



UKMC Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Purpose

1.1. UK Management College (UKMC) is committed to ensuring that student concerns, complaints and appeals are handled fairly, transparently and in a timely manner.

1.2. This Policy sets out the processes through which students may raise concerns or complaints about their experience at UKMC, explains how such matters will be reviewed and resolved, and clarifies the routes available for escalation where issues cannot be resolved informally.

1.3. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that students have access to clear and effective procedures for raising concerns, that decisions are made consistently and impartially, and that appropriate remedies are available where complaints are upheld.

Scope

1.4. This Policy applies to all registered students of UKMC and to applicants where complaints relate to admissions processes managed by the College.

1.5. The Policy applies to matters arising during the student lifecycle, including:

- admissions and enrolment processes.
- teaching, learning and assessment delivery by UKMC.
- student support services and facilities.
- accessibility, reasonable adjustments and inclusive practice.
- course delivery, changes and continuity of study; and
- the conduct of UKMC staff and services.

1.6. This Policy does not apply to matters that fall exclusively within awarding body jurisdiction, including academic judgement, assessment outcomes, progression decisions, academic misconduct determinations, or the conferment and classification of awards. Such matters are governed by awarding body academic regulations and appeals procedures.

Relationship with Awarding Bodies

1.7. UKMC delivers programmes on behalf of one or more awarding bodies. Responsibility for handling complaints and appeals depends on the nature of the matter raised and is divided between UKMC and the relevant awarding body in accordance with partnership agreements and academic regulations.

1.8. UKMC is responsible for handling complaints relating to:

- the delivery of teaching and learning by UKMC.
- student support services, facilities and resources.
- accessibility and reasonable adjustments.
- course delivery arrangements, subject to awarding body requirements.
- staff conduct and service provision; and
- the implementation of remedies, refunds and compensation in accordance with UKMC policies.

1.9. Awarding bodies are responsible for handling academic appeals relating to:

- academic judgement.
- assessment outcomes and progression decisions.
- academic misconduct.
- conferment and classification of awards.

1.10. Where a complaint raises issues that fall partly within UKMC's remit and partly within awarding body jurisdiction, UKMC will explain clearly how the matter will be handled and will support the student in accessing the appropriate awarding body process where required.

Policy Framework

1.11. This Policy forms part of UKMC's wider framework for fair treatment of students and should be read alongside:

- the Student Contract.
- the Accessibility and Disabled Students Support Policy.
- the Course Changes and Continuity of Study Policy.
- the Refund and Compensation Policy; and
- relevant awarding body academic regulations.

1.12. Further detail on the division of responsibilities between UKMC and its awarding bodies is set out in the UKMC–Awarding Body Responsibilities Matrix, which underpins the operation of this Policy.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

2.1 Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction by a student or applicant about an aspect of UKMC's services, actions or decisions, where a response or resolution is expected. This may include concerns about teaching delivery, support services, facilities, accessibility, or administrative processes managed by UKMC.

2.2 Academic Appeal

A request for a review of a decision relating to academic judgement, including assessment outcomes, progression decisions, academic misconduct findings, or the classification or conferment of an award. Academic appeals are governed by awarding body academic regulations.

2.3 Early Resolution

An informal stage at which concerns are raised and addressed promptly with the aim of resolving issues without the need for a formal complaint.

2.4 Formal Complaint

A complaint that is submitted in writing under this Policy after early resolution has been attempted or where informal resolution is not appropriate.

2.5 Review Stage

The final internal stage of the UKMC complaints process, at which a formal complaint decision may be reviewed to ensure that the procedure has been followed correctly and that the outcome was reasonable.

2.6 Applicant

An individual who has applied for a place of study at UKMC but has not yet completed registration.

2.7 Registered Student

An individual who has accepted an offer and completed the formal registration process with UKMC.

2.8 Awarding Body

The university or awarding organisation responsible for setting academic standards and awarding the final qualification for a course delivered by UKMC.

2.9 Academic Judgement

A decision made by academic staff or an awarding body about a student's academic performance, including marks, grades, progression, assessment outcomes or awards. Academic judgement is not subject to review under this complaints process.

2.10 Completion of Procedures Letter

A formal letter issued by UKMC at the conclusion of the internal complaints process, confirming that the College's procedures have been exhausted and advising the student of their right to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

2.11 Remedy

An action taken to address a complaint that has been upheld or partially upheld. Remedies may include corrective action, apology, service improvement or financial redress, as appropriate.

2.12 Refund and Compensation Policy

UKMC's policy setting out the circumstances in which refunds or compensation may be payable and the process for determining and issuing such remedies.

3. What You Can and Cannot Complain About

Matters You May Complain About (UKMC Jurisdiction)

3.1. You may raise a complaint under this Policy about matters that fall within UKMC's responsibility, including (but not limited to):

- the quality or delivery of teaching and learning provided by UKMC.
- access to learning resources, facilities or services.
- student support, wellbeing, pastoral or administrative services.
- accessibility, reasonable adjustments and inclusive practice.
- the behaviour or conduct of UKMC staff.
- the handling of applications, offers, registration or enrolment processes managed by UKMC.
- the delivery of your course in practice, including timetabling, facilities or learning environment.
- the implementation of course changes, continuity of study arrangements or teach-out measures, where these are managed by UKMC in accordance with awarding body requirements.
- the application of UKMC policies and procedures; and

- the handling of a previous complaint under this Policy.

3.2. Where a complaint is upheld, UKMC may consider appropriate remedies in line with this Policy and the Refund and Compensation Policy.

Matters That Cannot Be Considered Under This Complaints Procedure

3.3. The following matters are **not** considered complaints under this Policy and cannot be reviewed through the UKMC complaints process:

- academic judgement, including marks, grades, assessment outcomes or feedback.
- decisions of Boards of Examiners.
- progression, classification or conferment of awards.
- findings of academic misconduct.
- matters governed exclusively by awarding body academic regulations.

3.4. These matters fall within the jurisdiction of the relevant awarding body and must be pursued through the awarding body's academic appeals or review procedures.

Complaints Involving Both UKMC and Awarding Body Responsibilities

3.5. Some concerns may involve elements that fall within both UKMC's remit and awarding body jurisdiction. In such cases, UKMC will:

- explain clearly which aspects of the concern can be considered under this Policy;
- advise you on how academic matters should be pursued through the relevant awarding body procedure; and
- provide guidance and support to help you understand the appropriate route for escalation.

3.6. UKMC will not reject a concern solely because it includes academic elements. Where possible, the College will separate issues so that non-academic aspects can be considered under this Policy while academic matters are directed appropriately.

Early Resolution

4.1. UKMC encourages students to raise concerns as early as possible so that issues may be resolved promptly and informally where appropriate.

4.2. Early resolution is intended to provide a straightforward way to address concerns without the need to invoke the formal complaints process. It may involve discussion with:

- a member of academic staff.
- a programme leader or module leader.
- a member of professional services staff; or
- another appropriate member of staff, depending on the nature of the concern.

4.3. Students are encouraged, where possible, to raise concerns directly with the person or service involved. However, where this is not appropriate or where the student

does not feel comfortable doing so, the concern may be raised with an alternative member of staff.

4.4. UKMC will make reasonable efforts to resolve concerns raised at the early resolution stage promptly, fairly and sensitively. Where appropriate, outcomes may include clarification, apology, corrective action or service improvement.

4.5. Early resolution does not require a formal written complaint and does not prevent a student from progressing to the formal complaints procedure if the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction. Students will not be disadvantaged for raising a concern or complaint in good faith.

4.6. If a concern cannot be resolved through early resolution, or if early resolution is not appropriate due to the nature or seriousness of the issue, the student may submit a formal complaint under Section 5 of this Policy.

4.7. The College recognises that some matters, including those involving serious concerns, safeguarding issues or allegations of misconduct, may not be suitable for early resolution. In such cases, students should be advised on the appropriate formal route without delay.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Submitting a Formal Complaint

5.1. If a concern has not been resolved through early resolution, or if early resolution is not appropriate, you may submit a formal complaint under this Policy.

5.2. A formal complaint must be submitted in writing and should include:

- a clear description of the issue or issues being raised.
- the steps already taken to seek early resolution, where applicable.
- the outcome sought; and
- any relevant supporting evidence.

5.3. Formal complaints should normally be submitted within a reasonable timeframe of the issue arising. Where there is a delay, you may be asked to explain the reasons for this. UKMC may decline to consider complaints submitted after an excessive delay unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Acknowledgement and Initial Consideration

5.4. UKMC will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing and will confirm:

- the scope of the complaint.
- the stage at which it will be considered; and
- the next steps in the process.

5.5. At this stage, UKMC may determine that:

- the complaint falls within the scope of this Policy and should proceed to investigation.
- the complaint, or part of it, falls outside UKMC's jurisdiction and should be referred to an awarding body or another procedure; or

- the complaint is premature and would benefit from further attempts at early resolution.

5.6. Where a complaint falls partly within UKMC's remit and partly within awarding body jurisdiction, UKMC will explain how each aspect will be handled and will provide guidance on any parallel processes.

Investigation of a Formal Complaint

5.7. Formal complaints will be investigated by a member of staff who has not been directly involved in the matter being complained about.

5.8. The investigation will consider:

- the issues raised by the student.
- relevant policies, procedures and contractual information.
- evidence provided by the student and by the College; and
- any relevant information provided by staff or services involved.

5.9. UKMC may request additional information or clarification from the student during the investigation. Reasonable timeframes will be provided for responses.

5.10. The College will aim to complete the investigation within a reasonable period and will keep the student informed if additional time is required.

Outcome of a Formal Complaint

5.11. At the conclusion of the investigation, UKMC will provide the student with a written outcome. This will normally include:

- a summary of the issues considered.
- the findings of the investigation.
- whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.
- the reasons for the decision; and
- details of any remedies or actions to be taken, where applicable.

5.12. Where a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, remedies may include corrective action, service improvement, apology, or financial redress, where appropriate. Any consideration of refunds or compensation will be handled in accordance with the Refund and Compensation Policy.

5.13. The outcome letter will also explain how the student may request a review of the decision under Section 6 of this Policy if they remain dissatisfied.

Review Stage: Final Internal Review

6.1. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint, you may request a review of the decision. This is the final internal stage of the UKMC complaints process.

6.2. A request for review must be submitted in writing within a reasonable timeframe of receiving the formal complaint outcome. The request should clearly state the grounds on which the review is being sought.

6.3. A review will normally be considered on one or more of the following grounds:

- that the formal complaints procedure was not followed correctly.
- that the decision was unreasonable in light of the evidence available at the time.
- that new and relevant evidence has become available which could not reasonably have been provided earlier; or
- that the proposed remedy was not proportionate to the findings.

6.4. The review will be conducted by the Provost or a nominated Deputy who has not had prior material involvement in the case.

6.5. The reviewer will consider:

- the original complaint.
- the investigation process and outcome.
- the grounds for review submitted by the student; and
- any relevant policies or contractual obligations.

6.6. The review will not normally involve a full reinvestigation of the complaint. Its purpose is to assess whether the complaint was handled fairly and appropriately.

6.7. UKMC will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the review. The outcome will normally include:

- confirmation that the original decision is upheld; or
- a revised decision and any amended remedies, where appropriate.

6.8. The outcome of the review represents the conclusion of UKMC's internal complaints process.

6.9. Where the internal process has been completed, UKMC will issue a Completion of Procedures letter, advising the student of their right to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

6.10. This review stage relates only to complaints considered under this Policy and does not constitute an academic appeal. Academic appeals are governed separately by awarding body academic regulations.

7. Academic Matters and Awarding Body Appeals

7.1. Academic matters are governed by the academic regulations of the relevant awarding body and are not considered under UKMC's complaints procedure.

7.2. Academic matters include, but are not limited to:

- assessment outcomes and marks.
- progression decisions.
- decisions of Boards of Examiners.
- findings of academic misconduct.
- classification and conferment of awards; and
- the exercise of academic judgement.

7.3. If a student wishes to challenge an academic decision, this must be done through the academic appeals or review procedures of the relevant awarding body, in accordance with its published academic regulations.

7.4. UKMC will make available clear information on how to access awarding body academic regulations and appeals procedures and will advise students on the appropriate route for raising an academic appeal.

7.5. Where a concern raised by a student includes both academic and non-academic elements, UKMC will:

- explain which aspects fall within UKMC's complaints process.
- identify which aspects must be pursued through awarding body procedures; and
- support the student in navigating the relevant processes without duplication or unnecessary delay.

7.6. UKMC does not determine the outcome of academic appeals but will cooperate with awarding bodies as required, including providing information or evidence relevant to an appeal.

7.7. Where an awarding body completes its academic appeals process and issues a final decision, students may be eligible to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), in accordance with the OIA's Scheme Rules.

Outcomes, Remedies and Compensation

8.1. Where a complaint is upheld or partially upheld under this Policy, UKMC will consider appropriate remedies that are proportionate to the nature and impact of the issues identified.

8.2. Remedies may include, where appropriate:

- an explanation or clarification.
- an apology.
- corrective action or service improvement.
- reasonable adjustments to delivery or support arrangements; or
- financial redress, including refunds or compensation.

8.3. Any consideration of refunds or compensation will be handled in accordance with the Refund and Compensation Policy, which sets out:

- the circumstances in which refunds or compensation may be payable.
- how financial remedies are assessed; and
- the process for issuing payments.

8.4. The College will ensure that remedies are implemented promptly and that students are informed of any actions taken because of an upheld complaint.

8.5. Where a complaint relates to course changes, disruption or continuity of study, remedies will be considered in line with the Course Changes and Continuity of Study Policy and, where applicable, in consultation with the awarding body.

8.6. Remedies will be designed to address the specific impact on the student and, where appropriate, to prevent recurrence. Remedies do not imply fault or liability beyond the scope of the complaint upheld.

8.7. The availability of remedies under this Policy does not limit a student's right to pursue external review through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) once UKMC's internal procedures have been exhausted.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

9.1. Once UKMC's internal complaints process has been completed and a Completion of Procedures letter has been issued, you may be eligible to refer your complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

9.2. The OIA is an independent body that reviews student complaints after a higher education provider's internal procedures have been exhausted. The OIA does not consider matters of academic judgement.

9.3. Referral to the OIA must be made within the timeframe specified in the Completion of Procedures letter and in accordance with the OIA's Scheme Rules.

9.4. UKMC will provide clear information in the Completion of Procedures letter about how to contact the OIA and how to submit a complaint.

9.5. UKMC will cooperate fully with the OIA in the consideration of any complaint and will implement any recommendations or remedies determined by the OIA, where applicable.

Confidentiality and Data Handling

10.1. UKMC will handle complaints and related information sensitively and with due regard to confidentiality.

10.2. Information provided as part of a complaint will be shared only with those individuals who need to be involved in considering or resolving the matter. This may include relevant members of staff, senior reviewers, or awarding body representatives where appropriate.

10.3. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In some circumstances, information may need to be disclosed:

- to investigate the complaint properly.
- to comply with legal or regulatory obligations.
- to protect the safety or wellbeing of individuals; or
- where disclosure is otherwise lawful and appropriate.

10.4. Personal data provided in connection with a complaint will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation and UKMC's Privacy Notice.

10.5. Information relating to complaints will be retained only for as long as necessary for the purposes of handling the complaint, responding to any external review, and meeting governance, audit or reporting requirements.

10.6. Students are expected to engage with the complaints process responsibly and to respect the confidentiality of those involved. Inappropriate disclosure of information relating to a complaint may be addressed under relevant UKMC policies.

Monitoring, Review and Governance

11.1. UKMC will monitor the operation and effectiveness of this Policy to ensure that complaints are handled fairly, consistently and in a timely manner.

11.2. Monitoring may include:

- analysis of complaints data and outcomes.
- identification of themes or trends arising from complaints.
- consideration of feedback from students and staff; and
- review of the effectiveness of remedies and service improvements.

11.3. Information arising from complaints will be used to inform quality enhancement, service improvement and risk management across the College.

11.4. This Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains current, effective and aligned with:

- UKMC's wider policy framework.
- changes in legislation or sector guidance.
- awarding body requirements; and
- lessons learned from the operation of the complaints process.

11.5. Responsibility for oversight of this Policy sits within UKMC's academic and governance structures. The College will ensure that appropriate senior oversight is in place to support effective implementation and review.

11.6. Any material changes to this Policy will be communicated to students in a timely manner and implemented in a way that avoids unnecessary disadvantage.