**RVC General Complaints Resolution Procedure**

# Please make sure you read Sections A and B before submitting a complaint

* 1. **When should this procedure be used?**

## Who may complain?

Any member of the general public, our local communities, or former students or staff may complain using the following procedure.

## What may you complain about?

The complaint must relate to an action or inaction of the RVC that has had a direct and negative consequence on the complainant.

# What this procedure cannot be used for:

## Vexatious, malign, or unfounded complaints

If your complaint is vexatious (designed to disrupt the lawful business and activities of the RVC and/or its staff and students), malign or manifestly unfounded in reason or evidence then neither this procedure nor any other procedure will be used.

If your complaint is based on a difference of opinion or values and the RVC is acting within all relevant laws and regulations, then neither this procedure nor any other procedure will be used.

Complaints falling into the above categories will not be responded to unless the RVC considers that it may be necessary to take legal action against the complainant.

## When alternative complaint procedures are appropriate

The RVC has a range of complaint procedures relating to different aspects of our business. These include:

* + - * Student Complaints & Appeals Processes
      * Client Complaints processes
      * Staff Grievance Policy
      * Dignity at Work and Study Policy
      * Public Interest Disclosure Policy
      * Admissions Policy
      * Data Protection Policy

These policies relate directly to contractual and specific responsibilities between the RVC and its key stakeholders. If your complaint can and should be dealt with through one of these procedures, then you may not use this procedure.

## Third Party Complaints without consent

We cannot investigate any complaint made on behalf of a member of the public, clients, students or staff members without informing them and seeking their explicit consent that a responsible third party (such as a parent) is acting on their behalf. This applies to this procedure and to all other complaints procedures.

## Making a complaint

In the first instance, you should contact the RVC by email at [governance@rvc.ac.uk.](mailto:governance@rvc.ac.uk) Your complaint will be considered in the context of Sections A and B above.

## Informal resolution

If we are able to consider your complaint under this procedure an appropriate representative of the RVC (to be nominated by University Secretary who may nominate themselves) will discuss your complaint with you and will contact other members of staff to try to resolve your concerns informally, as we have a firm commitment to resolving of complaints through goodwill, understanding and co-operation in the first instance.

We hope that most complaints can be resolved in this informal way, but if that is not possible, a formal complaint may be appropriate. If you have already made a complaint and it has been dealt with informally by another Member of RVC staff, then you should make this clear in your communication and/ or advise the RVC ‘s representative that this is the case.

## Formal resolution

If we cannot resolve the complaint informally, we will move to the formal stage. For a formal complaint to be considered we will require the following information (please complete the form in Appendix A) :

* 1. The detail of your complaint, including all relevant evidence
  2. Details of the informal attempts you have made at resolving the complaint and who you discussed the matter with in the RVC
  3. Why the outcome of the informal attempts is not considered to be satisfactory, and
  4. The desired outcome of your complaint (*Please note that this must be relevant and proportionate to the issue and its impact – unreasonable demands will not be considered*).

Depending upon the nature of the complaint, the University Secretary will decide whether, on the basis of the information contained in your complaint, an investigation into the matter is warranted. If an investigation is **not** warranted, because you have not exhausted the informal complaints procedure, you will be notified within ten to fifteen working days of receipt of your complaint.

If an investigation **is** warranted, you will be told that one will be carried out and given a date by which you should receive a report on your complaint.

The investigation will be carried out by a member of staff (which maybe the University Secretary) or if appropriate an external individual. Once appointed they will, within thirty working days (if the complaint is complex, we may inform you that we need to take longer) of the date that your complaint is referred to that individual conclude the investigation.

Once the investigation is complete, you will receive a written report of findings and conclusions including, if appropriate, recommendations for action to resolve the complaint.

Where the report contains actions for the RVC in resolving the complaint, the member of staff charged to look at the recommendations will do so within ten to fifteen working days of the date of the report and will decide whether to follow the recommendations or take other action to remedy the complaint.

You will be sent a complaint outcomes letter outlining his/her decision. This will conclude the complaints process and we will consider the matter closed.

## Withdrawing your complaint

You may withdraw your formal complaint at any time, at which time, the matter is closed.

## RVC General Complaints Resolution Procedure Appendix A

Complaint form for formal resolution – please make sure you have read Section A and Section B of the Procedure before completing this form.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Complainant: |  |
| Email: |  |
| Contact telephone No.: |  |
| Address: |  |
| **Data Protection**: *Please note that your personal data will be used for the purposes of carrying out the tasks necessary to complete the general complaints procedure. Records of the complaint will be kept on file for a period of 5 years and then securely destroyed, by submitting this form you are consenting for your personal data to be used for these purposes.* | |
| 1. The detail of your complaint, including all relevant evidence *(please attach / provide with the*  *form and references within this section)* | |
|  | |
| 2. Details of the informal attempts you have made at resolving the complaint and who you  discussed the matter with in the RVC | |
|  | |
| 3. Why the outcome of the informal attempts is not considered to be satisfactory, | |
|  | |
| 4. The desired outcome of your complaint (Please note that this must be relevant and  proportionate to the issue and its impact – unreasonable demands will not be considered | |
|  | |