

## **Making a Complaint**

### **1. Background**

You are entitled to make a complaint if you consider that RVC has not been reasonable in its dealings with you or you have received poor service.

The procedure looks daunting. We have tried to make it as user-friendly as possible but we do have to cover all eventualities so it is necessarily long.

RVC does not like anonymous complaints. Neither do we like complaints made to 'get at someone' (vexatious). They are not very professional approaches from the person making the complaint and it does not fit with the RVC Charter.

Some things are general, like a particular aspect of a course and it affects more students than just you. This might be better raised through your student representative to Campus Services or Course Management Committees.

### **2. So you want to take the first step**

#### **2.1. *Don't Worry***

You can go to a range of people to help with your problem. If you feel you can go to the person concerned then do so. This is a professional thing to do. Sometimes an immediate 'fix' is possible for something that is a quite a practical problem. If it is a bit more complicated you will be advised as to what to do/who to see next.

##### **2.1.1. *Prepare your approach***

Be clear about *why* you are dissatisfied, *what* did RVC do (or not do) that went wrong? *What* do you want RVC to do to sort out your complaint?

### **3. So you need to take a formal step**

#### **3.1. *Don't Worry and Prepare your approach***

You are entitled to complain. Now you will need to write something. So as above:

- *What went wrong*
- *Why are you dissatisfied*
- *What do you want the College to do about it?*

#### **3.2. *There will be an Investigator***

This will be a person independent of anyone or anything directly involved with your situation. They are not on anyone's 'side'. They are just trying to find out what happened and why so that they can make a reasonable conclusion as to what should happen next.

#### **3.3. *You might be asked to attend a meeting***

If so you are entitled to take a friend. Students sometimes wonder who they should bring. You should bring the person who will give you good moral support and be understanding of your situation. It is not an adversarial legal process; it is a College process that ensures the College finds out the details, has no bias and acts fairly.

#### **3.4. *You might be asked to see a mediator***

Some problems just can't be solved with an investigation and a conclusion. Some problems need groups of people to sort out their differences and come to an amicable or at least tolerable conclusion. If your complaint has this aspect to it, then mediation is often the only helpful route for you. At first it is a 'tough step' but it is a proven approach so think about it with an open mind.

#### 4. **The conclusion**

Whatever route your complaint takes in the end you will receive a letter which says whether the College agrees with (upholds) your complaint. If it does, then it will detail anything it will do to try and put things right. If it does not agree with your point of view then it will explain what else you can do if you want to take further steps.

May 2015 post RDC