



The College of
Animal Welfare

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Reviewed August 2023

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1. COMPLAINTS POLICY

The College of Animal Welfare is committed to:

- Maintaining a strong client focus and where possible, meeting their requirements
- Continuously improving and working towards the achievement of high standards
- Personal development with a recognition of each individuals' contribution to the College's success
- Teamwork within the College and collaboration with others in sharing ideas and expertise
- Delivering services effectively with due regard to value for money

The College's approach to handling complaints is shared with learners in a range of publications and activities, including our charter, the student handbook, induction and on the virtual learning environment (VLE). Employers are also advised of the complaints policy in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Copies of the policy will also be sent out on request from Student Services or following receipt of a complaint received verbally, in writing or via 'Express a Concern' on our website.

A log of complaints, including the outcome is maintained by the Principal.

2. PURPOSE

The College of Animal Welfare is a diverse organisation engaged in many activities of both an academic and non-academic nature. If a learner, employer or member of the public (our clients) feel dissatisfied with any aspect of their dealings with the College, it is important that there is an appropriate procedure in place to investigate and resolve problems as quickly as possible.

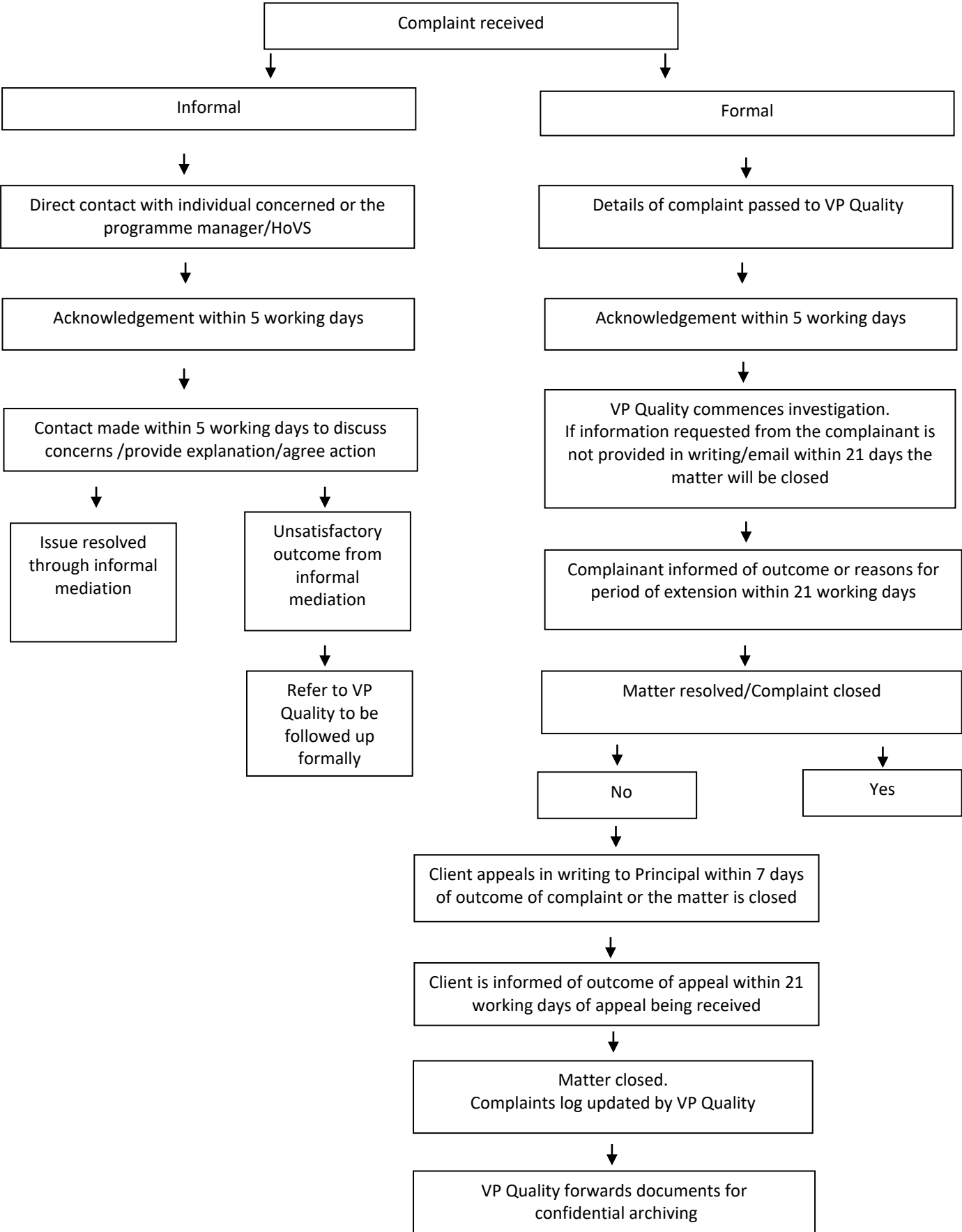
This document is intended to provide guidance for situations in which clients feel that the treatment or service they have received is unsatisfactory. Resolving minor problems or areas of concern as they arise will often prevent escalation of the problem, which could then prove more difficult to resolve. We would encourage issues or dissatisfaction to be raised at an early stage so that it can be dealt with as promptly and effectively as possible. Clients will not be disadvantaged as a result of marking a complaint or raising a concern.

3. HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The College approaches complaints in a way that:

- Encourages informal mediation
- Is fair and efficient
- Facilitates early resolution
- Treats complaints with appropriate seriousness, sympathy and confidentiality
- Allows the College or a particular centre to learn from the experience and improve

CLIENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



4. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Dissatisfaction often arises from misunderstanding; often an explanation of the reason for a particular action or position can resolve matters. Therefore, where possible, a concern should be addressed to the member of staff who is most directly concerned with the issue or with the Programme Manager/HoVS. If the client feels unable to approach the person who is directly responsible, or if the client feels that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, they should raise their concern with the Principal as a formal complaint.

Informal complaints will be acknowledged by the recipient within 5 working days and the client can expect to receive a response within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint, although this may be a holding letter if a more detailed investigation is required.

5. FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The formal complaints procedure should be used only when other means of resolving the matter are not possible or effective.

If a client is dissatisfied with the handling or outcome of their informal complaint, or does not receive a response within 21 working days, they are entitled to invoke the formal complaints procedure.

Any complaint against an individual will be dealt with in a confidential manner and may be passed on to the Human Resources Manager.

5.1 Procedure for formal complaints

1. The complainant should complete and submit either:
 - An email to Barbara Cooper (Principal) at complaints@caw.ac.uk providing the nature of the complaint and/or the individual against whom the complaint is being made
 - 'Expressing a concern' via the VLE or website – Please clearly state 'Complaint' at the beginning of your message
2. The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt which will include a copy of the complaints policy.
3. The VP Quality will maintain a log of complaints and provide a termly report to the senior management team.

4. The complaint will be explored, which will involve referral to the appropriate person for investigation:
 - Non-academic matters (including TP/Clinical coach/Clinical Tutor) – Vice Principal Student Services
 - Academic matters – Vice Principal of School/Head of School/Programme
 - Staff matters – HR Manager
 - Discrimination – Any of above as appropriate
 - Collaborative Partner’s Vice Principal of relevant School
5. Further information may be sought from the complainant. Failure to provide information requested in writing/email with 21 days will result in the matter being closed.
6. An outcome will be provided to the complainant within 21 working days. Where a full response cannot be given, a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining the progress in dealing with the complaint and indicating when a response can be expected.
7. If the complainant is satisfied with the College’s explanation or proposed action, the matter will be considered closed.
8. In the absence of the Principal, complaints will be referred to a Vice Principal for investigation.

6. APPEALS

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the explanation or course of action they will have the right to appeal.

1. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Principal within 7 days of receipt of the outcome of the complaint. In the event of the Principal having been involved with the case, the appeal will be reviewed by the Vice Principal Student Services.
2. The Principal will investigate the appeal. Whereas each of the stages of the policy involves full investigation of the matter, the Principal will only be concerned with two issues:
 - Was the complaints procedure conducted in accordance with the policy, and
 - Was the final decision reasonable and in accordance with the facts of the case?
3. The Principal will only act if they feel that the correct procedures have not been followed or if the outcome does not appear reasonable in the light of the facts of the case.
4. The Principal will confirm the decision in writing within 21 working days. Where a full response cannot be provided at this stage, a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining the progress in dealing with the appeal.

5. When the College’s internal procedures have been concluded the client will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter (COP) by the Principal. If dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal the learner can refer the matter to:

- Office of Independent Adjudicators (OIA) oiahe.org.uk (For Higher Education Programmes)
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk (For government funded Further Education Programmes)

Please note that complaints must be lodged within 3 months of the College’s internal procedure being exhausted.

Complaints related to Safeguarding Matters

Any complaint about the handling of a safeguarding issue can be made directly to the Cambridge safeguarding team or to the NSPCC.

The NSPCC’s, ‘What you can do to report abuse’ dedicated helpline, is available as an alternative route for individuals who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by the college. Call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

CONTACTS

Formal Complaints	
<p>Principal Barbara Cooper The College of Animal Welfare Headland House Chord Business Park London Road Godmanchester Cambridgeshire PE29 2BQ</p> <p>Email: complaints@caw.ac.uk</p>	
Appeals against the outcome of complaints	
<p>Vice Principal Quality Karen Davison The College of Animal Welfare Capitol Park East Tingley West Yorkshire WF3 1DR</p> <p>Email: kdavidson@caw.ac.uk</p>	<p>Vice Principal Student Services Ruth Franklin The College of Animal Welfare Headland House Chord Business Park London Road Godmanchester Cambridgeshire PE29 2BQ</p> <p>Email: rfranklin@caw.ac.uk</p>

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