



decision;

- If your complaint is upheld, whether we are offering any practical or financial remedy;
- The outcome will also tell you that in certain circumstances you have the right to request that your complaint is reviewed at *Stage Two*. It will explain the grounds for requesting such a review, the procedure to follow and the deadline for submitting a *Stage Two* complaint.

4. Formal complaints – Stage Two consideration

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the *Stage One* consideration of a complaint, you may request a review of the decision via *Stage Two*.

Your complaint must have been considered at *Stage One* before it can proceed to *Stage Two*.

Reviews can only be considered on one or more of the following grounds:

- there is evidence of procedural irregularity in the *Stage One* consideration of the matter;
- there is new evidence which, for an acceptable reason, was not submitted at *Stage One*;
- there is evidence previously available at *Stage One* which requires further consideration.

Normally the review stage does not consider the issues raised afresh or involve further investigation. For this reason, if you are simply unhappy with the outcome at *Stage One* this will not in itself be an acceptable reason for requesting a review the decision.

How to submit a *Stage Two* Complaint

If you wish to request a review of a *Stage One* outcome you must complete a *Stage Two Complaint Form* and submit it to the Academic Registrar within 28 days of the conclusion of the stage one consideration.

We will not usually consider review requests which are submitted after the deadline you are given.

What happens next?



The Academic Registrar will nominate a *Stage Two* senior officer who was not involved in the original consideration of your complaint to undertake a review of the issues you raise.

The *Stage Two* senior officer will consider the following questions:

- Were the relevant procedures followed during *Stage One*?
- Was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstances?
- Have clear reasons been given explaining why the complaint was rejected at the formal stage?
- If new material evidence has been provided, have valid reasons been given for not supplying this earlier?

The *Stage Two* senior officer may then conclude:

- That your review request does not demonstrate eligible grounds and dismiss your complaint; or
- that eligible grounds of review have been demonstrated and that your complaint may be resolved through the offering of a remedy; or
- that eligible grounds of review have been demonstrated and your complaint may be referred for further consideration by a complaint panel.

If you are offered a remedy but do not wish to accept it, then your complaint will be referred to a complaint panel.

Complaint Panel

A *Stage Two* complaint panel it will have the following membership:

- The *Stage Two* senior officer who initially reviewed the complaint (who acts as Chair);
- A Co-Dean of the organisation (for a complaint about an academic matter) or a *Stage One* senior officer (for a complaint about a non-academic matter) without prior involvement in your complaint;
- Another senior member of staff of the organisation without prior involvement in your complaint.

We will arrange a meeting of the panel and you will be invited to attend either in person or via skype. You will be given 21 calendar days' notice of the date of the meeting and can choose to ask a friend or representative to attend with you, but no legal representation is permitted at this stage.

Before the panel meets we will send you and all others attending a copy of the paperwork. This will include the procedure to be followed and details of those attending



(including the names of any witnesses).

If there is a good reason you cannot attend the panel meeting (hearing) you can request a 'paper-based consideration'. For a 'paper-based consideration' no hearing is held but we collect written submissions from everyone and send a copy to you.

Once these have been sent to you we will give you 14 days to submit a further written response if you wish to do so. The panel will then meet to consider its decision regarding the complaint in your absence.

The decision of the Chair to permit a 'paper' hearing will be final. The outcome of the *Stage Two* Panel will be sent to you in writing, normally 7 calendar days after the date of the panel meeting. This marks the end of our consideration of your complaint.

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR (OIA)

Following the conclusion of your complaint at *Stage Two*, you will also be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' and if you believe that the organisation's complaint process has been conducted incorrectly or you feel that the outcome is unreasonable in relation to the evidence, then you have the right to raise the matter for external and independent review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Information about the process is available on the Office of the Independent Adjudicator website.

COMPLAINT EXPECTATIONS

We will handle complaints in a sensitive and appropriate way and expect that those submitting a complaint will also act reasonably.

We may discontinue the complaints procedure if we consider that a complaint is being conducted in an unreasonable or vexatious way.