# THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY

## Policies, Procedures and Guidance

**Complaints Handling Procedure**

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| **Approved by** | Executive Group and Deans | | |
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| **Version** | 1 | **Date of next review** | As required |

# COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE
## (For use by persons other than students and staff)

### Who can complain?

The complaints procedure applies to members of the public and organisations who wish to make a complaint against the University where some perceived injustice or hardship has been suffered as a result of the University providing a poor service, delivering a service badly or failing to provide a service. It does not apply to students (Student Complaints Policy) or staff (Staff Grievance Procedure) who have their own procedures and policies.

### Informal resolution

The University seeks to resolve any complaint as quickly and appropriately as possible. Any complaint should, in the first instance, be directed to the member of staff, school or department concerned who shall endeavour to respond as soon as practicable and resolve the matter without the need for any formal procedure. If you are unsure who to approach then please contact the Policy Advisor, based in the Principal and Vice-Chancellor's Office, in the first instance for guidance (policy.advisor@rgu.ac.uk) Tel No. 01224 262005/262496).

If you remain dissatisfied, you should raise a formal complaint clearly setting out in writing the injustice or hardship that you feel you have suffered as a result of the maladministration or service failure of the University.

### When should a complaint be made?

The University will not usually consider a formal complaint made more than three months after the incident or the date at which you could reasonably have become aware that you had grounds for complaint. The University will only waive this time limit in exceptional circumstances.

### To whom should I complain?

A complaint should be submitted in writing to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor or, where this is inappropriate, to the Chairman of the Board of Governors at The Principal and Vice Chancellor's Office, The Robert Gordon University, Schoolhill, Aberdeen, AB10 1FR.

### What format should my complaint take?

In order to facilitate the handling of the complaint, it is suggested that any complaint should:

- be clearly marked as a formal complaint;
- state clearly and precisely the nature of the complaint;
- provide a record of events, including as much relevant information as possible and be accompanied by any relevant documentation;

- include details of the outcome of the attempt at informal resolution and the outcome achieved with the School or Department concerned;
- state clearly the result sought in response to the complaint.

**When will I receive a response?**

The complaint will be acknowledged within five working days and where a full response cannot be given at that time, a preliminary indication of the process to be undertaken will be provided. The University will aim to make a formal response within 21 working days of receipt of the complaint.

**What if I remain dissatisfied after the response?**

If you remain dissatisfied with the response you may refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman who deals with complaints made by individuals about organisations providing Public Services in Scotland.

The Ombudsman will consider complaints when an organisation has:

- Provided a poor service;*
- Delivered a service badly;*
- Failed to provide a service;*

In exceptional circumstances only, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman may deal with complaints:

- that have not been through the organisation's own process
- if it is more than 12 months since the aggrieved person found out about the matter
- when there is a right of appeal through, for example, tribunals or the courts.

Please also be aware that the University is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act and information concerning the complaint you submit may require to be disclosed in response to a Freedom of Information request.

* If you claim you have suffered injustice or hardship as a result of these failures.