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| **Higher Education Complaints**  **Policy & Procedure 2016-17** |
| Version 1.4  September 2016 |

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Policy

# Scope of the Policy

* 1. Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies (CICT) makes a clear distinction between:
     1. Appeals against assessment board decisions – these are managed by the respective Academic Support Offices based at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and at De Montfort University (DMU
     2. Expressions of dissatisfaction about service provision, which are dealt with in accordance with the complaints procedure outlined in this document.

Any complaint which appears to be an academic appeal will be referred to the Academic Support Office at NTU or DMU for consideration.

* 1. The CICT complaints procedure is available to all Higher Education students, Higher Education alumni, Higher Education applicants or Higher Education visitors (referred to as ‘service users’ in the rest of this document) to enable them to raise any concerns about service provision.
  2. CICT will not communicate with any third party about a complaint, unless written permission has been provided by the service user to whom the complaint relates.
  3. The policy of CICT is that no service user is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of their age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation. No person should be discriminated against for making a complaint.
  4. Complainants also have access to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for external, independent review if they remain dissatisfied following the final stage of this complaints procedure.
  5. **Student who wish to make a complaint about the quality of support they are receiving**.

Students who are in receipt of Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) who receive Non-Medical Help (NMH) or support from CICT staff will follow this procedure. Those students who receive their NMH or support from an external agency will need to refer to the agencies complaint policy to make a formal complaint and can be assisted to do this by contacting the Higher Education -Additional Learning Support Coordinator [Sonia.Pinder@confetti.ac.uk](mailto:Sonia.Pinder@confetti.ac.uk)

# Aims of the Policy

The aims of the policy are to:

* Encourage local resolution to complaints in as many cases as possible;
* Be simple, open and accessible;
* Be accountable;
* Be non-adversarial;
* Be fair to all parties involved and avoid allocating unnecessary blame to individuals;
* Lead to prompt resolution;
* Lead to service improvement.

# Successful Resolution

A successful resolution at any stage of the procedure should:

* Be honest;
* Be fair to all parties;
* Include an apology and/or other form of recompense if appropriate;
* Include corrective and/or preventive action or provide a clear and honest explanation of what has happened and why further action is not appropriate.

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Group Tutor

Each student is allocated a Group Tutor, who should be the first point of contact for any queries whilst on programme. At the local resolution stage, most complaints can be addressed to the Group Tutor.

## Course Leader

When it is not appropriate to discuss local resolution issues with the Group Tutor (e.g. the complaint involves them), the Course Leader can also be contacted to discuss concerns.

## Student Support Services (SSL)

In a very small number of cases, the Course Leader may also be the Group Tutor, and in this instance it may be more appropriate to discuss concerns with the Student Services Leader. The complainant may also prefer to speak to the SSL if the content of the complaint is personal.

## Nottingham Trent University and De Montfort University Link Staff

As detailed in the complaints procedure, these are key staff based at both universities who may handle a complaint if escalated beyond the CICT process, or if the complaint relates to academic standards.

## Head of Student Support Services

Monitor and review content and regularity of complaints and evaluate and update systems based on any outcomes from this process. Review the Higher Education Complaints Policy annually.

Procedure

# HE Student Complaints Procedure

## Stage 1: Local Resolution

* + 1. Most complaints are resolved informally by expressing the complaint to an appropriate member of staff with whom you feel comfortable;
    2. Where the above does not produce a satisfactory resolution to the problem, you should write to the Head of Student Support Services who will strive for a resolution between all parties.
    3. At this stage, a written complaint will normally only be recognised when it is made within 15 working days of the date of the incident it refers to;
    4. When a written complaint is received, CICT will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 24 hours, and respond to the complaint within 10 working days from the date of receipt;
    5. Sometimes it is not possible to reach a satisfactory resolution to a problem through the above steps, and in such cases a formal hearing may be organised to determine the outcome of the complaint.

## Stage 2: Complaint to the Awarding Institution

* + 1. If your complaint cannot be resolved locally, you should complete the form in Appendix 1 and forward to the appropriate personnel at Nottingham Trent University or De Montfort University. This form should be received within 10 working days of the most recent local resolution response. The partner university institution is available to act as an objective third party to investigate complaints.

Student Liaison Manager

Nottingham Trent University

Burton Street

Nottingham

NG1 4BU.

Student Appeals and Conduct Officer

De Montfort University

The Gateway

Leicester

LE1 9BH;

* + 1. The Student Services Team (SST) at CICT or a representative of the Student Union (SU) can assist you in your complaint;
    2. Please refer to the complaints procedure for the appropriate partner university:

**Nottingham Trent University**

<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/resources/student_handbook/complaints_summary/index.html>

**De Montfort University**

<https://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/the-student-gateway/academic-support-office/student-complaints/student-complaints-procedure.aspx>

## Stage 3: Appeal to University Complaints Committee

* + 1. If your complaint cannot be resolved at stage 2, you can take the complaint further to the relevant university complaints committee;
    2. Stage 3 operates within the policy of the relevant partner university:

**Nottingham Trent University**

<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/document_uploads/93065.pdf>

**De Montfort University**

<https://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/the-student-gateway/academic-support-office/student-complaints/stage-3.aspx>

## Stage 4: Appeal to Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

* + 1. If a resolution cannot be reached, and the local CICT and partner institution processes have been exhausted, your complaint can be taken to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for investigation. Further details can be found on the OIA website at: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.

# Related Policies

* CICT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
* CICT Admissions Policy
* Nottingham Trent University Complaints Policy
* De Montfort University Complaints Policy
* De Montfort University Assessment Regulations
* De Montfort University Appeals (Chapter 8 of General Regs)

Student who are in recept of Disbaled Student Allownace (DSA) who receive NMH or support from CICT will follow this procedure, while those in receipt of DSA who receive NMH or support from an external agency will need to refer to the agencies complaint policy.

# Version Control

* Version number: 1.4
* Author: Debbie Brannan, Head of Student Support Services
* Next review date: September 2017

# Appendix 1: Student Complaint Form

Please read the university's full procedure before you complete this form. You must have tried to resolve your complaint with CICT before making a formal complaint to the university. If you do not complete all parts of the form or fail to enclose all relevant documents, the investigation into your complaint may be delayed.

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| **Your Details** | |
| Title: | Address Line 1: |
| First name: | Address Line 2: |
| Last name: | City: |
| Student ID: | County: |
| Course studied: | Postcode: |
| Daytime phone: | Email: |

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| **Your Representative**  If you have asked someone else to complain on your behalf please give details below. The university will not communicate with any third party without your written permission. | |
| Title: | Address Line 1: |
| First name: | Address Line 2: |
| Last name: | City: |
| Relationship to you: | County: |
|  | Postcode: |
| Daytime phone: | Email: |

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| **Your Complaint**  Please briefly set out below the main points of your complaint. If you need more space, continue on a separate sheet of paper, which you must attach securely to this form. The complaints process cannot be used for making appeals against assessment board decisions. If your complaint appears to be an academic appeal it will be referred to the appropriate awarding organisation for consideration. |
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| **What Have You Done So Far?**  Explain briefly what steps you have taken in the relevant faculty or support department to resolve your complaint and why you are not happy with their response. If you have not tried to resolve your complaint in the faculty or department concerned it will be referred to the relevant Dean or Head of support department for consideration. |
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| **What would you like done about your complaint?**  Explain briefly what you might consider to be a satisfactory resolution to your complaint. |
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