

Customer Guide to Complaints

If you have an issue or concern that cannot be resolved by chatting with a staff member, you may wish to complain formally to the College. The College is committed to ensuring that issues or problems are resolved quickly and as close to the source as possible, to the satisfaction of all concerned. The College's full Complaints and Compliments Policy is available at www.serc.ac.uk/public-information.

STEP

01

Complaint

- › Complaints should be submitted in writing so we have full details of your concern(s). Forms are available at reception, can be downloaded from www.serc.ac.uk or can be emailed to complaints@serc.ac.uk.
- › Please make sure you tell us what has happened, why are you complaining, and what you would like the College to do to put things right for you.
- › If you need assistance to make a complaint then please contact reception staff, email complaints@serc.ac.uk or call **0345 600 7555**, and we will be happy to help.
- › Please note Higher Education academic appeals follow a different process. You should refer to the **HE student handbook** for further information.

STEP

02

Acknowledgement

- › We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days of receiving it*. This will be via email if you have provided an email address, otherwise by post.
- › We will advise you when to expect a response to your complaint. If it relates to an academic matter the response timeframes will align to the academic calendar.
- › If you are complaining on behalf of someone else we will make contact with them to obtain their permission for you to act on their behalf.

*Complaints specific to course admissions will be acknowledged within 2 working days from receipt of complaint. **Complaints specific to course admissions will be responded to within 5 working days from the date acknowledgement is sent.

STEP

03

Investigation

- › A senior member of staff will investigate all of the concerns you have raised through an evidence gathering process.
- › The investigation may involve speaking to other members of staff if they are involved.
- › We may need to contact you for further information if there are any elements of your complaint we need clarity on.

STEP

04

Response

- › We will respond to your complaint within 20 working days from acknowledgement**. This will be via email if you have provided an email address, otherwise by post.
- › The response will address each of the concerns you raised.
- › In the response letter we will confirm your options should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint.

STEP

05

Next Steps

- › If you are unhappy with the response you have received, you have the right to appeal in writing to the Principal and Chief Executive.
- › If, upon exhausting the appeals process you remain dissatisfied with the College's handling of your complaint, you have the right to raise your concerns with the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. You can find further information about the role of NIPSO at www.nipso.org.uk.