

EDA COLLEGE



EDUCATE | **D**EVELOP | **A**CHIEVE

Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure¹

Version Control/History	
Policy Reference	EDA-POL-CMP-001
Version	1.0
Status	Approved
Approved by	Board of Governors
Approval Date	August 2025
Policy Owner	Principal
Policy Custodian	Registry Lead / Registrar
Review Date	August 2026
Approval Date V1.1	11 September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027
Applies To	All current and former students of EDA College

¹ In accordance with OfS conditions C1, C2 and C5, the OIA Good Practice Framework and CMA Guidance

Contents

1. Introduction and Purpose.....	3
2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework.....	3
3. Scope: What This Procedure Covers.....	3
4. What This Procedure Does Not Cover.....	4
5. Key Principles.....	5
6. Who Can Use This Procedure.....	5
7. Support Available to Students.....	5
8. Timeframes at a Glance.....	6
9. Part A: Student Complaints Procedure.....	7
10. Part B: Academic Appeals Procedure.....	10
11. Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).....	12
12. Vexatious and Malicious Complaints.....	13
13. Confidentiality and Data Protection.....	13
14. Monitoring, Reporting and Governance.....	14
15. Related Policies and Procedures.....	14
Appendix A: Complaint Submission Form.....	16
Appendix B: Academic Appeal Submission Form.....	17
Appendix C: Grounds for Academic Appeal — Guidance.....	17
Appendix D: Quick Reference Summary.....	19

1. Introduction and Purpose

EDA College (“the College”) is committed to providing an excellent student experience and to resolving any concerns or complaints that students may have promptly, fairly and effectively. We take all complaints seriously and regard them as valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

This document sets out EDA College’s Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Procedure. It provides a clear, transparent and accessible route for students to raise concerns about the quality of their experience at the College, and to appeal against academic decisions that they believe have been made incorrectly or unfairly.

The procedure is designed to be straightforward, impartial and free from reprisal. Students who raise complaints or appeal in good faith will not be disadvantaged in any way as a result of doing so.

“EDA College treats every complaint and appeal seriously. We are committed to learning from student feedback and to resolving concerns fairly, promptly and without disadvantage to the student raising them.”

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This procedure has been developed in accordance with the following:

Framework / Legislation	Relevance
Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework — Conditions C1, C2 and C5	Requires registered providers to have a student protection plan and a published complaints procedure accessible to all students
OIA Good Practice Framework: Handling Student Complaints and Appeals (2022)	Sets out the standards expected of higher education providers when managing student complaints and appeals; EDA College aligns its procedures to this framework
Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Guidance for HE Providers (2015)	Requires providers to give students clear, accurate and transparent information about their rights, including complaints and appeals routes, before and during their studies
Consumer Rights Act 2015	Students have consumer rights; this procedure ensures those rights are respected and that redress is available where services fall below the standard promised
Equality Act 2010	EDA College will ensure this procedure is accessible to all students including those with disabilities, and that no student is disadvantaged on the basis of a protected characteristic
UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018	Personal data processed in connection with complaints and appeals will be handled in accordance with EDA College’s Data Protection Policy
Human Rights Act 1998 / ECHR Article 6	Right to a fair hearing applies to formal academic decisions; this procedure ensures decision-making is procedurally fair

3. Scope: What This Procedure Covers

This procedure covers two types of student concern:

Part A — Student Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of the College’s provision or services. Complaints may relate to, but are not limited to:

- The quality or standard of teaching, learning or academic support
- The content, delivery or administration of a programme or module
- The conduct, behaviour or attitude of a member of staff
- Failure by the College to fulfil a commitment made in published course materials or the student contract
- The quality or availability of facilities, resources or services

- The administration of assessments, including marking turnaround times
- Student support services, including disability support, wellbeing and careers
- Bullying, harassment or discrimination by a member of staff (note: complaints about other students are handled under the Student Disciplinary Procedure)
- Any other aspect of the student experience not covered by Part B

Part B — Academic Appeals

An academic appeal is a request by a student for a review of a decision made by the College in relation to their academic progress or outcome. Appeals may relate to:

- A final module or programme mark or grade
- A decision of an Assessment or Examination Board, including a decision to refer, fail, repeat or exclude a student
- A decision on an extenuating circumstances application
- A decision to discontinue a student's studies on academic grounds
- A decision on a fitness to practise or fitness to study matter where academic progression is affected

4. What This Procedure Does Not Cover

The following matters fall outside the scope of this procedure and are dealt with under separate procedures. Students will be signposted to the appropriate procedure in each case:

Matter	Appropriate Procedure
Complaints about the conduct of another student (bullying, harassment, etc.)	Student Disciplinary Procedure
Complaints about academic misconduct decisions against the student	Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Policy — Appeals Process
Complaints about freedom of speech or academic freedom	Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy — Complaints Procedure
Complaints about a student disciplinary decision	Student Disciplinary Procedure — Appeal Stage
Staff grievances	Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure
Subject access requests or data protection queries	Data Protection and Privacy Policy / ICO
Complaints about the Student Loans Company or funding	Student Finance England / SLC complaints process
Matters subject to active legal proceedings	Legal advisors; procedure paused pending legal outcome

If you are unsure which procedure applies to your concern, please contact the Registry Lead / Registrar who will advise you. Raising a concern under the wrong procedure will not disadvantage you — your concern will be redirected appropriately

5. Key Principles

EDA College's approach to complaints and appeals is underpinned by the following principles:

Principle	What This Means in Practice
Accessibility	The procedure is clearly published, written in plain English, free of charge to use, and accessible to all students including those with disabilities. Support is available to students who need help using the procedure.
Timeliness	Complaints and appeals will be acknowledged and responded to within the timescales set out in this procedure. Where delays occur, the student will be informed and given a revised timescale.
Fairness and Impartiality	Complaints and appeals will be considered objectively by staff who have no prior involvement in the matter and no conflict of interest. All parties will be given an opportunity to put their case.
Confidentiality	Information shared in connection with a complaint or appeal will be treated confidentially to the extent possible. It will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the matter.
No Reprisal	No student will be disadvantaged, penalised or treated less favourably as a result of raising a complaint or appeal in good faith. Any breach of this principle will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.
Learning and Improvement	The College will use complaints and appeals data to identify systemic issues and drive continuous improvement. Trends will be reported to the Academic Board and the Board of Governors.
Independence	Where a complaint cannot be resolved internally, students have access to the independent review of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education.
Good Faith	Students are expected to engage with this procedure honestly and in good faith. Complaints or appeals made maliciously or vexatiously may be dismissed and may result in disciplinary action.

6. Who Can Use This Procedure

This procedure is available to:

- All currently enrolled students at EDA College, on any programme of study
- Students who have recently left the College, in respect of matters that arose during their enrolment, provided the complaint or appeal is submitted within three months of leaving
- Students who have recently graduated, in respect of academic decisions made during their programme, provided the appeal is submitted within the timescales set out in Section 10

Where a student lacks capacity or is otherwise unable to manage their own complaint, they may nominate a representative to act on their behalf. The representative must be authorised in writing by the student and must be either a fellow student, a member of the Student Guild (when established), or a qualified legal representative.

EDA College does not permit complaints or appeals to be submitted by third parties (including parents or family members) on behalf of a student without the student's written authorisation. This is to protect student confidentiality and ensure the student's own wishes are respected.

7. Support Available to Students

EDA College is committed to ensuring that all students can access this procedure regardless of their background, disability or level of confidence. The following support is available:

Support Available	How to Access	Lead
Advice on whether to use this procedure and how	Contact the Registry Lead / Registrar in the first instance; appointments available in person or by video call	Registry Lead / Registrar
Help completing complaint or appeal forms	Student Services team can assist; forms available in accessible formats on request	Operations Manager

Emotional support during the complaints process	Refer to the College's mental health and wellbeing service; signposting to external services where appropriate	Operations Manager
Peer support and advocacy (from 2027/28)	Student Guild representatives will be trained to support students through the complaints process	Student Guild (when established)
Disability-related adjustments	The procedure will be adapted for students with disabilities (e.g. extended timeframes, alternative formats for submissions)	Operations Manager
Translation support	Where a student's first language is not English, the College will make reasonable efforts to provide support; formal submissions must be in English	Registry Lead / Registrar
Independent advice	Students may seek independent advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau, a solicitor or the National Union of Students (NUS); this is at the student's own expense	Student's own arrangement

8. Timeframes at a Glance

Stage	Description	Submission Deadline	Response Deadline
Complaint Stage 1	Early Resolution	Within 8 weeks of the matter arising	Within 10 working days of receipt
Complaint Stage 2	Formal Complaint	Within 4 weeks of Stage 1 outcome	Acknowledgement: 3 working days Decision: 20 working days
Complaint Stage 3	Review Panel	Within 10 working days of Stage 2 outcome	Acknowledgement: 3 working days Decision: 25 working days
Appeal Stage 1	Appeal Request	Within 10 working days of the decision being appealed	Acknowledgement: 3 working days Decision: 15 working days
Appeal Stage 2	Appeal Panel	Within 10 working days of Stage 1 outcome	Acknowledgement: 3 working days Decision: 20 working days
Appeal Stage 3	Final Review	Within 10 working days of Stage 2 outcome	Acknowledgement: 3 working days Decision: 15 working days
OIA	Office of the Independent Adjudicator	Within 12 months of Completion of Procedures Letter	Varies — OIA determines its own timeline

All working day references are to days when the College is open. Timeframes may be extended in exceptional circumstances (e.g. summer vacation periods, College closure). Students will be notified of any extension in writing with reasons.

PART A: STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

9. Part A: Student Complaints Procedure

EDA College's complaints procedure has three stages. Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve their complaint at the earliest and most informal stage possible. However, they are entitled to proceed to each subsequent stage if they remain unsatisfied with the outcome.

IMPORTANT: Students should normally attempt to resolve their complaint within 8 weeks of the matter arising. Complaints submitted more than 8 weeks after the relevant event may be considered out of time, unless the student can demonstrate good reason for the delay. Contact the Registry Lead / Registrar if you are unsure.

Stage 1: Early Resolution — Informal Stage

Most concerns can be resolved quickly and informally. Before submitting a formal complaint, students are encouraged to raise their concern directly with the relevant member of staff, programme leader or the Registry Lead / Registrar.

Who to approach at Stage 1:

Nature of Concern	Who to Approach First
Concern about a specific module, teaching or feedback	Programme Leader or relevant academic staff member
Concern about course administration or College services	Registry Lead / Registrar
Concern about student support, welfare or wellbeing	Manager of Student Services
Concern about the conduct of a member of staff	Registry Lead / Registrar (who will involve the appropriate line manager)
General dissatisfaction with the College	Registry Lead / Registrar

Process at Stage 1:

- The student raises their concern verbally or by email with the appropriate person
- The person receiving the concern should respond within 10 working days
- Where possible, the concern should be resolved through discussion, explanation, apology or practical remedy
- If the concern is resolved to the student's satisfaction, no further action is needed
- If the concern is not resolved, the student may proceed to Stage 2

No written record is required at Stage 1, though students are encouraged to keep notes of any discussions. The Registry Lead / Registrar can assist students in articulating their concern if needed.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If a concern cannot be resolved at Stage 1, or if the matter is sufficiently serious to warrant formal investigation, the student may submit a formal complaint.

How to submit a Stage 2 complaint:

- Complete the Complaint Submission Form (Appendix A) and submit it to the Registry Lead / Registrar by email or in person
- The complaint must be submitted within four weeks of the Stage 1 outcome (or within eight weeks of the matter arising if Stage 1 was not attempted)
- The complaint must set out: the nature of the concern, the dates and individuals involved, any steps already taken to resolve it, and the outcome sought
- Supporting evidence (emails, correspondence, documents) should be attached where available

What happens after submission:

Step	Action	Timescale
Acknowledgement	The Registry Lead / Registrar acknowledges receipt of the complaint in writing	Within 3 working days
Initial review	The Registry Lead / Registrar reviews the complaint and determines whether it falls within scope. If out of scope, the student is informed with reasons and signposted to the appropriate route.	Within 5 working days
Investigation	An Investigating Officer (a senior member of staff with no prior involvement) is appointed to investigate the complaint. They may interview the student, relevant staff and any witnesses, and review relevant documentation.	Investigation completed within 15 working days of appointment
Draft findings	The Investigating Officer shares their draft findings with the relevant parties for comment before finalising	At least 5 working days before final outcome
Outcome letter	The Registry Lead / Registrar issues a formal Outcome Letter setting out the findings, the College's decision, any remedial action to be taken, and the student's right to proceed to Stage 3	Within 20 working days of the complaint being received

Possible outcomes at Stage 2:

- Complaint upheld — the College accepts the complaint is well-founded and sets out remedial action
- Complaint partially upheld — some elements are accepted; others are not
- Complaint not upheld — the investigation did not find evidence to support the complaint
- Complaint resolved by agreement — a mutually acceptable resolution is agreed before formal outcome

Remedial action may include: an apology, a change to College processes, additional academic support, a reassessment opportunity, financial compensation, or other appropriate measures. The College will take all upheld complaints seriously and act on findings promptly.

Stage 3: Review Panel — Final Internal Stage

If the student is not satisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, they may request a review by a Review Panel. The Review Panel is the final stage of the College's internal complaints procedure.

Grounds for requesting a Stage 3 Review:

A student may only request a Stage 3 Review on one or more of the following grounds:

- There is new evidence that was not available at Stage 2 and which could have materially affected the outcome
- There was a procedural irregularity at Stage 2 that was sufficiently serious to have affected the fairness of the outcome
- The Stage 2 outcome was unreasonable in the sense that no reasonable person, having considered all the available evidence, could have reached that decision

Disagreement with the Stage 2 outcome alone, without one of the above grounds, is not sufficient to proceed to Stage 3.

Review Panel composition:

- The Review Panel will comprise three members: a senior member of staff (Chair) who had no involvement at Stage 2, an academic staff member, and a lay member (a member of the Board of Governors or a senior manager from outside the academic area concerned)
- Where possible, the Panel will include at least one member who reflects the diversity of the College's student body
- Panel members must declare any conflict of interest and withdraw from the Panel if one exists

Process:

Step	Action	Timescale
Application	Student submits written request for Stage 3 Review to the Principal, setting out the grounds for review	Within 10 working days of Stage 2 outcome
Eligibility check	The Principal reviews whether the request meets the permitted grounds for review and informs the student	Within 5 working days
Panel convened	Review Panel is constituted and all relevant papers shared with Panel members and the student	Within 10 working days of eligibility confirmed
Hearing (if required)	The Panel may hold an oral hearing. If so, the student may be accompanied by a friend, fellow student or Student Guild representative. Legal representation is not permitted at this stage.	At Panel Chair's discretion
Panel decision	The Panel issues a written decision with reasons to the student and the Principal	Within 25 working days of the Stage 3 request being received
Completion of Procedures Letter	If the complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the Registry Lead / Registrar issues a Completion of Procedures (COP) Letter confirming the College's internal process is exhausted	Within 5 working days of Panel decision

The Review Panel's decision is final within EDA College's internal process. Once the Completion of Procedures Letter has been issued, the student may refer their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) — see Section 11.

PART B: ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE

10. Part B: Academic Appeals Procedure

An academic appeal is a formal request for a review of an academic decision. EDA College's academic appeals procedure provides students with a fair and transparent route to challenge academic decisions they believe to be wrong or procedurally flawed.

IMPORTANT: Academic appeals must normally be submitted within 10 working days of the academic decision being communicated to the student. Late appeals will only be considered where good cause for the delay is demonstrated. Do not delay — contact the Registry Lead / Registrar immediately if you are considering an appeal.

Grounds for Academic Appeal

A student may only appeal an academic decision on one or more of the following grounds. See Appendix C for detailed guidance:

- Procedural irregularity: The assessment or decision-making process was not conducted in accordance with the College's published regulations or procedures, and this affected the outcome
- Extenuating circumstances not previously considered: The student has evidence of circumstances (e.g. illness, bereavement, significant personal crisis) that affected their performance, which they were unable to disclose at the time, and which were not considered in the original decision
- Prejudice or bias: There is demonstrable evidence that the assessment or decision was affected by prejudice, bias or other improper conduct

The following are NOT grounds for academic appeal:

- Disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiner or Assessment Board where the correct procedure was followed and no bias is demonstrated
- Disappointment with a mark or grade
- The student was unaware of the assessment regulations (regulations are published and made available at enrolment)
- Extenuating circumstances that the student chose not to disclose at the time, where there was no barrier to doing so

Stage 1: Academic Appeal Request

How to submit a Stage 1 appeal:

- Complete the Academic Appeal Submission Form (Appendix B) and submit it to the Registry Lead / Registrar
- The appeal must be submitted within 10 working days of the academic decision being communicated
- The form must set out: the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal (from the permitted grounds above), supporting evidence, and the outcome sought
- Medical certificates, letters from healthcare providers or other supporting evidence must be submitted with the appeal form

What happens after submission:

Step	Action	Timescale
Acknowledgement	The Registry Lead / Registrar acknowledges receipt in writing	Within 3 working days
Grounds check	The Registry Lead / Registrar determines whether the appeal falls within the permitted grounds. Appeals that do not meet any permitted ground are rejected with written reasons.	Within 5 working days
Initial review	Where the appeal is admissible, the Registry Lead / Registrar (or a nominated senior academic not involved in the original decision) reviews the appeal and supporting evidence	Within 10 working days of acknowledgement
Outcome	The student receives a written decision: appeal upheld (referral to Assessment Board), partially upheld, or not upheld, with reasons and information about Stage 2	Within 15 working days of receipt

Submission of an academic appeal does not automatically suspend the academic decision being appealed. Where appropriate, the Registry Lead / Registrar may recommend that a decision is held in abeyance pending the outcome of the appeal.

Stage 2: Appeal Panel

If the student is not satisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, or if the Stage 1 review concludes that an oral hearing is necessary, the matter will be considered by an Appeal Panel.

Appeal Panel composition:

- Three members: a Chair (a senior academic or manager with no prior involvement), an academic member (from a different subject area), and a lay member (Board member or equivalent)
- All Panel members must be independent of the original decision and must declare any conflict of interest

Panel hearing:

- The student will be invited to present their case to the Panel in person or by video call

- The student may be accompanied by a friend, fellow student or Student Guild representative. Legal representation is not permitted.
- The relevant academic staff and Assessment Board Chair may also be invited to present
- The Panel may request additional documentation or evidence
- The hearing will be conducted in a manner that is fair and respectful to all parties

Panel powers:

- Direct that the original assessment decision be reconsidered by the Assessment Board
- Direct that the student be offered a further assessment opportunity
- Uphold the original decision where no valid grounds for appeal are established
- Make recommendations regarding process improvements to avoid recurrence

Timescale:

- Panel convened within 10 working days of Stage 2 request
- Panel decision issued within 20 working days of Stage 2 request

Stage 3: Final Review — Principal's Review

If the student is not satisfied with the Appeal Panel's decision, they may request a final review by the Principal. This is the final stage of EDA College's internal appeals procedure.

Grounds for Stage 3 Final Review:

- There is new evidence not available at Stage 2 that could materially affect the outcome
- There was a procedural irregularity at Stage 2 that affected the fairness of the outcome
- The Stage 2 decision was manifestly unreasonable

Process:

- The student submits a written request to the Principal within 10 working days of the Stage 2 decision
- The Principal (or a nominated deputy who had no prior involvement) conducts a paper-based review of the full case file
- The Principal issues a final written decision within 15 working days
- Where the appeal is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the Registry Lead / Registrar issues a Completion of Procedures (COP) Letter

The Principal's decision is final within EDA College's internal process. Once the COP Letter is issued, the student may refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) — see Section 11.

11. Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) is an independent body that reviews unresolved complaints and appeals from students at higher education providers in England and Wales. EDA College is a member of the OIA scheme.

When can students go to the OIA?

- After EDA College has issued a Completion of Procedures (COP) Letter confirming that all internal stages of the relevant procedure are exhausted
- Where EDA College has failed to complete the internal procedure within a reasonable time (the OIA defines this as 90 days from the date the formal complaint or appeal was submitted)

- Where the student believes, the College has failed to handle the complaint or appeal in accordance with the OIA's Good Practice Framework

How to contact the OIA:

Website	www.oiahe.org.uk
Complaint form	Available on the OIA website; complete online or download
Time limit	Submit to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter
Cost to student	Free of charge to the student
What the OIA can do	Review the College's decision; recommend a remedy including financial compensation; make recommendations about College processes
What the OIA cannot do	Change academic decisions directly; award compensation above the limits set in its Rules; deal with matters that are or have been the subject of court proceedings

EDA College will cooperate fully with any OIA review and will implement OIA recommendations promptly. Students will be informed of their right to access the OIA in every Completion of Procedures Letter issued by the College.

12. Vexatious and Malicious Complaints

EDA College is committed to treating all complaints and appeals in good faith. However, the College also has a duty to protect staff and students from complaints or appeals that are made maliciously, vexatiously or in bad faith.

A complaint or appeal may be considered vexatious or malicious where it:

- Is an abuse of the process, for example where the same complaint has already been fully investigated and decided
- Is made with the primary intention of causing distress or harassment to a member of staff or another student
- Contains demonstrably false allegations made knowingly
- Pursues a matter that has no reasonable prospect of success and where the student has been so advised but continues regardless

Where the Registry Lead / Registrar determines that a complaint or appeal is vexatious or malicious, the complaint may be dismissed without investigation. The student will be notified in writing with reasons. Where a complaint is made in bad faith, the matter may be referred for consideration under the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

A complaint is not vexatious simply because it is not upheld, or because the subject of the complaint disputes it. The bar for determining that a complaint is vexatious is high and will only be applied in clear cases.

13. Confidentiality and Data Protection

EDA College is committed to handling all complaints and appeals in a confidential manner. The following principles apply:

- Information shared in connection with a complaint or appeal will only be disclosed to those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the matter
- Where it is necessary to share information with a third party (e.g. a member of staff who is the subject of a complaint), the student will be informed in advance
- The identity of the complainant will be protected to the greatest extent possible, but complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed where it is necessary to share information to conduct a fair investigation

- All personal data processed in connection with complaints and appeals will be handled in accordance with EDA College's Data Protection and Privacy Policy and UK GDPR
- Complaints and appeals records will be retained for six years from the date of the final outcome
- Students have the right to access information held about them in connection with their complaint or appeal, subject to the provisions of UK GDPR

Students should be aware that where a complaint concerns the conduct of a member of staff, it may not be possible to keep the complainant's identity confidential if the complaint is to be properly investigated. In such cases, the student's wellbeing will be carefully considered throughout the process.

14. Monitoring, Reporting and Governance

EDA College uses complaints and appeals data to identify trends, drive improvement and demonstrate compliance with its regulatory obligations. The following monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place:

Activity	Lead	Frequency	Reported To
Complaints and appeals log maintained	Registry Lead / Registrar	Ongoing	N/A (internal record)
Termly complaints and appeals summary report	Registry Lead / Registrar	Termly	Academic Board
Annual complaints and appeals analysis (trends, themes, outcomes)	Registry Lead / Registrar	Annual	Board of Governors
OIA casework review	Registry Lead / Registrar / Principal	As cases arise; summary annually	Board of Governors
Review of procedure effectiveness	Registry Lead / Registrar	Annual	Academic Board
Publication of anonymised complaints data	Registry Lead / Registrar	Annual	Published on College website
Staff training on complaints handling	Registry Lead / Registrar / HR	Annual	Academic Board

The Academic Board is responsible for overseeing the operation of this procedure and for ensuring that lessons learned from complaints and appeals are acted upon. The Board of Governors receives an annual summary and has overall responsibility for ensuring the College operates a fair and effective complaints procedure.

15. Related Policies and Procedures

Policy / Procedure	Relationship
Student Protection Plan	Sets out what the College will do to protect students if a course or the College closes; linked to student rights on refunds and transfers
Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Policy	Contains its own appeals process for students found to have committed academic misconduct
Student Disciplinary Procedure	Applies where a student's conduct is being investigated; contains a separate appeals stage
Extenuating Circumstances Policy	Governs the process for submitting extenuating circumstances; closely linked to academic appeals grounds
Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy	Contains a separate complaints process for free speech concerns
Equality, Diversity and	Ensures this procedure is applied fairly to all students; discrimination complaints

Inclusion Policy	may be raised under this procedure
Data Protection and Privacy Policy	Governs how personal data in complaints is processed
Whistleblowing Policy	Applies where a complaint relates to a matter of public interest raised by a member of staff
Fitness to Study Policy	Contains its own internal review mechanism; linked to this procedure where academic progression is affected

Appendix A: Complaint Submission Form

Submit this form to the Registry Lead / Registrar by email or in person. A copy will be sent to you upon receipt. Please retain a copy for your records.

SECTION A — YOUR DETAILS	
Full name	
Student ID number	
Programme of study	
Year of study	
Email address	
Phone number	
Preferred contact method	Email / Phone / In person
SECTION B — YOUR COMPLAINT	
Subject of complaint (brief title)	
Date(s) the matter occurred	
Member(s) of staff / department involved (if applicable)	
Have you raised this at Stage 1 (informally)?	Yes / No — If yes, with whom and when?
Outcome of Stage 1 (if applicable)	
SECTION C — DETAILS OF COMPLAINT	
Please describe your complaint in full. Include what happened, when, who was involved, and why you believe the College's response to date has been unsatisfactory (if applicable).	
SECTION D — OUTCOME SOUGHT	
What outcome are you seeking from this complaint? Please be specific.	
SECTION E — SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	
Please list any documents, emails or other evidence you are attaching to this form.	1. 2. 3. 4.
SECTION F — DECLARATION	
I confirm that:	The information in this form is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that making a deliberately false or malicious complaint may result in disciplinary action. I consent to this information being shared with staff involved in the investigation of my complaint.
Signature / Name	
Date	

Appendix B: Academic Appeal Submission Form

Submit this form to the Registry Lead / Registrar within 10 working days of the academic decision you wish to appeal. Appeals submitted after this deadline may be rejected unless good cause is demonstrated.

SECTION A — YOUR DETAILS	
Full name	
Student ID number	
Programme of study	
Email address	
SECTION B — DECISION BEING APPEALED	
Decision being appealed (e.g. module grade, Assessment Board decision, EC outcome)	
Date the decision was communicated to you	
Name of module / assessment / decision-making body	
Mark or outcome awarded (if applicable)	
SECTION C — GROUNDS FOR APPEAL	
Please tick the ground(s) on which you are appealing (see Appendix C for guidance):	☐ Procedural irregularity ☐ Extenuating circumstances not previously considered ☐ Prejudice or bias
Please explain in detail why you believe the selected ground(s) apply to your case.	
SECTION D — SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	
Please list all evidence attached (e.g. medical certificate, correspondence, assessment feedback).	1. 2. 3. 4.
SECTION E — OUTCOME SOUGHT	
What outcome are you seeking? (e.g. reassessment, reconsideration of EC application, review of grade)	
SECTION F — DECLARATION	
Declaration:	I confirm that the information in this form is accurate and complete. I understand that appeals must be based on the permitted grounds and that raising an appeal solely because I am dissatisfied with my mark is not a valid ground. I consent to this information being shared with staff involved in the review of my appeal.
Signature / Name	
Date	

Appendix C: Grounds for Academic Appeal — Guidance

This appendix provides detailed guidance on the three permitted grounds for academic appeal to help students decide whether their appeal is likely to be admissible.

Ground	What It Means	Examples	What It Does NOT Cover
1. Procedural Irregularity	The assessment or decision-making process was not conducted in accordance with the College's published regulations or procedures, and this error was serious enough to have affected the outcome	The wrong marking criteria were applied; the student was not given the required notice of the assessment; the Assessment Board did not have a quorum; the extenuating circumstances panel did not consider evidence that was submitted	Minor administrative errors that did not affect the outcome; errors that were flagged at the time but did not affect the mark
2. Extenuating Circumstances Not Previously Considered	The student has evidence of circumstances that affected their performance at the time of the assessment, which they could not have disclosed at the time, and which were not taken into account	Serious illness first diagnosed after the assessment; bereavement of a close family member shortly before the assessment where the student was unable to disclose; a significant traumatic event	Circumstances the student chose not to disclose at the time when disclosure was possible; general ongoing conditions already known to the College; stress related solely to exam or assessment pressure
3. Prejudice or Bias	There is clear, demonstrable evidence that the assessment or decision was tainted by prejudice, bias or improper conduct on the part of an assessor or panel member	Written or verbal evidence of discriminatory remarks; demonstrable inconsistency in marking that cannot be explained by academic judgement; a conflict of interest not disclosed by an assessor	Disagreement with the academic judgement of a marker; belief that the marker 'does not like' the student without concrete evidence; a lower mark than the student expected

If you are unsure whether your situation meets any of these grounds, please speak to the Registry Lead / Registrar before submitting your appeal form. Submitting an appeal without a valid ground will result in the appeal being rejected at the admissibility stage.

Appendix D: Quick Reference Summary

Use this quick reference guide to identify the right route for your concern and the key steps to follow.

I want to...	Use this process	First step
Raise a concern about teaching, a service or a member of staff	Part A: Student Complaints Procedure	Speak informally to the relevant staff member or the Registry Lead / Registrar (Stage 1)
Appeal my exam or coursework mark	Part B: Academic Appeals Procedure	Complete the Academic Appeal Submission Form (Appendix B) within 10 working days
Challenge an Assessment Board decision	Part B: Academic Appeals Procedure	Complete the Academic Appeal Submission Form within 10 working days of being notified
Raise a complaint about discrimination or harassment by staff	Part A: Student Complaints Procedure	Contact the Registry Lead / Registrar directly; do not approach the subject of the complaint
Challenge an extenuating circumstances decision	Part B: Academic Appeals Procedure	Complete the Academic Appeal Submission Form (EC ground) within 10 working days
Report a concern about another student's behaviour	Student Disciplinary Procedure (separate)	Contact the Registry Lead / Registrar or Operations Manager
Complain about academic misconduct finding against me	Academic Misconduct Policy — Appeals	Refer to the Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Policy for the appeals process
Seek independent review after internal process is exhausted	Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)	Submit your complaint to the OIA at www.oiahe.org.uk within 12 months of the COP Letter

KEY CONTACTS	CONTACT DETAILS
Registry Lead / Registrar (complaints & appeals)	Contact via Student Services or email the College
Operations Manager (welfare & wellbeing support)	Contact via the Student Services desk or College website
Principal / CEO (Stage 3 complaints and appeal reviews)	Via the Registry Lead / Registrar
Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)	www.oiahe.org.uk
Citizens Advice (independent advice)	www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Student Loans Company (funding queries)	www.slc.co.uk / Student Finance England

Document Ends here!