

## Frequently Asked Questions for Complaints

### Scope

*Common questions raised in relation to student complaints.*

**To be read in conjunction with** *the Student Complaints Policy, Student Complaints Complaint forms (Stage 2 and Stage 3 Review)*

*Click on the red question mark to go directly to the answer*

- **What are the time limits for a complaint?**
- **How and where do I submit a complaint?**
- **I think I have a complaint about a member of staff but don't want to talk to them directly - what should I do?**
- **What sort of evidence do I need to submit?**
- **If I make a complaint, will it influence other decisions about me?**
- **What is the difference between an appeal and a complaint?**
- **I don't understand the advice I have been given about my complaint. What do I do?**
- **What is the OIA?**

### **What are the time limits for a complaint?**

You should aim seek to resolve your complaint at the earliest opportunity.

City's complaint process is designed to deal with complaints raised within 3 months of the event complained about. Former students can use the student complaint process about matter relating to when they studied at City within 3 months of their last registered date as a student.

### **How and where do I submit a complaint?**

For most complaints, students can raise an informal complaint with the staff member most directly involved in the event leading to your complaint. There is no form to complete – you may contact the individual staff member in person or via email.

If the complaint cannot be dealt with at that level your complaint will normally be referred to be dealt with via a formal Stage 2 complaint investigation.

If you are not happy with the outcome at the informal stage you can submit a formal Stage 2 complaint using the form accessible on the Student Hub.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your Stage 2 complaint, you may seek a Stage 3 Review.

Students wishing to submit a Stage 2 formal complaint or a request for Stage 3 review will need to complete the relevant form, both of which are accessible via the Student Complaints area of the *Help and Support* section on the Student Hub.

### **I think I have a complaint about a member of staff but don't want to talk to them directly - what should I do?**

Speak to your personal tutor, programme director or head of department. If you are still not sure speak to a Student Adviser in the Union Advice team – see City Student Union website for further information.

### **What sort of evidence do I need to submit?**

In order for your complaint to be investigated you must include evidence to support your argument. There is no limit as to how much evidence you can submit. If you have been given a deadline but the evidence is not yet available be sure to submit your complaint anyway, explain why your evidence is delayed and submit your evidence as soon as possible.

### **If I make a complaint, will it influence other decisions about me?**

If you make a complaint it will have no bearing on other decisions made about you or your future progression and achievement at City. The only exception is where a complaint is pursued inappropriately (e.g. where it is not made in good faith), and in such cases disciplinary action may be taken against you.

### **What is the difference between an appeal and a complaint?**

An appeal is made against a decision of an Assessment Board regarding a student's assessment, progression or award (for taught students) or against a decision relating to progression or examination results (for research students). A complaint can be made about any aspect of the student experience or the wider University, including educational aspects, with which the student has a grievance (excepting those things covered by appeals). A complaint can be made on any grounds whilst the grounds on which a student can appeal are limited to those set out in the Appeal Regulations.

If you aren't sure, speak to your personal tutor, a member of staff in your School Administration Office or City Students' Union Advice.

### **I don't understand the advice I have been given about my complaint. What do I do?**

Speak to the person who responded to your complaint in the first instance to seek clarification. You may also wish to contact the City Students' Union Advice who will be able to advise you and help you get the clarification you need.

### **What is the OIA?**

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) is an independent scheme which reviews student complaints against Universities. The Scheme is free for students to use. You can only apply to the OIA once you have exhausted the University's procedures and received a Completion of Procedures letter. Information on the OIA and the types of cases they will consider can be found at: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.