

Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
Student Complaints Regulations 2026-7

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Status of this document: “Policy” The RWCMD defined term for a policy is a deliberate system of guidelines to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. A policy is a statement of intent and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. They are typically informed by how people would like to see the space defined. They are often aspirational in nature and do not typically have legal implications if they are not followed.							
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Contents of this Policy Document:

1. INTRODUCTION
 2. ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS
 3. COMPLAINTS COVERED BY THESE REGULATIONS
 4. COMPLAINTS FALLING UNDER SEPARATE REGULATIONS
 5. STAGES IN THE HANDLING OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS
 6. OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR
 7. MONITORING
 8. GENERAL PRINCIPLES
 9. PRINCIPLES RELATING TO THE HANDLING OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS
 10. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE STUDENTS’ UNION
- APPENDIX

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (hereafter RWCMD or 'The College') is committed to providing high quality education and support to its students. Where appropriate, it does so in close relationship with the University of South Wales, the degrees, and diplomas of which are taught at RWCMD. There are many routes through which students can raise any concerns or issues. Feedback regarding the College's provision is welcomed so that the College can develop and enhance the services it provides.
- 1.2 These regulations apply to:
- Students of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
 - Former students, for a period of 3 months after leaving the course to which the complaint relates
 - Students studying on work-placements or engaged in work-based learning
 - Students on an approved leave of absence
- 1.3 For the purposes of these regulations, a complaint is defined as "a concern that is formally raised by a student either verbally or in writing with a member of staff". When a complaint is received, the College seeks to resolve it as quickly, fairly, and equitably as possible, whether the complaint is about services provided by the College, treatment by any staff member, student or visitor, or any other issue. Focus is on resolution of issues at the earliest point, so that students maintain confidence in their studies and their relationship with the College. It is the College's hope and expectation that most issues which arise will be resolved at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.4 The types of complaints covered by these regulations are detailed in section 3. Information on how raise other complaints are detailed in section 4.

2. ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- 2.1 Before making a complaint, you can seek support and guidance from a trusted source; this could be a member of academic staff, a member of college administrative staff including the Student Voice Officer, Student Services, the Students' Union, or the Chaplaincy.
- 2.2 The Student Casework Manager provides authoritative, formal guidance on the applicability and operation of the Student Complaints Regulations.
- 2.3 It is expected that you, your representatives (either members of the Students' Union Executive Committee or Course Board Representatives (known as 'reps'), and staff members act reasonably and fairly towards each other and treat this process with dignity and respect. As well as our duty of care to you as a student, we have a responsibility to protect our staff against unacceptable behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour by you or your representatives during this process will be dealt with in accordance with the policies and procedures governing student misconduct, and non-exhaustive list of unacceptable behaviours can be found in that policy.
- 2.4 The College may terminate consideration of a complaint if it considers it to be frivolous or vexatious and you will be informed in writing by the College if this is the case and will be provided with the right of appeal.

- 2.5 Section A of this document sets out the regulations and procedures. Section B provides information about general principles. Please read this advice carefully and contact the appropriate member of staff as necessary.

3. COMPLAINTS COVERED BY THESE REGULATIONS

3.1 Academic matters

Academic matters mean specific concerns a student may have about the provision, teaching or delivery of academic courses and related services, including complaints about the conduct and management of academic appeals. These could include:

- Failure by the College to meet obligations including those outlined in course / student handbook and student charter.
- Misleading or incorrect information in the College's prospectus, promotional material or other documentation published by the College.
- Poor quality of facilities, learning resources or services directly provided by the College or partner provider.

Students who have concerns regarding academic matters should raise them, through these regulations, at the time when the issue first arises. Complaints about the provision and conduct of academic courses cannot be retrospectively used as grounds for an appeal against the decision of an assessment board.

3.2 Students' Experience

Students may complain about any aspect of their experience at the College, including their learning and relationships with the administration or support services.

3.3 Discrimination

Students may complain about discrimination by the College, in contravention of the College's Strategic Equality Plan and Respect Statement.

3.4 Malpractice or Impropriety

Students may complain about concerns relating to malpractice or impropriety in the conduct or management of the College, the disclosure of which is deemed to be in the public interest.

3.5 Complaints against Members of Staff

A case conference will take place to decide whether the case will be considered through the Student Complaints Procedure or through the appropriate HR procedure for staff, or appropriate alternative process. Normally, if the complaint is about the alleged misconduct of a member of staff, this will be considered under the HR procedure and service complaints directed at an individual member of staff will be handled under the Student Complaints Procedure. Where a case is particularly complex, it may be considered jointly by the HR/Student Casework Teams.

4. COMPLAINTS FALLING UNDER SEPARATE REGULATIONS

4.1 Academic Appeals

Students wishing to submit an appeal may seek advice from the Students' Union, the Student Voice Officer, or the Dean of Students. The submission is made to the University of South Wales.

4.2 Allegations of Misconduct Against Students

Allegation of misconduct by or against any student is subject to the Policy & Procedure Governing Student Conduct. Students wishing to raise such allegations may do so by bringing them to the attention of the Student Casework Manager.

4.3 Complaints against Members of Staff

A case conference will take place to decide whether the case will be considered through the Student Complaints Procedure or through the appropriate HR procedure for staff, or appropriate alternative process. Normally, if a complaint is about the alleged misconduct of a member of staff it will be considered under the HR procedure and service complaints directed at an individual member of staff will be handled under the Student Complaints Procedure. Where a case is particularly complex, it may be considered jointly by the HR/Student Casework Teams.

SECTION A

5. STAGES IN THE HANDLING OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS

5.1 Raising Concerns

Concerns must be raised no more than three months after the issue leading to the complaint (in exceptional circumstances extension to this deadline will be considered where there is good reason supported by evidence; for example, if the student has been ill and the request is supported by a doctor's note).

Students should raise concerns directly with the person responsible, speak to the Student Voice Officer, or submit report using the [RWCMD Report & Support Facility](#) (which is received by the Student Casework Manager). Concerns raised via the [RWCMD Report & Support Facility](#) will be maintained for the duration of the student life-cycle of the student and archived immediately thereafter.

Students who submit report using the RWCMD Report and Support facility will normally be invited to meet with the Student Casework Manager or another member of staff (in person or online) to discuss their report. Staff will work with you to try to help you determine a way forward that you feel comfortable with, including informal and early resolutions and/or the submission of a formal complaint. The way forward will be conducted within the framework of restorative practice and may (depending on the situation and after a thorough risk assessment) include a restorative conservation.

5.2 The Stages of Complaint

Complaints may be considered in three stages.

5.2.1 Stage One – Informal Action Leading to Early Resolution

Informal action leading to early resolution enables steps to be taken to address concerns without the need for formal investigation. Informal action will be taken in the context of the College's values based framework and will be informed by restorative practice. The Student Casework Manager may use discretion at this stage to determine whether early resolution is appropriate and may recommend that the complaint proceeds directly to formal investigation stage.

5.2.2 Stage Two - Formal Complaint

A formal complaint will be investigated by a senior member of staff (the Investigating Officer) with no prior involvement with the case. The Investigating Officer will normally seek to investigate the complaint within 30 working days. The final report will normally be provided to the complainant within an additional 10 working days.

5.2.3 Stage Three - Review

Complainants can request a review of the outcome of a complaint, provided they meet the grounds set out in the Request for Review (see 5.5). The review stage will normally be completed within 20 working days.

5.3 Informal Action Leading to Early Resolution

- 5.3.3 Depending on the nature of the concern raised, the Student Casework Manager (or alternate) may refer to another, more appropriate, member of staff/group (e.g. Study or Course Board) and/or may invite the student to attend a meeting to discuss concerns.
- 5.3.4 The Student Casework Manager (or alternate) will work with a student to clarify what matters to them and what a good and accountable outcome might look like for them. The student will have individual agency to explore the possibility of reaching early resolution through an informal restorative approach.
- 5.3.5 Several staff members are trained in restorative approaches. These staff can engage with students who present issues relating to their student experience to find the appropriate forum for resolution. This can include:
- supportive conversations with the student raising the complaint to discuss the impact of their experience;
 - mediated discussions between the complainant and staff member the complaint relates to (subject to individual preparation meetings, a risk assessment in line with the college's approaches to restorative practice, and agreement from all parties);
 - restorative letter (this may be through email).
- 5.3.6 Students are reminded that staff members who are accused of improper conduct who agree to engage in a restorative process will also receive preparative support from a trained restorative practitioner. The practitioner's position on the incident reported will remain neutral, in keeping with a key principle of restorative justice.
- 5.3.7 In seeking early resolution, the Student Voice Officer may assist in advocacy and in principles of restorative practice, that is, helping students and other parties in finding a solution which is acceptable to all.
- 5.3.8 If informal action is taken and leads to early resolution, a record of the type of action and the date it was taken is retained on the casework file.
- 5.3.9 When informal action is taken and leads to early resolution, no complaint has been formally made, investigated, or proven, and no formal consequences and sanctions can be applied. The College will respect a student's request for no formal action unless there is perceived to be a need to safeguard individuals and/or as part of effective risk management.
- 5.3.10 If a student accepts informal action as early resolution, they retain the right to submit formal complaint at a later point if the informal action does not address their concerns.
- 5.3.11 All students have the right to be accompanied to any meetings they attend about a complaint by a "support person" who could be the Student Voice Officer, a representative from the Students' Union, a friend, or a relative. The support person provides support during the meeting, but they are not normally expected to represent the student or to advocate on their behalf unless this has been agreed in advance as a reasonable adjustment. The name of the support person, their relationship to the student, and their email address must be provided to the Student Casework Manager before the meeting. The Student Casework Manager reserves the right to refuse the attendance of a support person if it is determined that there is a conflict of interest relating to the nominated person, in which case, the student will be given the opportunity to nominate a different support person.

5.4 Formal Complaint

- 5.4.3 College expects it will be possible to resolve most concerns at an early point. If concern has not been satisfactorily resolved by early resolution (or early resolution was not appropriate), a student has the right to submit a formal complaint requesting formal investigation.
- 5.4.4 A student must complete and submit the [Student Complaint Form](#) to request formal investigation and will be asked, as part of that submission, what steps were taken in 'Early Resolution'. The [Student Complaint Form](#) must be completed in full, and appropriate evidence must be presented, for formal investigation to be instigated. All available information and evidence should be shared at this point - it will not be possible to provide additional, new information at later stages of the procedure unless students can demonstrate that it was unreasonable to provide the information at this stage.
- 5.4.5 The College does not expect complainants to submit spurious or vexatious complaints and reserves the right to refuse to consider such complaints. In addition, the College may take action in line with the Policy & Procedures Governing Student Conduct where complaints have been identified as such.
- 5.4.6 The Student Complaint Form will be logged by the Student Casework Manager and discussed with the Dean of Students.
- 5.4.7 The Dean of Students will consider the nature of the complaint, its perceived seriousness, and the range of potential outcomes.
- 5.4.8 The Dean of Students may conclude the complaint without full and formal investigation where a robust and evidenced conclusion can be reached without it and, therefore, there is no purpose to it (e.g. if provision of evidence at submission proves or nullifies complaint without any doubt). In this scenario the complainant retains the right to request review and receipt of a Completion of Procedures letter.
- 5.4.9 If the Dean of Students determines that the complaint requires full and formal investigation an Investigating Officer will be appointed, who shall have no previous knowledge of, or involvement in the case. Internal Investigating Officers shall be at Head of Department level or above. In cases of substantial and serious complaint, consideration will be given to appointing an Investigating Officer who is external to RWCMD, but who is nevertheless suitably qualified and trained. Examples (not exhaustive) of serious complaint are those which might include breaches of dignity policies, and those cases which may result in staff or student disciplinary action.
- 5.4.10 Cases of contemporaneous submission of formal complaint will normally result in all complaints being considered by the same investigation and the same Investigating Officer, although separate Investigation Reports will be produced when investigation is concluded. The Dean of Students retains capacity to consider it necessary to appoint a separate Investigating Officer to conduct a discrete investigation.
- 5.4.11 The Investigating Officer will meet with the student to discuss the issue raised. The student may be accompanied at this meeting by a "support person".

- 5.4.12 The student will be asked to agree a Checklist of Issues, which will form the basis of the investigation, by a set deadline. Any proposed amendments or additions to the Checklist after the set deadline will be considered at the discretion of the Investigating Officer.
- 5.4.13 In the interest of fairness, where an individual is the subject of a complaint, or responsible for the service complained about, they will also be invited to comment on the complaint. The Investigating Officer will subsequently meet with any relevant members of staff and witnesses to discuss the detail of the complaint from their perspective. Any member of staff who is the subject of a complaint has the right to be supported by a colleague or a trade union representative throughout the process.
- 5.4.14 A witness is not required to attend investigation meetings and can formally decline. The College will respect the decision of those witnesses who decline to attend but, in this circumstance, any written or verbal evidence/contribution the witness has already submitted in relation to the complaint will be classed as 'hearsay'. Hearsay is a legal term for evidence that is not tested by asking questions in person of the person providing the evidence. The Investigating Officer will determine whether hearsay evidence should be included as part of the investigation's evidence base. If it is included, the Investigating Officer will decide what weight or importance should be given to this evidence. It is likely that hearsay evidence (if admissible) is likely to be given lower weight or importance.
- 5.4.15 The Investigating Officer will normally seek to investigate the complaint within 30 working days. Where the complexities of the case and the need to contact a range of individuals during the investigation make this difficult, students will be kept informed of progress and the reason for any delays.
- 5.4.16 Following completion of the investigation, the Investigating Officer will prepare a Complaint Investigation Report and present it to the Dean of Students (or nominee). The report will include a concluding section addressing the principal allegations of complaint, and the seriousness and impact of any concerns which may have been upheld by the evidence. The report may also contain recommendations, which may be addressed to College, to any parties named in the complaint, or which may relate to process and procedure.
- 5.4.17 The Dean of Students will review the Complaint Investigation Report and prepare a response to the report on behalf of the College [the complaint outcome]. This complaint outcome will normally be provided to the complainant no later than 10 working days after receipt of the Complaint Investigation Report, and will confirm whether the complaint has been upheld (or not), providing sufficient information to enable the reporting party to understand how that decision was reached.
- 5.4.18 Where the complaint outcome includes an offer of financial reimbursement/compensation, the Dean of Students will obtain approval from the Principal, where required, before notifying the student of the outcome of the complaint. The offer of financial reimbursement/compensation will be incorporated within the complaint outcome letter.
- 5.4.19 If complaint involves an allegation against a member of staff, the student will be told of the outcome of complaint, but it may not be appropriate to share specific details affecting staff members, particularly where disciplinary action is being taken. To protect the integrity of the college's internal disciplinary procedures and in line with employment law, if such HR processes are initiated against a staff member students will not be informed of the details.

- 5.4.20 A student will be asked to confirm in writing whether or not they accept the complaint outcome no later than 28 calendar days from the date of complaint outcome letter. If no communication is received within the specified timescales, the College will close the case and the student may request a Completion of Procedures letter.

5.5 Review

- 5.5.3 If, upon receipt of the complaint outcome following formal investigation, a student believes they have reasonable grounds to consider the complaint has not been adequately addressed, they can request a review. To ensure impartial consideration at the review stage, the review will be undertaken under the administrative jurisdiction of the University of South Wales (USW), on behalf of RWCMD.
- 5.5.4 A review can only be invoked when the formal investigation has been completed. Students are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the Students' Union or from the Student Voice Officer before seeking to progress a complaint to the review stage.
- 5.5.5 To invoke a review the complainant must submit a 'RWCMD Request for Review Form' to the USW Student Casework Unit. This form must be submitted no later than 28 calendar days from the date of the complaint outcome letter. Relevant evidence must also be provided when submitting the request for review.
- 5.5.6 The criteria under which a complaint may be considered at the review stage are:
- Evidence demonstrates that the procedures at the formal investigation stage were not conducted in line with the regulations and this materially affected the outcome.
 - Evidence demonstrates that specific issues of the complaint which were raised during the formal investigation (and confirmed in the Checklist of Issues) were not considered. N.B. new issues introduced at this stage will not be an eligible basis for review.
 - New material evidence is available that could not, for valid reasons, be provided earlier in the process.
 - Evidence demonstrates that the outcome was unreasonable or disproportionate to the circumstances of the case.
- 5.5.7 Prior to referring the case to a USW Complaint Review Officer, the USW Head of Student Casework (or nominee) will review the Request for Review Form to determine whether there are grounds for review. The student will be notified within 5 working days of receipt of the request for review by the USW Head of Student Casework (or nominee) whether their case is eligible (or not) for consideration; that is:
- a) they have demonstrated an arguable case under one or more of the grounds set out under 5.5.6; and
 - b) the request for review has been submitted within one month of the complaint outcome, or with good reason for lateness (with evidence if requested); and
 - c) the request for review is supported by appropriate evidence.
- 5.5.8 If it is deemed that the request for review: does not meet the criteria outlined in 5.5.6; was not submitted by the deadline; is not supported by evidence; RWCMD will issue the student with a Completion of Procedures Letter.
- 5.5.9 If a complaint is deemed eligible for review, a Complaint Review Officer will be allocated by the USW Student Casework Unit. The Complaint Review Officer will have had no prior involvement with the case and will be independent of the College.

- 5.5.10 In considering the case, the Complaint Review Officer may wish to re-interview the student/staff/witnesses *but this is not a requirement*.
- 5.5.11 New material or witnesses are not normally expected to be introduced at this stage. New material/witnesses may be added in exceptional circumstances, but only with the approval of the Complaint Review Officer. The assessment to allow admission of new material/witnesses will be based on consideration of:
- (i) the relevance of the material/witness to the case; AND
 - (ii) whether the material/witness could reasonably have been provided/called earlier in proceedings.
- The complainant must provide a written statement outlining relevance and explaining why they could and did not provide information at an earlier stage. Failure to provide this statement means any new material or witnesses will not be considered in the context of review.
- 5.5.12 The Complaint Review Officer will review the case and provide an outcome to the RWCMD Dean of Students within 15 working days. The Complaint Review Officer may:
- propose a change in outcome
 - uphold the findings of the original investigation.
 - refer the complaint for re-investigation (in this case, the standard procedures and timescales will apply).
- 5.5.13 The RWCMD Dean of Students, acting on behalf of the Principal, will normally provide a response to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the Complaint Review Officer's report.
- 5.5.14 When the case has been closed, the student will receive a Completion of Procedures letter.

6 OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR

- 6.1 If the student is unhappy with the outcome of their request for review under the College's Procedures, they may, following issue of a University Completion of Procedures Letter, lodge a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).
- 6.2 Details of the OIA and the relevant information in relation to the Scheme can be accessed at www.oiahe.org.uk. Further information and advice can also be obtained from the RWCMD Student Casework Manager.

7 REPORTING AND MONITORING

- 7.2 The Student Casework Manager will monitor the actions taken by the College in relation to recommendations arising from investigations into student complaints. A report will be submitted to RWCMD Academic Board by means of the annual Student Casework Review.
- 7.3 The Student Casework Review may incorporate recommendations for consideration by the Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee, Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board, as appropriate, on any matters arising from the consideration of complaints that require amendments to regulations.

SECTION B

8 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 8.1 Purpose.** The purpose of the Student Complaints Regulations is to provide a framework within which students can submit complaint to the College. The regulations and the associated procedure provide a context and step-by-step guide for what happens when complaints are considered internally by the College and the potential consequences.
- 8.2 Timely and transparent procedures.** In the interests of students and the College, all complaints are dealt with in a timely manner and through processes which are open and straightforward. Where students subject to regulation have not signed up to the latest version of the regulations (e.g. because they have been suspended or interrupted study), the Student Casework Manager will decide which iteration of the regulations will apply according to which iteration is most favourable to the student.
- 8.3 Consistency and Fairness.** The regulations are designed to ensure that, in considering complaints and in taking action, the College acts fairly and consistently in relation to all students and staff and holds the wellbeing of all parties at the centre of all investigations. Students needing reasonable adjustment to processes should attend a meeting with Student Services or outline requirements in an email so their needs can be considered and appropriate reasonable adjustments agreed.
- 8.4 Anonymous complaints.** Complaints made anonymously will not be considered under this procedure, but students should be aware that there are other means by which they may bring things to the attention of the College anonymously, including under the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Procedure. Students should seek the advice of the Student Voice Officer or an Officer of the Students' Union, but such complaints would only be considered because of the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.
- 8.5 Third party complaints –** The College expects that students with concerns should be responsible for making these concerns known themselves. Only in exceptional circumstances will a complaint about a student's experience from a third party be investigated.
- 8.6 Submission in good faith –** The College presumes all complaints are submitted in good faith and will not disadvantage any student for bringing forward a complaint. However, the College would not expect students to submit spurious or vexatious complaints and may take action in line with the Policy & Procedures Governing Student Conduct where complaints have been identified as such. Examples of such complaints include but are not limited to:
- 8.6.1 Complaints which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive;
 - 8.6.2 Insistence on pursuing non-meritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes;
 - 8.6.3 Insistence on pursuing what may be meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner;
 - 8.6.4 Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
 - 8.6.5 Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value.
- 8.7 Submission of evidence.** Complaints should be supported by corroborating evidence upon submission. Complaints which do not submit such evidence will not be considered, unless a good reason for the lack of evidence has been provided. All sensitive material or evidence

submitted should be appropriately labelled to safeguard staff who will be receiving and reviewing it.

- 8.8 **Covert Recordings.** The College recognises that with advances in modern technology, it is easier to make covert recordings i.e., recordings of meetings or conversations made without the consent of the participants. Where recordings are made of telephone calls, this activity is likely to be in breach of the Investigatory Powers Act 2024. In the case of recordings of face-to-face meetings, the material gained is likely to be held in breach of the participant's Article 8 right (to private and family life) under the Human Rights Act and the UK's data protection regulations. In addition, a recording should only be used for the purpose for which it was made and should not be made available to a third party without the consent of the individual it refers to, unless there is lawful reason to do so.3.3.2 For these reasons, the College will only permit the use of such recordings in cases, in exceptional circumstances. The facts that will be considered are:
- The extent to which the evidence is relevant to the issues in the case, including considering the nature of the evidence and if other, more cogent evidence is available.
 - The extent to which the evidence has been obtained unlawfully, or its use otherwise interferes with privacy rights.
 - The extent to which the evidence can be relied upon from a technical perspective given that it is possible to manipulate recorded material. The availability of an independently created transcript of any recording may be helpful to satisfy this requirement.

Where a safeguarding issue is identified and/or an issue could cause a serious risk to the wellbeing of the College community or reputational damage to the institution, the case may be referred to Student Casework for consideration under the Risk Assessment Procedure. A case may also be referred where an allegation could constitute a criminal offence.

These expectations should be considered in addition to those outlined in the Recording Educational Activities Policy.

- 8.9 **Timeliness of submission.** All concerns should be raised no more than 3 months after the last occurrence of the issue from which the concern arises. In exceptional circumstances the Student Casework Manager (or nominee) will consider extending this deadline where there is good reason supported by evidence.
- 8.10 **Students' engagement with the process.** It is expected that the student raising the concern will engage with the process in a timely manner. If a student fails to respond to a request for further information or a meeting within timescales specified by the member of staff dealing with the case, without good reason (for example an incapacitating illness, in which case a doctor's note should be provided), the Student Casework Manager (or nominee) may suspend or close the case.
- 8.11 **Impartiality in investigation.** Complaints are normally investigated by College staff who have no knowledge of or interest in the complaint. Serious complaints may be investigated by an External Investigating Officer.
- 8.12 **Privacy** – Investigation of complaints is made with due regard to the privacy of all parties. The complaint is only disclosed to those immediately involved and/or those whose participation is

necessary for a resolution. All parties respect the confidentiality of the process. Intimidation of any party involved with casework under this (or related) procedures) may result in application of the RWCMD Policy and Procedures Governing Student Misconduct.

- 8.13 **Confidentiality.** Confidentiality should be respected in conducting all aspects of the complaints regulations. However, any member of staff about whom a complaint is made will have the right to be informed of the complaint and its nature and have access to any relevant evidence. If the student raising the concern requests that their identity be kept confidential, this is respected up to the point when disclosure is necessary to progress or resolve the issue, in which case they will be informed in advance of the disclosure. The College will not disclose any information to third parties regarding investigations and outcomes from student complaint cases unless legal exceptions under the Data Protection Act apply. Failure to observe confidentiality when involved with casework under this (or related) procedures) may result in application of the RWCMD Policy and Procedures Governing Student Misconduct.
- 8.14 **Complainant representation.** The complainant is allowed to be accompanied to any discussions, meetings, or hearings by a support person. The support person could be the Student Voice Officer, a representative from the Students' Union, a friend, or a relative. The Support Person provides support during the meeting, but they are not normally expected to represent or to advocate on the student's behalf unless this has been agreed in advance as a reasonable adjustment. The name of the support person, their relationship to the student, and their email address must be provided to the Student Casework Manager before the meeting. The Student Casework Manager (or nominee) reserves the right to refuse the attendance of a support person if it is determined that there is a conflict of interest relating to the nominated person, in which case, the student will be given the opportunity to nominate a different support person.
- 8.15 **Complaints including elements of appeal.** Where a complaint also contains within it an element of an academic appeal it is possible for the complaint, or aspects of the complaint, to be reclassified and processed using the Academic Appeals Regulations, if appropriate. The complainant will be notified as soon as possible.
- 8.16 **Group complaints.** Complaints may be submitted by individuals or groups. Where a complaint is submitted by a group of students, one of the group should be nominated as the main contact and to act as a spokesperson. Each member of the group must confirm in writing that they wish the nominated individual to act in this capacity and that the complaint reflects their concerns. The nominated spokesperson will receive updates on the complaint on behalf of the group. All members of the group will be invited by the spokesperson to any meetings arranged to discuss the complaint and receive a copy of the outcome letter. The spokesperson for the complaint should inform the investigating officer 24 hours in advance of their support person, where appropriate.
- 8.17 **Complaints by students on placement.** Students who wish to make a complaint about an aspect of their experience whilst on placement should, in the first instance, contact their Head of Department who will advise on the process in liaison with the Student Casework Manager. Whether the complaint will be dealt with by the College, or the placement provider will depend on the circumstances of the complaint. If the complaint is more appropriately dealt with through the placement provider's own complaints procedure, complainants will be assisted by an appropriate member of staff in the College in taking this forward.

- 8.18 **Fairness.** Students will not be disadvantaged in any way as a result of bringing a complaint in good faith.
- 8.19 **Enhancement.** The College will ensure that information gathered is used to enhance services for students and the student experience

9 PRINCIPLES RELATING TO THE HANDLING OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS

- 9.6 Students making the complaint must be made aware that, in the interest of fairness, those who are either themselves the subject of the complaint, or responsible for the provision or service complained about, will be invited to comment on the complaint at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.7 Students making the complaint will be allowed reasonable time within prescribed timeframes to seek advice for any meeting which forms part of the process, whether at the early resolution or formal stages of the regulations.
- 9.8 At the formal investigation and review stages, every effort should be made to come to a resolution acceptable to all parties, including through informal discussion and agreement, should that be the complainant's wish.

10 COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE STUDENTS' UNION

- 10.6 Students are encouraged to bring to the attention of Students' Union Officers any issues that they may have. Complaints regarding the Students' Union should be directed to the Trustees of the Union. The College's Student Voice Officer currently acts as secretary to the Students' Union Trustee board and can be signposted to in the event of a complaint against the Students' Union or one of its staff.
- 10.7 Commercial operations' staff (bar and shop) are line managed by the Dean of Students (as outlined in the Students' Union constitution) and issues relating to their conduct should be signposted to the Dean of Students directly.

APPENDIX

Advice and Support for Students

It is recognised that bringing a complaint can cause pressure and support is available to students through Student Services, Student's Union, and Chaplaincy services.

Advice and Support for Staff

1. It is recognised that dealing with student complaints or being the subject of a complaint can cause pressure for staff. Staff are encouraged to make use of line management support, trade union support or RWCMD's Support Services (including Counselling) as appropriate.
2. A member of staff who is the subject of a complaint has:
 - the right to be supported by a colleague or a trade union representative throughout the process
 - the right of reply to any such complaint
 - access to relevant documentation presented as part of the complaint.
3. The Human Resources (HR) department may, dependent on the outcome, be notified of complaints against members of staff. If a complaint made against a member of staff is of a serious disciplinary nature, advice will be sought from the Director of Finance and Resources in relation to suspending the student complaints procedure pending the outcome of an investigation by HR.