

PROTOCOL FOR THIRD PARTY TO RAISE ISSUES WITH THE UNIVERSITY NOVEMBER 2008

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This protocol has been prepared to clarify how a “third party” might raise an issue with the University. A “third party” is defined for the purposes of this protocol as an individual who is not a paid employee, “a registered student”, or contracted to undertake work on behalf of the University.

The protocol relates to an individual who may have had contact with the University and feels dissatisfied about that interaction (for example, it includes individuals who may have applied for a post within the University and not been content with the way the application was treated).

- 1.2 For the avoidance of doubt, it is noted that a third party may not raise issues vicariously on behalf of anyone else (see section 3, below). This protocol relates only to the concerns that a third party may have in respect of her/his own personal experience of engaging directly with the University.

2.0 **PROCESS**

- 2.1 Third parties who wish to raise an issue are asked to write formally to the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor, Administration. All individuals are asked to state concisely and precisely in writing the basis for dissatisfaction and the remedy sought. Upon receipt of the statement from the third party by the Pro Vice Chancellor, Administration or his/her nominee appointed to handle such cases, the statement will be referred to the member of the Core Executive who has Executive responsibility for the appropriate school or operational department for consideration of the letter or email. Where the matter relates to the Vice Chancellor, the matter shall be referred to the Clerk to the Board who shall ask the Chairman to nominate an independent member of the Board to investigate the matter as outlined below.

Where the matter relates to a member of the Board, the Chairman or Vice Chairman as appropriate shall consider the matter in accordance with the procedures below.

- 2.2 The Complainant will normally be sent an acknowledgment within 5 working days of the letter being received and shall be informed which member of the Core Executive has been asked to consider the complaint and provide a response. The member of Core Executive identified to consider and respond to the complaint shall ensure that where ever possible an appropriate response is provided by his/her team within 28 working days and shall approve the response prior to it being sent under their signature to the complainant. Where the response may take longer than 28 working days, the member of Core Executive is required to write to the third party to advise them of the reason(s) for this and the revised timescale that will be met. A copy of all correspondence including the formal response must be provided to the Pro Vice Chancellor, Administration or his/her nominee handling the case.
- 2.3 In the event that the third party remains dissatisfied having considered the response provided, he/she will be invited to write to the Vice Chancellor's office (or the Clerk to the Board as indicated above where the complaint relates to the Vice Chancellor) indicating the basis for continuing dissatisfaction and outlining the remedy that in their view continues to seem reasonable in the circumstances. The Vice-Chancellor will consider the issue or ask another senior member of staff to do so and respond to the individual. The Vice Chancellor's decision or the decision of his/her nominee is final.
- 2.4 Where the complaint related to the Vice Chancellor and the third party remains dissatisfied with the response he/she has received from the independent member of the Board appointed by the Chair to investigate the matter, the Clerk shall refer the matter to the Chair and either he/she or a member of the Board not previously involved shall be asked to review the case as outlined in 2.3 above. The Chair's decision or the decision of his/her nominee is final.
- 2.5 Where the complaint related to a member of the Board (including the Chair or the Vice Chair) and the third party remains dissatisfied with the response he/she has received from the independent member of the Board appointed by the Chair/Vice Chair to investigate the matter, the Clerk shall refer the matter to the Chairman and either he/she or a member of the Board not previously involved shall be asked to review the case as outlined in 2.3 above. The Chairman's decision or the decision of his/her nominee is final.

3.0 **SIGN POSTING**

- 3.1 This protocol relates to individuals who have no other recourse within existing policy and procedure to settle any concern that they have

following their involvement with the University. It is appropriate to note that there are already procedures in place for:

- Applicants for a place on a programme of study to appeal, if grounds exist, via the procedure operated by Admissions Office;
- Students (and those who have graduated not more than 12 weeks prior to submitting their complaint) to seek recourse through the Student Complaints Procedure;
- Staff to seek resolution of issues through the relevant grievance procedure operated by the Human Resources Department;
- Staff, students or anyone contracted to work for the University to have recourse to the Public Interest Disclosure Policy (details available from the University website or Clerk to the Board of Governors) in the event that there is reason to suspect that the University or any of its staff or students are engaged in inappropriate or illegal activities.

Approved by the Board of Governors 12th December 2008