

# Complaints policy

June 2018

## NCRQ complaints policy and procedure

Version 2.0

# Purpose

NCRQ recognise the right of a student to launch a complaint, which is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about NCRQ’s action, lack of action, or about the service provided by or on behalf of NCRQ”.

NCRQ believes it is in everyone’s interests to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, as close to the source of the problem as possible, and by informal means in preference to formal ones.

NCRQ aims to ensure that all complaints are received and dealt with promptly, fairly, and professionally, and in a non-discriminatory manner. All complaints will be treated seriously and students will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint in good faith. However, it is expected that students or people communicating on behalf of a student will conduct themselves responsibly and treat the process and those members of staff involved in the process with respect at all times.

NCRQ will ensure appropriate action is taken to resolve issues and will endeavour to prevent similar occurrences.

A student may provide feedback which will be useful to NCRQ when reviewing its policies and operations, without invoking this policy. Students are encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course in a prompt and constructive manner.

# Scope

This policy applies to complaints from any student who wishes to express dissatisfaction with an aspect of NCRQ’s activities.

A complaint must be made within 30 days of the event that gave rise to it.

There are three levels to our complaints procedure:

**1. Student Support Officers.** Student Support Officers will aim to resolve issues quickly and effectively, and prevent reoccurrence. Where this is not possible, or if the proposed resolution is unsatisfactory, a student may wish to escalate the complaint.

**2. Student Support Manager.** Where a Student Support Officer has been unable to satisfactorily resolve the issue, a student may request to escalate this to the Student Support Manager to resolve an issue. Where this is not possible, or if the proposed resolution is unsatisfactory, a student may wish to escalate the complaint.

**3. Director of Quality / Senior Management.** Where the Student Support Manager has been unable to satisfactorily resolve the issue, a student may request to escalate this to the Director of Quality / Senior Management to resolve an issue. This is the highest level at which a complaint can be dealt with under NCRQ's complaints policy.

It is expected that day-to-day concerns will be resolved promptly and informally.

## Who can use the complaints policy?

Students enrolled on an NCRQ course may use this procedure. Student who have completed their NCRQ course are eligible to use this policy up to 30 days after a student's final validation interview has taken place.

A group of students may use this procedure to make a collective complaint, provided that one student identifies themselves as the main contact for the purposes of communication throughout this procedure.

Anonymous complaints will not be considered unless there are exceptional and evidence-based reasons to do so. In many circumstances, raising a concern anonymously could impede investigation and communication of the outcome.

## What does not constitute a complaint?

Disagreements with the academic decisions of assessors in relation to the result or feedback in an assessment. If a student wishes to appeal against the outcome of an assessment, this must be dealt with under the re-marking procedure, and then subsequently the appeals policy.

Disagreement with the decisions made in relation to special consideration or reasonable adjustment requests, or in relation to the outcome of a malpractice investigation. These must be taken under the appeals policy.

Disagreement with a policy rather than its application. Feedback on NCRQ's policies will be welcome at all times and will be communicated to the Director of Education.

## Process

1. Informal complaints will be dealt with, where possible, by the Student Support Team. These complaints may be received via email, phone call or by monitoring NCRQ's official forums.
2. Where a complaint cannot be dealt with informally, the wish to escalate the complaint to the formal procedure must be made via email and can be emailed to the NCRQ Complaints Officer at [complaints@ncrq.org.uk](mailto:complaints@ncrq.org.uk) - the complaint must be submitted within 30 days of the event a student wishes to complain about taking place.
3. The complaint will then be dealt with in accordance with the three stages detailed in Section 2 of this policy, and will be escalated as necessary. In order to escalate the complaint, a student must inform the complaints officer of their desire to do so within 5 working days of the outcome being communicated to a student.
4. At each stage of the process, NCRQ will inform a student of the outcome of the complaint within 10 working days. This will be communicated to the student via email.
5. Once a complaint has been resolved the complaint will be closed, and may not be re-opened, unless the terms agreed to upon resolution of the complaint have not been met.
6. If the complaint has reached the third level of the NCRQ complaints policy, and has not been satisfactorily resolved, the complaint will be referred to the appeals policy. At this stage, a student is welcome to launch an appeal against the outcome of the complaint, and will be subject to the conditions as laid out in the Appeals Policy.
7. NCRQ reserves the right not to investigate complaints considered to be vexatious or malicious. Where NCRQ deems this to be the case, the complainant or appellant will be informed in writing.