

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Version Number	2.1
Version Date	17/9/18
Date Approved by Academic Board	DRAFT - Subject to REVIEW
Review Date (Annual)	
Person Responsible	Programme Manager
Linked policies	Appeals Policy Equality and Diversity Policy Safeguarding and Welfare Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Health and Safety Policy Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy
Chapter in OU Operations Manual	13
Mapping to Quality Code	Chapter B9 (indicators 1-7)

13 Complaints Policy & Procedure (QC chapter B2, B9)

13.1 Definitions

13.1.1 A **complaint** relates to an ongoing situation or incident, usually relating to teaching and learning or general activities within Ballet West. Complaints are dealt with using this policy and procedure.

13.1.2 An **appeal** is a request to reconsider a decision made by an admissions panel, an academic misconduct panel or an exam board. Appeals are dealt with through the Appeals procedures.

13.2 Policy

13.2.1 Ballet West aims to provide an excellent service to those who engage us, including students and their parents. It is recognised that sometimes there may be individuals who feel that their experience at Ballet West has fallen below the standard to be reasonable expected or that they have not been dealt with in a fair or equitable way. Ballet West requires procedures to deal with complaints to provide satisfaction for complainants and to improve good practice.

13.2.2 We will ensure that the complaints procedures at Ballet West are

- Accessible to all
- Transparent in process
- Well publicised, with up to date information on our website, VLE and student handbooks

- Carried out with any risk of disadvantage to the complainant
- Carried out in a timely manner
- Effective and constructive in improving provision at Ballet West
- Monitored with reports of complaints made to the appropriate managing committees

13.2.3 We aim to seek resolution of students' issues through open communication between staff and students, either through informal discussion or through student representation on the programme committees. However, it is recognised that informal mechanisms may not always resolve issues and a formal procedure is necessary.

13.3 Procedure for Students

13.3.1 This procedure relates to complaints about the delivery of the Ballet West courses and programmes and general complaints about your experience at Ballet West.

13.3.2 Matters of concern or dissatisfaction will be resolved at an informal level as far as possible. You should discuss any issues with module tutors, the programme manager or the principal as soon as possible. Do not wait for issues to become unbearable before you bring them to the attention of staff.

- If your issue relates to the course - discuss it with the module tutor or the programme manager
- If your issue relates to fellow students or personal interactions with staff - discuss it with the principal

13.3.3 The staff member you discuss the issue with may refer the issue to the principal or the programme manager. Please note that staff are obliged to disclose information to senior management.

13.3.4 If there is an issue which affects a number of students, you can discuss it with your student representative who may either discuss it with staff or raise it as an issue at a Course Committee meeting

13.3.5 If a problem remains unresolved or is considered too serious to be dealt with informally, you should submit a written complaint. You can either use the Complaints Form (available from the programme manager or the VLE) or submit an email which contains all the information requested in the form -

- Your name, course and email address
- The nature of your complaint
- What you would consider to be an appropriate resolution
- Attach any evidence you may have to support your complaint

13.3.6 Your complaint should be addressed to the programme manager and submitted to registry@balletwest.ac.uk or delivered to the school office. In the event that the complaint involves the programme manager, the form should be sent to the Principal.

13.3.7 The programme manager or Principal will acknowledge your complaint within two

days. In most cases a meeting will be arranged with you and relevant senior management depending on the nature of the complaint.

- 13.3.8 We aim to resolve all complaints within 28 days. You will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint throughout the process and its final outcome in writing.
- 13.3.9 If you are dissatisfied with the resolution of the complaint by the senior management and want to appeal the decision, contact the Programme Manager and the complaint will be referred to the Board of Trustees.
- 13.3.10 If the complaint deals with the actions of the Principal or associated party, the programme manager will refer the matter directly to the Ballet West Board of Trustees, who will discuss the matter in the absence of the Principal and associated parties.
- 13.3.11 Whistleblowing - if you feel that your complaint is very serious, or you think it will not be dealt with properly by Ballet West staff, you can contact the CHAIR of the BOARD of TRUSTEES directly, whose mobile number is included in the current course handbook.
- 13.3.12 The details of all complaints will be logged for the purposes of annual monitoring and review. If you have exhausted the Ballet West complaints procedure and are dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint, and your complaint relates to academic quality or standards, you may complain through the Open University complaints procedures by writing to The Director, Open University Validation Partnerships, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA.
- 13.3.13 The Open University will investigate your complaint and issue a Completion of Procedures Letter. This marks the formal end of the internal complaints procedure and is a necessary document to escalate the complaint to the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.
- 13.3.14 If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, then you may contact the Office for the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (www.oiahe.org.uk) and follow their complaints procedure.

13.4 Procedure for Staff

- 13.4.1 Staff should always be receptive to concerns from students. If you are unable to discuss concerns when approached, arrange a later time when you can talk to the student.
- 13.4.2 The response to concerns / complaints should vary depending on the severity of the issue. You should be aware of procedures relating to bullying which are detailed in the Anti-Bullying policy.
- 13.4.3 You must advise the students that you cannot promise to keep the conversation secret, no matter how insistent the student may be. You must explain that you are ready to listen but that you have to tell other people in order to deal with the complaint properly.

13.4.4 If you can resolve the issue quickly, do so and inform any related parties. Keep a note of the issue as it may be relevant to Course Committee meetings.

13.4.5 If you cannot resolve the issue either discuss the matter with the Programme Manager or the Principal on the student's behalf or refer the student to the Programme Manager or the Principal

- If the issue relates to the course - refer to the programme manager
- If the issue relates to pastoral matters or personal interactions between students or with staff - refer the student to the principal

13.4.6 If you discuss the matter on a student's behalf, remember to feedback to the student the actions taken to resolve the issue.

If a student wishes to submit a formal complaint, remind them of the procedure and direct them either to the programme manager or the location of the complaints form on the website.

2. What do you feel would be an acceptable resolution to your complaint:

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3. List any documentary evidence below to support your complaint and attach copies to the form. Keep any original documents safe and secure.

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4. Please use this box for any further comments you may have:

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Signed:		Date:	
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Formal complaints should be sent to the Ballet West programme manager, either by post or email.