

Procedure on Management of Learner Complaints

Policy Procedure Protocol Guideline

Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD): Consortium of Centres of Nursing and Midwifery Education (CCNME)

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps required for a learner to raise a complaint to the CCNME Programme Team. The CCNME encourages learners to raise any concerns informally so that they can be resolved without resorting to formal procedures.

The following procedures outline how Complaints are informally managed at **Stage 1** and formally managed from **Stage 2 – Stage 3** in the teaching and learning environment.

2.0 Procedure

2.1 Stage 1 Learner Initiation of Complaints Process

- 2.1.1 The learner is responsible for the initiation of the complaints process and is advised, (not essential) to raise the issue of concern informally with the CCNME Programme Team member (Point of Contact);
- 2.1.2 The informal complaint can be initiated verbally or in writing and is not considered a formal matter at this stage;
- 2.1.3 The CCNME Programme Team member (Point of Contact) endeavours to reach a satisfactory outcome with the learner and the issue of concern through informal discussions;
- 2.1.4 The possible outcomes are:
 - 2.1.4.1 The complaint is resolved: The complaint must be examined to identify any quality improvements that should be implemented as a result;
 - 2.1.4.2 The complaint is not resolved through informal communication, either:
 - The learner decides not to pursue the matter further;
 - The learner makes a formal complaint.
- 2.1.5 The learner is advised of the steps of the complaints management pathway process.

2.2 Stage 2 Director of CCNME Programme Team

- 2.2.1 If complaint is not resolved at **Stage 1** the CCNME Programme Team member (Point of contact) informs the Director of CCNME Programme Team and complaint is escalated to **Stage 2**;
- 2.2.2 The CCNME Programme Team member (Point of contact) with complainant completes the Complaints Escalation Form and the learner provides appropriate evidence to support the matter of concern;
- 2.2.3 The Complaint should be made within five working days of the alleged matter or issue of concern;
- 2.2.4 The Director of CCNME Programme Team acknowledges receipt of the complaint to the learner within five working days and manages **Stage 2** within 30 days as per Complaints management pathway;
- 2.2.5 If complaint is resolved, Director of CCNME Programme Team informs the complainant in writing of the outcome;

- 2.2.6 Examines the complaint to identify any quality improvements that should be implemented as a result;
- 2.2.7 Generates a report with findings and recommendations to Point of contact and other relevant parties;
- 2.2.8 If complaint is unresolved at **Stage 2** the Director of CCNME Programme Team informs the Chairperson of Programme Committee
- 2.2.9 The Chairperson of Programme Committee notifies the Chairperson of the Programme Board who in turn escalates the complaint to the Academic Council **Stage 3**;
- 2.2.10 The Academic Council convenes the Complaints Committee to review and investigate the complaint.

2.3 Stage 3 Complaints Committee

- 2.3.1 Reviews and investigates the complaint within 30 days of receipt;
- 2.3.2 Ensures all documentation relating to the complaint is received by all parties no later than ten working days before the Committee convenes. After this time, no additional communications will be accepted for consideration by the committee;
- 2.3.3 Requests from either learner or member of staff to call witnesses will be decided by the Chairperson and where agreed, either party (or witnesses) at a committee may attend through virtual means;
- 2.3.4 In the event of a learners non-attendance the complaints committee meeting will proceed;
- 2.3.5 Formally communicate in writing the findings of the investigation and rationale for decision made to all relevant parties;
- 2.3.6 Learners are advised of their right to appeal the decision within five working days using the appeals procedure;
- 2.3.7 Submit a report to the CCNME Academic Council of the outcome of the complaint including recommendations to mitigate a recurrence;
- 2.3.8 The Academic Council communicates quality improvements for implementation and dissemination within the CCNME.

3.0 Document Control

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	V.1.0	04/11/2022
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Supporting Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). (2015). <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.engaq.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf [accessed 22 April 2022]. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2017). <i>Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/gp-17-policies-and-criteria-for-the-validation-of-programmes-of-education-and-training.pdf [accessed 24 January 2022]. • Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). (2016). <i>Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers</i> [online]. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf [accessed 30 January 2022].
Related Policies & Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Learner Complaints [PDF, 4 Pages]
Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Management Pathway • Point of Contact Complaint Resolution Form • Point of Contact Complaint Escalation Form

Appendix 1 Complaints Management Pathway

Complaints Management Pathway

