



RICHMOND
THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY IN
LONDON

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Introduction

It is a policy of the University to resolve as quickly and fairly as possible any grievance students may have about a programme of study for which they are registered; a service provided by the University; their treatment by any student, staff or faculty member of the University.

The purpose of the complaints procedure is to provide an opportunity for the student to resolve any such problem.

Definition of a complaint

We define a complaint as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction concerning the provision of a program of study or related academic or administrative service, when the complainant has drawn his or her concern to the attention of the University and is not satisfied with the response’. This definition does not include complaints that are covered by the following separate University procedures:

Academic Honesty

www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-programs/academic-policies-and-procedures/academic-policies.aspx

Student Conduct Code

www.richmond.ac.uk/cms/pdfs/Handbook_student_conduct.pdf

Grade Appeals

www.richmond.ac.uk/downloads/catalog0506/Academic-Affairs.pdf

Classification of Degree

Dismissal from the University

www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-programs/academic-policies-and-procedures/academic-policies.aspx

Outline of Process

Please note that Richmond operates both an Informal Procedure and Formal Procedure for dealing with Student Complaints.

If a student has a dispute with a staff or faculty member or feels that s/he is being treated unfairly by the University, s/he is strongly encouraged to appeal using the informal process by speaking directly to the person in question. If the student does not feel comfortable doing this, s/he may still pursue the informal process by seeking out the Department Chair for complaints dealing with academic matters or the Dean of Students for complaints dealing with non academic matters.

If, at the end of the informal process, the student is still dissatisfied, s/he may appeal using the formal procedures outlined below by addressing the formal complaint in writing in the first instance to the Dean of Students.

In addition, all Student Affairs staff are trained in conflict resolution as the Office of Student Affairs is generally the first point of contact for student questions and concerns.

The Informal Procedure

A student who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the University experience, outside of academic assessment, is encouraged to raise the cause of that dissatisfaction with the staff member most directly concerned. The staff member will listen carefully to the complaint, collect facts, and make informal notes as required.

If the staff member has immediate responsibility then he or she will take reasonable and prompt action to try to resolve the complaint. A student may expect a response within 10 working days to the informal raising of the complaint.

During this initial informal period, a student may consult for advice and/or informal mediation with the Student Affairs Office.

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by informal discussion with the person concerned, a student should approach the Chair of the Department or the person in charge of the service area in person or in writing. This is still the informal part of the procedures. A prompt written response should be expected.

Short notes will be kept by the staff member for monitoring and reporting purposes and to ensure that remedial action is carried through.

If the complaint is still not satisfactorily resolved then the student should resort to the formal procedures.

If the complaint is against the Chair of Department or Director of Service then the student should proceed directly to the formal part of the procedures.

The majority of complaints should be capable of resolution at this stage.

The Formal Procedure

Students should only resort to the formal procedure:

- when informal resolution has been sought and has failed;
- when the complaint is against the Head of Department or Director of Service.

The formal complaint should be addressed in writing to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will acknowledge receipt within five working days and refers the complaint to the Dean of Academic Affairs depending on the nature of the complaint.

The letter of complaint under should include:

- complainant's contact details and student number;
- the reasons why the previous actions to date have been unsatisfactory;

a full description of the specific failings of the University in the delivery of the service concerned;
the desired outcome sought by the complainant.

Should the complaint be about the Dean of Academic Affairs or the Dean of Students him/herself, then the student should forward the complaint to the President requesting that another senior manager be appointed to deal with the complaint.

Following investigation, a full response should normally be expected within 20 working days from the receipt of the complaint letter. Any recommended remedies will be implemented by the department concerned as soon as possible, and written confirmation of action taken will be sent to the Dean of Students.

If at the end of the process the student is still unhappy with the University actions, s/he may appeal to the Provost or her designated representative, whose decision in the matter will be final.

Rights and Responsibilities

The University will:

- Deal with all complaints within the time limits set out in these notes
- Make sure that we deal with all the points you raise, and that our replies explain the outcomes clearly
- Handle your complaint confidentially and only give people the information that is needed to carry out a proper investigation and make a full response
- Keep records of complaints separate from other records
- Make sure that no complaint you have made in good faith will be used to your disadvantage in the future
- Always be polite

If you are making a complaint, you should follow the procedures as outlined in this document and confine your communications to the parties mentioned.

- Give full details of your complaint and your suggested resolution
- Deal sensitively with issues that involve other students or staff, and not name them unless it is necessary
- Ensure that you follow the process outlined in this document and that you confine your communications to the officers/individuals listed in this document.
- Always be polite – abusive or inflammatory language is not acceptable neither is the widespread dissemination of any complaint.

University Personnel

Academic

Vice President for Academic Affairs/Registrar, Dr. M. Clare Loughlin-Chow,
loughlic@richmond.ac.uk 0208 332 8219

Chair of Department of Business and Economics, Professor Robert Leppard,
lepparr@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0207 368 8603

Senior Administrative Assistant: Jacqueline Ryan – ryanj@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0207 368 8601

Chair of Department of Arts & Sciences - Professor Mary Robert, robertm@richmond.ac.uk, tel:
0208 332 8234

Senior Administrative Assistant: Helen Pether petherh@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208 332 8313

Chair of Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Alex Seago,
seagoa@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208 332 8257

Senior Administrative Assistant, tbc

Domestic

Domestic Bursar, Cheryl Goodyear – goodyec@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208 332 8269

Facilities

Director of Property Services, John McEllistrim – mcellisj@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208 332 8271

Finance

Vice President for Finance and Administration, William Scott – scottw@richmond.ac.uk, tel:
0208 332 8223

Human Resources

Director of Human Resources, Jane Crichton – crichtj@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208 332 8238

IT

IT Operations Manager, Ade Akanji - akanjia@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0207 368 8617

MIS Technical Manager, Jane Silverleaf – silverj@richmond.ac.uk, tel 0208 332 8280

Security

Security Manager, Geoff Piper – piper@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208 332 8230

Student Affairs

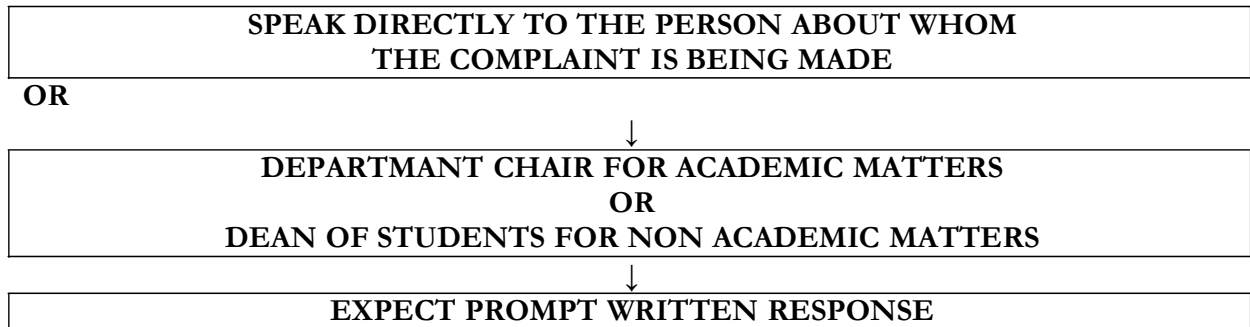
Dean of Students– Allison Cole-Stutz, colesta@richmond.ac.uk, tel: 0208
332 8208

Study Abroad

Director of Study Abroad, Dominic Alessio (from July 2007) – alessia@richmond.ac.uk,
tel 0207 368 8413

Flow Chart

INFORMAL PROCESS



FORMAL PROCESS

