

## **The Robert Gordon University Complaints Procedure – A Guide for Students**

The Robert Gordon University is committed to providing an excellent education and high quality services to our students from enrolment to graduation.

### **Getting help to make your complaint**

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your written consent to complain for you.

Useful contacts details:

*Student Union – [hello@rguunion.co.uk](mailto:hello@rguunion.co.uk), 01224 262266 or RGU Students Union, University Street, RGU Campus, Garthdee Road, Aberdeen AB10 7GE*

*Student Services – Student Help Point, Faculty of Health and Social Care Building, T: 01224262182/263660, E: [studenthelppoint@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:studenthelppoint@rgu.ac.uk)*

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all students. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us.

### **Our contact details**

Please contact us by the following means:

**Post:** *Dr Duncan Cockburn  
Director of Planning and Policy  
Robert Gordon University,  
Garthdee House,  
Garthdee Road  
Aberdeen  
AB10 7QB*

**Phone:** *01224 262195*

**Email:** *[complaints@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@rgu.ac.uk)*

**We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.**

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

### **What is a complaint?**

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

### **What can I complain about?**

A complaint may relate to [though is not limited to] the following:

- (a) the quality and standard of service;
- (b) failure to provide a service;
- (c) the quality of facilities or learning resources;
- (d) treatment by or attitude of a staff member, student or contractor;
- (e) inappropriate behaviour by a staff member, student or contractor;
- (f) the failure of the University to follow an appropriate administrative process;
- (g) dissatisfaction with the University's policy, although it is recognised that policy is set at the discretion of the University.

Your complaint may involve more than one of the University's services or be about someone working on our behalf.

### **What can't I complain about?**

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include [though are not limited to]:

- (a) a routine, first-time request for a service;
- (b) a request under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act or Data Protection Act;
- (c) a request for information or an explanation of policy or practice;
- (d) a response to an invitation to provide feedback through a formal mechanism such as a questionnaire or committee membership will generally not be treated as a complaint;
- (e) an insurance claim;
- (f) an issue which is being, or has been, considered by a court or tribunal;
- (g) an attempt to have a complaint reconsidered where the University's procedure has been completed and a decision has been issued;
- (h) a grievance by a member of staff which is eligible for handling through the grievance procedure;
- (i) an appeal about an academic judgement of an Assessment Board relating to assessment, progression and/or award (refer *Academic Regulation A3 – Section 1*, paragraph 6.2);
- (j) an academic decision relating to admission to a course of the University.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

### **Who can complain?**

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by the services of the University can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone

who is dissatisfied with our service. If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf you will need their personal written consent. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

### **How do I complain?**

You can complain in person at any office, by phone, in writing, or by email at [complaints@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@rgu.ac.uk)

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff within the School or Department you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

### **How long do I have to make a complaint?**

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

### **Contact details**

Dr Duncan Cockburn  
Policy Advisor  
Robert Gordon University  
Garthdee House  
Garthdee Road  
Aberdeen  
AB10 7QB

Phone: 01224 262194

Email: [complaints@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@rgu.ac.uk)

## **What happens when I have complained?**

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint.  
Our complaints procedure has two stages:

### **Stage one – frontline resolution**

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem. Where possible, your concerns should be raised with the relevant staff member, tutor, university representative or School/Department Office. This can be done face-to-face, by phone, in writing or by email.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure. You may choose to do this immediately or shortly after you get our initial decision.

### **Stage two – investigation**

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation. We have a complaint form, which will help you to state your complaint clearly to us. Although we will also accept complaints that are made in person or on the phone, we encourage you to complete the complaint form in the interests of clarity and in order to best assist the investigation process.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

### **What if I'm still dissatisfied?**

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (**so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO**)

- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

In Person:

SPSO

4 Melville Street

Edinburgh

EH3 7NS

By Post

SPSO

Freepost EH641

Edinburgh

EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

We can also give you this leaflet in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille).

## Quick guide to our complaints procedure

