

## Exeter College

### Complaints and Appeals Procedures

#### 1. Overview

Exeter College's complaints procedure is designed to ensure that any questions and problems you may have in connection with the College are aired quickly, and resolved fairly and consistently. We therefore encourage you to use the following procedure to facilitate this. Complaints may relate to a wide range of issues, including health and safety, the physical environment, and the standards, performance, decisions or actions of one or more of our members of staff or of the College as a whole.

The procedure is designed to be accessible and transparent, and to indicate how such matters should be dealt with within Exeter College, although we reserve the right at our discretion to vary, replace or terminate the procedure at any stage. It cannot be used to deal with an anonymous complaint as it would be difficult to accurately determine the particular circumstances relating to such a complaint.

Please note that complaints from current or prospective members of the College that relate to the areas specified below are not covered by this procedure, and are subject to alternative procedures (follow the URL for further details). The College recognises the requirement as an employer to comply with the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and to take all steps to ensure that any complaint is handled both fairly and reasonably.

- *Issues of harassment, victimisation or bullying*

Code of Practice on harassment:

[http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/cop\\_harassment.pdf](http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/cop_harassment.pdf)

Informal procedure:

[http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/informal\\_harassment\\_flowchart.pdf](http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/informal_harassment_flowchart.pdf) Formal

procedure:

[http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/formal\\_harassment\\_flowchart.pdf](http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/formal_harassment_flowchart.pdf)

- *Complaints from non-academic staff members concerning their employment*

Grievance Procedure:

<http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/grievance-procedure.pdf>

- *Complaints from academic or academic-related staff members concerning their employment*

Grievance Procedures: <http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/sites/exeter/files/documents/statutes.pdf> (Statute XII Part VI)

- *Complaints from Junior Members of the College*

The Red Book: <http://www.exeter.ox.ac.uk/currentstudents/redbook>

- *Feedback on admissions decisions*

[www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate\\_courses/about\\_oxford/codes\\_and\\_procedures/feedback.html](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/about_oxford/codes_and_procedures/feedback.html)

## **2. Stages of the Procedure**

The complaints procedure enables you to raise and settle any complaint you may have as quickly and as near to the point of origin as possible.

### **2.1. Stage One: Discuss your complaint with the person most relevant to the situation**

Many issues will, and indeed should, be resolved informally. This may be done by contacting the member of staff with whom you were originally in contact, or another person who is immediately concerned with the complaint that has arisen.

If an informal approach does not result in the required resolution, you should follow the procedure set out below.

### **2.2. Stage Two: Send a formal written complaint to the College**

Your letter should be dated and should state that you are raising a formal complaint under our complaints procedure. It should be addressed to the Head of the Department relating to the issue you are raising, or to the HR Officer. We will respond to your complaint as soon as is reasonably practicable, and usually within 15 working days. It may take longer in certain circumstances.

After giving full consideration to the points you have raised, we will communicate the outcome in writing to you, confirming whether it merits further investigation, what further steps will be taken (if any), and your right to appeal.

### **2.3. Stage Three: Investigation**

If an investigation is to take place, this will take place over a maximum period of six weeks.

A written report of the investigation will be compiled and sent to you. The report will give written notice of any further action such as disciplinary procedures or training.

### **2.4. Stage Four: Appeals Procedure**

Failing satisfactory resolution at Stages One, Two or Three, you may appeal to the Rector. You should do this in writing, stating your original complaint and your reasons for requesting the appeal. The Rector or a member of the Senior Management Team may meet with you as soon as is reasonably practicable and at an agreed location to discuss your complaint. He/she will attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of both you and the College. Whatever decision is taken by him/her will be final and will be confirmed to you in writing usually within 20 working days of your request for the appeal. This is the final stage of the College's complaints procedure.

## **3. Guidelines**

Complaints should be raised as early as possible and in any event within three months, and the above procedure followed without unreasonable delay at any stage.

When considering a suitable resolution, the person hearing the complaint will consider whether similar complaints have been raised before, how they have been resolved, and any follow-up action that was taken.

## **4. Implementation, Monitoring and Review of this Procedure**

This procedure will take effect from 19 June 2012. The Governing Body of the College has overall responsibility for implementing the procedure and for monitoring any complaints raised under it. The procedure will be reviewed on a regular basis following its implementation and may be changed from time to time and without notice.