



KENSINGTON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Complaints Policy

External Reference Points

UK Quality Code B9

Practice Guidelines from the Office of Independent Adjudicators

Related Policies and Documents

2.5.7. Academic Appeals Procedure

3.1.5. Procedure for Making Appeals against Admissions Decisions

6.1.1. Complaints procedure

6.1.2. Appeals procedures

6.1.3. Complaints form

6.1.4. Appeals Form

Policy Review

Next Review Date: July 2019

Reviewed By: Academic Board

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Scope

1. This policy and procedure apply to all students at Kensington College of Business (KCB), current and those who have also completed their course. As far as possible, this policy references and reflects the Good Practice Guidelines from the Office of Independent Adjudicators.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students have a clear policy and procedure to follow when submitting a genuine complaint.

Introduction

3. KCB treats all complaints from students seriously and ensures that they are dealt with promptly, in a transparent and fair manner consistently and efficiently. This policy is made simple and easy to follow so as to be Accessible to all students:

- a. This policy is summarised into a simple procedure that should always be on display on all college boards, and both the policy and procedure are distributed and explained to each student during the Induction process
- b. Each student is required to sign off the Induction checklist to confirm that they have been given the set of important documents which include the Complaints Policy
- c. The Complaints Policy should be available on the College Moodle
- d. The Policy covers all complaints made by students, including formal and informal and as far as possible concerns students on all programmes except in situations where the awarding partner dictates that its procedures be followed. However, in most cases, awarding partners require that internal processes be exhausted before recourse can be sought from their processes
- e. Each Complaint including the Appeal against the Complaint Decision should be internally dealt with within 90 days of the initial report
- f. Complaints with a major effect on the student will be given the highest priority with regards to processing times and access to staff, processes and stages at a higher level.
- g. Wherever possible, KCB aims to address student concerns about their course and its services informally through discussion. It is important that students raise their concerns locally, at an early stage, with their lecturer or any other member of staff.
- h. Students and staff have rights and responsibilities under this procedure. Consequently, students must make complaints in good faith and without malice, Students who make complaints that are frivolous, malicious, obscene or abusive may be subject to disciplinary action.
- i. All complaints will be confidential and only disclosed to individuals involved in the investigation.
- j. This Policy respects complete independency: No person with any potential conflict of interest will be included in any complaint or appeals process or stage of such process where any such conflict or potential of such conflict exists

- k. All complaints are additionally addressed with regards to enhancement procedures: the review process should capture any learning gained concerning the general welfare of the students or for the enhancement of the student's experience.
- l. An anonymous complaint box is located at reception for informal complaints for similar purposes as above. The Registrar collects the complaints/suggestions from the box every week and will assess and monitor those complaints/suggestions. Feedback from these complaints is discussed at appropriate board/committee meetings, and communicated to Student Representatives who disseminate it to the student body.

Review Process

- 4. All complaints will be reviewed as follows:
 - a. The registrar maintains a register of all complaints/suggestions in a complaints logbook
 - b. The Complaints logbook is normally presented to the next Academic Board for analysis, further action and review.
 - c. Records of such reviews are presented to the Board of Governors for further discussion and advice.
 - d. Feedback from these reviews is disseminated back to the students through the student representatives and some cases as notifications via the VLE.
- 5. The Academic Board also assesses, monitors and reviews the number, level, type and frequency of complaints and academic appeals made over the course of each academic year, during the Annual Monitoring Review. The Review report is discussed and signed-off by the BOG

Grounds of complaints considered under this Policy / Procedure:

- 6. Examples of grounds for complaint include:
 - a. A failing in KCB academic or support services
 - b. Inaccurate information about a programme
 - c. Inadequate provision of a programme and/or related resources
 - d. Inadequate facilities
 - e. The conduct of a member of staff.
- 7. Students must be registered on a programme in order to lodge a formal complaint. The only exception to this is where students have completed their programme and have a complaint about any aspect of certification of their programme (e.g. delays in receiving qualification certificates).

Exclusions from this Policy / Procedure

8. The following matters are excluded from this policy/procedure:
 - a. Complaints against final grades or progress
 - b. Complaints against the admission procedures (These are dealt with in the Complaints Against Admissions Decisions)

Complaints procedure

9. There are three parts to the complaints procedure:
 - i) Informal stage (conciliation)
 - ii) Formal stage
 - iii) Appeal stage

Informal stage (conciliation):

10. Local resolution of the complaint: complaints are generally best dealt with by the people most closely involved with the issue(s). Therefore, students should first discuss the matter either directly with the source of the complaint or with a responsible person as follows:

- a. Student representative
- b. Programme Leader
- c. Registrar
- d. Lecturer
- e. Principal, where the complaint is serious

Formal stage:

11. If a student is dissatisfied with informal attempts at resolving the complaint, they should make a written complaint using the form at Appendix 1 and e-mail it to complaints@kcb.ac.uk. The registrar compiles details of the complaints and hand the to the Principal, who commissions a Complaints Panel to investigate and report its findings to the Academic Board for consideration.

12. Acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint will be sent within 5 working days. Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, the Registrar sends a copy of the complaint to them for their response. If the student has been granted anonymity the name will be redacted. When the Academic Board has completed its consideration, it will determine one of the following:

- i. that there is substance in the complaint and what action(s) should be taken in response;
- ii. that there is no substance to the complaint and that no further action need be taken;
- iii. that there is no substance to the complaint and that the complaint has been shown to be malicious, obscene or abusive. In this case, disciplinary action in line with the College misconduct policy may be taken against the complainant.

13. The Complainant will be informed in writing of the action as result of the complaint in 15 working days.

Appeal stage:

14. Students may appeal against KCB's decision by completing the form and e-mail it to **appeals@** within 15 working days of receiving the written notification of the outcome of the complaint on the following grounds:
 - i. there was a procedural irregularity which has materially disadvantaged the student in making their complaint;
 - ii. there is new and relevant material/evidence that was not available at the time the complaint was first submitted;
 - iii. there is evidence that the complaint decision was unreasonable.
15. The registrar compiles details of the appeal and submit it the Chair of the Board of Governors for further consideration. The Chair of the BOG, appoints an Appeals Panel which will decide either to:
 - i. confirm that the complaint has been resolved satisfactorily;
 - ii. resolve the complaint;
 - iii. hear the complaint afresh.
16. The Appeals Panel should not include the Head of HE or any other member of staff who may have been involved with the case as a member of the Complaints Panel. The outcome of the appeal is final.
17. The Appeals Panel will normally be expected to complete its processes within twenty working days.
18. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they can correspond with the appropriate external body or Office of Independent Adjudicators (OIA). Full details for external recourse will be included in the Completion Letter.