

## **Quick guide to Student Complaints**

### **What is not considered to be a complaint?**

The College welcomes feedback from students. If you wish to give informal feedback, you can do so by contacting the relevant department directly. If you are unhappy with the outcome of an assessment, you should submit an appeal.

### **Who can complain?**

Any currently registered Birkbeck student can complain, as well as students who left the College no more than three months ago (either because they have been awarded a degree or because they have formally ceased their studies). Applicants to the College can also complain, but only if they think that the Admissions Policy has not been applied properly.

### **When can I complain?**

Any complaint should normally be made within 6 weeks of the incident(s) you are complaining about, occurring.

### **How do I submit a complaint?**

You submit a formal complaint by completing the complaints form and sending it to [studentcomplaints@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:studentcomplaints@bbk.ac.uk) or by handing the paper form in to the Student Advice Centre in the Malet Street building. Any relevant evidence to the complaint must be attached to the complaint form.

### **Submitting evidence to support a complaint**

Evidence to support your complaint should usually be in written form. For example, if you are complaining about slow responses to emails from a department, you could include an email trail from your inbox, showing clearly the emails you sent that received no response. If you do not have written evidence of an incident, you could submit statements from other students or staff who were present at the time. Please note, Birkbeck does not record telephone conversations.

### **Your preferred outcomes**

It is important to include a clear expression of what you would consider a satisfactory resolution to your complaint when you first submit your complaint. This will allow us to better understand what outcomes you are hoping to achieve and how we can best help you. It will also allow us to advise you in circumstances where the desired outcomes are not feasible, or within the limits of the Complaints Policy.

### **What happens when I complain?**

When you submit a complaint, it will be considered by Registry staff. If they consider the complaint to be in time and valid, they will either request a response from the relevant School or service, or refer the complaint on to an independent investigator. Any response to the complaint, or the investigating outcome, will be communicated to you by Registry staff.

### **What if I'm not happy with the complaint outcome?**

If you believe that the complaint outcome was unreasonable, or against College regulation or policy, or that a mistake was made in the handling of your complaint, you can request that the complaint is reviewed. You should do this within 2 weeks of getting the complaint outcome. If your request is accepted, you may be given a written resolution, be referred to mediation, or the complaint may be referred to a complaint panel.

### **The Office of the Independent Adjudicator**

If you've completed the College's internal complaints process and remain unsatisfied, you can refer your complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). In order to contact the OIA the College needs to provide you with a Completion of Procedures letter.

### **Further Advice**

Birkbeck Students' Union has a dedicated advice service for students and can provide guidance and help with submitting casework (including academic appeals and student complaints). You can reach a Student Advisor by email at [su-advice@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:su-advice@bbk.ac.uk) or by telephone on 020 7631 6655.