



Procedure – Quality Concerns and Complaints

Purpose

This procedure provides any participant in the College's quality framework or assessor training programme a clear process for raising and resolving concerns and complaints with the College regarding the College's quality framework (e.g. assessment outcomes or assessor conduct) or assessor training programme.

This procedure identifies specified processes for concerns and complaints, roles and responsibilities and defines the various steps and timeframes.

Definitions

Concerns

A concern is generally a situation where the expectations of an individual, general practice team or PHO regarding the quality framework and/or assessor training programme have not been met or an individual, general practice team or PHO wishes to raise a query with the College about an issue or concern. The impact on the individual, general practice team or PHO has not been significant, and it is likely a resolution can be met by direct, informal discussion with all the parties involved.

Complaints

A complaint is generally a situation where an individual, general practice team or PHO seeks some form of redress or a change to a current situation directly related to their experience within the quality framework and/or training programme. The impact and effect on the individual, general practice team or PHO has been significant and requires a formal process of resolution.

Procedure

Concerns Procedure			
Step	Team/Person Responsible	Evidence	Timeframes
1. The policy and procedures for concerns, complaints and appeals are available to all individuals or groups participating in the College's quality framework and/or assessor training programme.	Quality Team	College website College intranet	Ongoing – most recent version of documents published.
2. The Complainant raises their concern/s directly with the person/s concerned. If the Complainant feels unable to raise and/or resolve the issue with the person concerned, the Complainant can raise the matter directly with the College.	Complainant	Correspondence with parties involved (if applicable)	Within 30 working days of the alleged incident or situation occurring.
3. If the concern relates directly to a College staff member, the Complainant raises their concern/s to the Team Leader or Head of Quality.	Complainant Team Leader Head of Quality Human Resources Manager	Email, discussion notes	Within 30 working days of the alleged incident or situation occurring.
4. The appropriate person at the College acknowledges the concern/s and discusses it with the Complainant.	Relevant College staff	Email acknowledgment Discussion notes	Within two (2) working days of the concern/s being raised.
5. The College acts to address the concern, in consultation with the Complainant and other person(s) concerned.	Quality Team Leader Other relevant College staff (if applicable) Head of Quality	Correspondence notes	Within 10 working days of the concern/s being raised.

Concerns Procedure			
Step	Team/Person Responsible	Evidence	Timeframes
<p>6. Either:</p> <p>All involved parties agree that the concern has been resolved and no further action is required.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>The Complainant is not satisfied with the proposed resolution.</p> <p>The Complainant will need to make a written formal complaint to the College.</p> <p>The formal complaint procedures will then apply.</p>	<p>Complainant</p> <p>Other relevant College staff</p> <p>Complainant</p>	<p>Meeting/discussion notes</p> <p>Email or letter</p> <p>Written complaint on the College's Complaint Form</p>	<p>Within 20 working days of the concern/s being raised.</p> <p>Within five (5) working days of the Complainant receiving the proposed resolution.</p>
<p>7. Where relevant and appropriate, actions are taken by the College to make improvements in relation to the nature of the concern or complaint (e.g. to the quality programme, support, advice, guidance).</p>	<p>Quality Team Leader</p> <p>Head of Quality</p> <p>Other relevant College staff</p>	<p>Actions and/or improvements made (if applicable)</p>	<p>As appropriate</p>

Formal Complaints Procedure			
Step	Team/Person Responsible	Evidence	Timeframes
1. The policy and procedures for concerns, complaints and appeals are available to all individuals and groups participating in the quality framework or assessor training programme.	Quality Team Leader Head of Quality	College website College intranet	Ongoing – most recent version of documents published.
2. The Complainant raises a complaint with the College.	Complainant	Email or phone call	Within 30 working days of the alleged incident or situation occurring.
3. The relevant College staff member acknowledges the complaint and contacts the Complainant to have an initial discussion to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > establish the nature of the complaint to determine if it is a concern or a complaint > explain the process for making a formal complaint with the College > confirm if the Complainant wishes to proceed with making a formal complaint. 	Relevant College staff member	Discussion notes	Within two (2) working days of the complaint being raised.
4. The Complainant submits a formal complaint form to the College. Sufficient detail must be provided to enable the College to investigate.	Complainant	Written complaint on the College's Complaint Form	Within 30 working days of the alleged incident or situation occurring.
5. Once the formal complaint has been received, the complaint is acknowledged and recorded on the College database.	Quality Team	Email acknowledgment Entry into complaints file in IMIS/ Objective	Within two (2) working days of the complaint being received by the College.
6. The complaint is investigated by the College. Additional information may be sought by the College and if appropriate, a face-to-face or Skype/telephone meeting may be requested with the Complainant.	Quality Team Leader Head of Quality Other relevant College staff	Notes and minutes of meeting as appropriate Report of investigation	Within 10 working days of the complaint being received by the College.
7. If the complaint concerns potential misconduct by a College staff member, the Staff Discipline Procedure will apply.	Quality Team Leader Head of Quality Human Resources Manager	Correspondence notes	Within 10 working days of the complaint being received by the College.

Formal Complaints Procedure			
Step	Team/Person Responsible	Evidence	Timeframes
8. The Head of Quality decides based on all the evidence provided at the time and communicates the decision and outcome in writing to the Complainant. This includes information about the process for lodging an appeal.	Head of Quality	Formal letter to Complainant, with information on the Appeals process.	Within 20 working days of the complaint being received by the College.
9. The outcome is recorded on the College database (IMIS, Objective).	Quality Team Leader Head of Quality Quality Team	Entry into complaints file on IMIS/ Objective	Immediately following the correspondence sent to the Complainant.
10. The outcome is communicated to the Chief Executive.	Head of Quality	Written memo/report	Within five (5) working days of the decision and outcome being communicated to the Complainant.
11. If the Complainant chooses to appeal the final decision, the Appeals Process applies.	Complainant	Appeals Process	Within 10 working days upon receipt of the College investigation outcome.

NOTE: All correspondence relating to concerns and complaints must be saved by the College into the complaints file on IMIS/Objective.