staff may also be accompanied by a representative.