



# **Complaints and Suggestions for Improvement Handling Procedure**

**A guide for students and visitors**

**Please ask if you, or someone you know, would like  
this document in a different format.**



Moray College is committed to providing an excellent education and high quality services to our students and visitors.

**We value complaints and suggestions for improvement and use information from them to help us improve our services.**

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This document describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

**What is a complaint or suggestion for improvement?**

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf. A suggestion for improvement might relate to an idea, observation or perception about some aspect of our services or facilities which could be adjusted to enhance our operation.

**What can I complain about?**

You can complain about things like:

- the quality and standard of any service we provide, for example information about a course or personal support and guidance;
- the quality of our facilities and learning resources;
- the quality and standards of teaching and learning support available to you;
- the quality and standards of administrative processes, such as the admissions process;
- unfair treatment by a student or staff member.

Your complaint may involve more than one of the College's services or be about someone working on our behalf.

**What can't I complain about?**

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure.

These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- a request for information or an explanation of policy or practice
- a request under freedom of information or data protection legislation
- requests for compensation from the University
- things that are covered by academic appeals, such as academic judgements and decisions
- an issue which is being, or has been, considered by a court or tribunal

- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following an investigation. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) for an independent review of the complaint.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

### **Who can submit a complaint or a suggestion for improvement?**

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by the services of the College can make a complaint or suggestion for improvement, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf you will need their personal written consent. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

### **How do I complain or submit a suggestion for improvement?**

You can complain or submit your suggestion for improvement in person, by phone, in writing or by e-mail.

If you are complaining, it is easier for us to resolve problems if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So if possible, please talk to a member of our staff within the department you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

### **How long do I have to make a complaint?**

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

### **Who do I submit a complaint or suggestion for improvement to?**

You can raise a complaint or submit a suggestion for improvement with any member of College staff, although it is useful if complaints are raised with staff associated with the area of concern or through the student services office. Depending upon its nature, the complaint may be forwarded and dealt with by an academic or support section manager.

### **What happens when I have complained?**

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

#### **Stage one – frontline resolution**

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem. Where possible, your concerns should be raised with the relevant member or staff or through the student services office. This can be done face-to-face, by phone, in writing or by email.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in 5 working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint or you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. You may wish to take your complaint to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure. You can choose to do this immediately or up to 10 working days after you get our initial decision.

#### **Stage two – investigation**

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

### What if I'm still dissatisfied?

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) or the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) or other relevant awarding body to look at it. For qualifications that are regulated, if you remain dissatisfied with the way that the awarding body has handled your complaint then you may complain to the qualifications regulator, SQA Accreditation.

The SPSO considers complaints about the quality of service and maladministration, which may include issues surrounding course delivery. The SPSO does not have the power to revise course awards. Only SQA and other awarding bodies have the authority to do this and where this is what you want to achieve as a result of your complaint, you should always approach SQA or the relevant awarding body using the appropriate procedure, following completion of Moray College's complaint procedure.

The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (**so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO**)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

In Person:  
SPSO  
4 Melville Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7NS

By Post:  
SPSO  
Freepost EH641  
Edinburgh  
EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us)

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

Mobile site: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>

## Getting help to make your complaint

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your written consent to complain for you.

Useful contacts details:

*Guidance staff within Moray College UHI Student Services*

*Tel: (01343) 576208*

*Email: [student.services@moray.uhi.ac.uk](mailto:student.services@moray.uhi.ac.uk)*

*Advocacy North East (Moray)*

*<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file70179.pdf>*

*Tel: (01343) 559649*

*Email: [advocacynemoray@btinternet.com](mailto:advocacynemoray@btinternet.com)*

*Fax: (01343) 559649*

*Moray Citizen Advice Bureau <http://www.moraycab.org.uk/>*

*Tel: (01343) 550088*

*Email: [bureau@moraycab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:bureau@moraycab.casonline.org.uk)*

*Fax: (01343) 559000*

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all students. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, please contact us in person or through any of the contact details below.

## Our contact details

Please contact us by the following means:

Telephone: (01343) 576000

E-mail: [comments.suggestions.moray@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:comments.suggestions.moray@uhi.ac.uk)

## Quick guide to our complaints procedure

