

## **VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **1 What is a vexatious complaint?**

- 1.1 The University understands that if a student makes a complaint, then it is a concern to them, whatever others might think. The University is committed to dealing with all complaints transparently or fairly and in line with its published procedures. However, the University reserves the right to consider a complaint vexatious for the reasons set out below.
- 1.2 The University considers a complaint to be vexatious as set out below, this list is not exhaustive;
- 1.2.1 Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
  - 1.2.2 Insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason;
  - 1.2.3 Insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner;
  - 1.2.4 Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- 1.3 Deciding whether a complaint is vexatious is a balancing exercise. The relevant University Department or Faculty making this decision will take into account all the circumstances of the case. The relevant University Department or Faculty will consider both the contents of the complaint and the student's behaviour in relation to the complaint before reaching a decision.
- 1.4 A student who has been found to have submitted a vexatious complaint may be referred under the University's Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure. Students whose programme of study leads to professional registration may be referred to under the Fitness to Practise Procedures.
- 1.5 Students whose behaviour is a cause for concern and where the University considers that there may be an underlying problem may be referred under the Fitness to Study Procedure.

### **2 What happens if a complaint is found to be vexatious?**

- 2.1 If a decision is taken by a University Department or Faculty that a student's complaint is vexatious, the relevant University Department or Faculty will write to the student explaining that they are no longer

prepared to engage with the student in relation to the vexatious complaint. The student will be given a full written explanation for the decision.

- 2.2 If a student wishes to challenge the decision then they should submit a written appeal to the Complaints and Appeals Office. The appeal will be considered by the Deputy Vice Chancellor nominee.
- 2.3 The Deputy Vice Chancellor or nominee will review the information on the file, including any representations the student has made, and will decide whether the appeal is to be upheld or rejected. If the appeal is upheld the Deputy Vice Chancellor will instruct that the student's complaint is reviewed by a different University Department or Faculty and in line with the University's published procedures.
- 2.4 The decision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor or nominee is final and a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued to the student.
- 2.5 If a student remains dissatisfied with the University's final decision then they may submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education