

## **P903 Complaints Procedure for UCP Visitors, Customers and Other Stakeholders**

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1** The purpose of this procedure is to describe the process by which any complaint or dissatisfaction expressed to, and about, University Centre Peterborough (UCP) is resolved. UCP aims to provide a quality service which meets the highest expectations of its staff. It welcomes all constructive feedback on its activities, whether positive or negative and recognises that such expressions provide an opportunity to improve the quality of service or facilities that we provide. It is also considered important that complaints and dissatisfactions are recorded, and that they are dealt with as fairly and quickly and as possible.
- 1.2** The principles underpinning this procedure are that UCP will:
- I. Consider external complaints impartially and professionally within reasonable timeframes;
  - II. Encourage informal resolution where possible;
  - III. Give fair and full consideration of complaints made;
  - IV. Respect the privacy of customers and disclose only the information necessary in order to process the complaint.

### **2. SCOPE**

- 2.1** This procedure is for anyone who is affected by the activities of UCP including those receiving or seeking a service or who have been subject to a decision of UCP.
- 2.2** This Procedure is not to be used by current students who are enrolled at UCP. Such students should refer to the UCP Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Students document found on the UCP Website. In addition, this Procedure should not be used by staff. Staff should use the P524 Grievance Policy found on the staff intranet page.
- 2.3** If an individual complains to UCP about the service of another organisation, but UCP is not involved in the issue, the individual should be advised to contact the appropriate organisation directly.

### **3. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Staff Intranet Page

- P505 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
  - P524 Grievance Policy
- [www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/](http://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/)
- UCP Rules Regulations and Procedures for Students
  - P902 Higher Education Freedom of Speech and External Speaker Policy

### **4. RISK ANALYSIS**

- 4.1** Failure to have a clear Procedure, or not following the procedure may result in the inconsistent or unfair handling of complaints which lead to poor external stakeholder perception and potential financial cost and compensation.

### **5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1** A Section One Impact Assessment has been completed for this Policy.

### **6. DATA PROTECTION**

- 6.1** Complaints will be handled with discretion and access to information will only be provided to those who have a legitimate interest for the purposes of facilitating investigations. Data

Protection legislation specifies that individuals have a right to access information concerning them, except in limited circumstances. This means that any third party identified in a complaint, may have an entitlement to access the information that has been written about them on request. Equally, individuals that are the subject of a complaint have a right to understand the nature of the complaint about them in order that the complaint can be adequately investigated and to ensure they are afforded the opportunity to respond.

**6.2** If enquiries to an outside organisation in relation to the complaint are required, care will be taken to comply with Data Protection legislation and the guidance on handling personal information. Such complaints may include, for example a complaint about catering service.

**6.3** All notes, letters and complaint logs will be stored securely for a period of 5 years.

## **7. DEFINITIONS**

**7.1** For the purpose of this procedure, a complaint may be defined as: an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more individuals about the standard of service, action, or lack of action by or on behalf of UCP.

**7.2** This procedure covers complaints made by someone other than a student, contractor, or member of staff which may relate to:

- I. Failure to provide a service;
- II. The quality and standard of service;
- III. The failure of UCP to follow an appropriate administrative procedure;
- IV. Treatment by or attitude of a staff member, student, external speaker or contractor;
- V. Inappropriate behavior by a staff member, student, external speaker or contractor;
- VI. Being prevented from arranging, speaking at or attending an event of the type envisaged by the P902 Higher Education Freedom of Speech and External Speaker Policy;
- VII. Alleged infringements of freedom of speech;
- VIII. Allegations that an external speaker at an event breached or is likely to breach the external speaker code of conduct.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITIES**

**8.1** Formal investigation when the complaint is against a senior post holder is referred to the UCP Academic Director.

**8.2** All complaints raised by completion of a CE1 or CE2 form are received by the Deputy Director of UCP.

**8.3** Complaints will not be considered unless the appropriate forms are submitted. CE1 and CE2 forms are available to download from the UCP website [ucp.ac.uk](http://ucp.ac.uk). A copy can also be requested by emailing [ucp.complaints@peterborough.ac.uk](mailto:ucp.complaints@peterborough.ac.uk) or calling the Deputy Directors office on 01733 838223.

## **9. PROCEDURE**

### **Informal Stage – Early Resolution and mediation**

**9.1** Complaints can usually be resolved quickly and satisfactorily on an informal basis. If possible, the customer should contact the Manager of the area most directly involved with the situation with a view to resolving the issues informally.

**9.2** If the member of staff can resolve the issue, a brief note of the issue circumstances and resolution should be sent via their line manager to the Deputy Director for logging. The member of staff should feedback to the customer that their concern has been addressed.

**9.3** If the member of staff receiving the complaint or dissatisfaction cannot resolve the problem it will be forwarded to the UCP Manager responsible for the area to which the source of the concern

relates, for investigation and response.

**9.4** The member of staff must;

- I. agree with the customer involved the most appropriate way of dealing with the concern
- II. ensure the person understands that s/he has a right to make a formal complaint
- III. ensure that brief details of the issue are written down and passed to their line manager
- IV. agree with the customer involved whether a personal response is required.

**9.5** Complaints investigated at local level by the appropriate member of staff should be completed within FIFTEEN working days from the receipt of the complaint.

**9.6** If a resolution cannot be found, a CE1 form should be completed by the customer within three calendar months of the first incident taking place. To lodge a formal complaint the customer where appropriate, must have attempted to resolve the issue informally.

**Stage 1 – Formal CE1 Stage**

**9.7** A formal complaint is raised by the customer completing and submitting a CE1 Form to the Deputy Director. The CE1 Form must be submitted within three calendar months of the date which the event complained about occurred. If the complaint relates to a series of incidents or events, you must make the complaint within three calendar months of the first incident or event.

**9.8** Formal complaints will not be considered unless the appropriate forms are submitted.

**9.9** The customer is asked on the CE1 Form to outline what informal measures have been initiated to resolve the issue, or why informal resolution was not pursued before submission of the CE1 Form.

**9.10** When we receive the completed CE1 form, the Deputy Director will send it to the relevant HE Manager / designated member of UCP staff, who will then investigate the complaint. They will normally reply in writing within TWENTY WORKING DAYS of receiving the complaint. Both sides will have the chance to state their case. A copy of the reply will be sent to the Deputy Director.

**Stage 2 – Formal CE2 Stage**

**9.11** If the complaint is not resolved, it may move to stage 2. A CE2 form should be completed by the customer within 20 working days of the date of the written outcome of the CE1 stage. The sides may change the time limit to take account of the difficulties of either or both sides being able to access information over holiday periods. In such cases, written notice must be communicated by either side outlining the reason for a delay.

**9.12** Formal complaints will not be considered unless the appropriate forms are submitted.

**9.13** On receipt of a completed CE2 form, the Deputy Director will send it to the Accountable Officer at UCP or designated other. Having considered the complaint, the decisions will be communicated in writing, normally within 20 working days of receiving a completed CE2 form. A copy of the reply will be sent to the Deputy Director of UCP for logging, and should it be necessary, to enhance, review or amend any practices or procedures considering the outcome.

**9.14** In considering the complaint the Accountable Officer at UCP or designated other will not reinvestigate the complaint. They will review;

- I. The procedures followed at the formal stage;
- II. Whether the outcome was reasonable;
- III. New material which, for valid reasons, were not provided earlier in the process.

**Complaints against a member of staff**

**9.15** In the event of a complaint being made against a member of staff, or if during CE1/CE2 stages of

the investigation it is found that a member of staff may have failed to carry out proper procedures or has not acted with integrity or competence the Deputy Director must inform the member of staffs Line Manager and the procedure below followed.

- 9.16** If the complaint refers to a matter of procedure or failing to meet standards, the Line Manager should deal with it through normal performance management processes.
- 9.17** If the complaint is a potential case of misconduct or gross misconduct, the Deputy Director should refer the matter to the Executive Director of Human Resources. Where an investigation is instigated, following the P505 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

#### **Anonymous Complaints**

- 9.18** Complaints submitted anonymously will be considered if there is enough information in the complaint to enable UCP to make further enquiries. If, however, an anonymous complaint does not provide enough information to enable UCP to take further action, UCP may decide not to pursue it further. However, consideration may be given to the issues raised, and UCP will record the complaint so that corrective action can be taken if appropriate.

#### **Acknowledgement, Logging, Corrective Action and Reporting**

- 9.19** On receipt of a formal complaint by the Deputy Director it will be dated and logged. The formal complaint will be acknowledged within six working days of receipt by the Deputy Director stating that the matter is under investigation and giving an indication of the date when the customer can expect a reply. If this date is not met, then a letter will be sent updating the customer and modifying the scheduled completion date.
- 9.20** Complaints will be logged and stored centrally. Hard copy information is destroyed once scanned, stored, and archived securely in accordance with data protection.
- 9.21** An anonymised report analysing all complaints (informal and formal) is reviewed at UCP's Academic Board held at least once a semester.
- 9.22** The Deputy Director acts as soon as it is practical, should it be necessary, to enhance, review or amend any practices or procedures as a result of a complaint.
- 9.23** This procedure is reviewed annually, or when required as a result of regulatory policy or industry updates.
- 9.24** Note CE1 And CE2 forms are found on the UCP website [ucp.ac.uk](http://ucp.ac.uk)