CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE

A UNIVERSITY SECTOR PREMIER COLLEGE

Academic Appeals and Student Complaints Procedure

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Context

This Policy should ensure that students are aware of the opportunities available to them to raise concerns, and that a structure is in place that offers a range of timely and appropriate remedies. The information guiding institutions in this area is contained in Section B9: Academic Appeals and Students Complaints. This document forms a key element in the UK Quality Code. All institutions are expected to ensure that their Policies and Procedures meet the Expectation and embody the related Indicators.

B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints

The Expectation: Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

Indicator 1:
Higher education providers make available opportunities for students to raise matters of concern without risk of disadvantage.

Indicator 2:
Higher education providers have procedures which encourage constructive engagement with the appeals and complaints process and which offer opportunities for early and/or informal resolution.

Indicator 3:
Higher education providers have accessible appeals and complaints procedures.

Indicator 4:
Clear and accurate advice and guidance is made available for students making an appeal

Indicator 5:
Academic appeals and complaints procedures are conducted in a timely and fair manner.

Indicator 6:
Higher education providers ensure that appropriate action is taken following an appeal or complaint.

Indicator 7:
Higher education providers monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their appeals and complaints procedures, and reflect on the outcomes of those procedures for enhancement purposes.

Academic Appeals

The Appeals Process is divided into three stages, 'local', 'formal' and 'review'.

Due to the nature of decision-making process for Fitness to Practise, Mitigating Circumstances and Academic Misconduct, an investigation cannot be made into decision making process as part of the local stage. Any appeals raised regarding these processes will start at the formal appeal stage. Students are still encouraged to seek clarification of the decision making process.

In the first instance an attempt to resolve queries and concerns informally should be made.

Decision-making bodies are expected to be open to re-examining their decision-making processes when queried by a student and, where an error has been made, evidence misinterpreted, or procedures not been followed, they should change a decision if appropriate, without the need for a formal appeal.

City of London College seeks to resolve academic appeals as quickly as possible and normal timescales are included in this document. There may be occasions when a student, or City of London College, may not be able to meet the normal timescales for a good reason. In such a case all parties will be kept informed of any changes to timescales.

A student has the right to withdraw from the appeal process at any time. [B9: Indicator 4]

Students are advised that if they are in a referral situation and have submitted an appeal they should still complete and submit their referral work within the given time limit.

Students, where permitted to continue a programme of study, should also continue to undertake relevant learning and teaching and assessment activities.

Appeal submissions should be as clear and concise as possible, concentrating on the grounds for the appeal and linked to the evidence. Other information which does not constitute an appeal, such as a complaint about the level of service provided, should be excluded and the appropriate route followed for these kinds of concerns. [B9: Indicator 2]

Stage 1 – Local academic appeal

Students should make their concerns known in writing, using the 'Local Academic Appeal Form' within 10 working days of the notification of the decision for which they wish to raise an appeal. The point of contact for appeals against Assessment Board decisions is the Course Leader or Student Services. [B9: Indicator 1]

Failure to access the decision made regarding their studies in a timely manner, for example not reviewing results' lists on the virtual learning environment (VLE) is not sufficient reason to submit an appeal beyond the time limit of 10 working days, except in exceptional circumstances - for example protracted hospitalisation.

The role of the investigating officer is to explore the issues raised, collate and review any evidence available, including that from the student, and to come to a conclusion on the local appeal. Meetings with the student and or members of staff may be necessary, either individually

or as a group as part of this process. It is anticipated that this review should take no more than 10 working days.

At this stage any error which has been found should be corrected by the appropriate decision-making body, which may be by Chair's action.

At the end of this process the student should be notified in writing (see Local Appeal Record Form, Form 2) as to what steps have been taken to resolve the concern; a response to each of the key facts of the matter; the outcome of the local process, with or without the offer of a resolution; and the student's right to submit a formal appeal if still dissatisfied. This correspondence should also include any additional documentary evidence on which the decision has been made. [B9: indicator 4]

All documentation and evidence considered, including notes of meetings, outcome of the local appeal and, where appropriate, written communications should be held electronically by the Student Services team for future reference and monitoring purposes and the Local Appeal Record Form forwarded to Student Services.

Stage 2 – Formal Academic Appeal

At any point during the formal process where it proves possible to come to a resolution, formal proceedings will cease, the appeal will proceed no further and will be closed.
Should both parties agree to undertake mediation, the appeal will be put on hold pending the outcome of the mediation process. Neither party will be disadvantaged by taking the opportunity for mediation. If the mediation is unsuccessful, the appeal will be restarted from the point at which it was stopped. [B9: Indicator 5]

Submitting an Appeal
If a student wishes to proceed with a formal appeal this should be submitted to Student Services (studentservices@clc-london.ac.uk) within 10 working days of receiving notification of the conclusion of the local appeal process or notification of the decision of the Fitness to Practise Panel, Mitigating Circumstances Panel or outcome of Academic Misconduct investigation.

It is not appropriate to add additional grounds at the Formal Appeal stage, which were not raised at the local stage.

To make a formal appeal a student must complete a 'Notice of formal academic appeal' form and submit this together with:

- a copy of the decision notification that they are appealing against;
- local appeal record form and accompanying documents;
- all relevant evidence to support the appeal.

Student Services Initial Review of Document
When an appeal is received it will be reviewed initially by a member of Student Services to determine whether it has been submitted within the requirements of the process. If one or more requirements are not met, the actions will be taken as listed in the table below:

Appeal	Action
Not within the designated time limit	Reject
Not/inappropriately completed 'Notice of Academic Appeal' form	Returned to student for completion/clarification with set deadline for response
No evidence of an attempt at local resolution (excludes Fitness to Practice, Mitigating Circumstances and Academic Misconduct)	Request clarification of local resolution and if none undertaken, refer back to the appropriate local stage.
No admissible grounds	Request clarification from student with set deadline for response. If not received the appeal will be rejected.
No evidence supporting the grounds	Request clarification from student with set deadline for response. If not received the appeal will be rejected.

Appeals submitted which require further clarification or additional evidence to proceed will be referred back to the student for a response within a specified time period. Failure to respond by the stated deadline will result in the appeal being rejected.

Appeals brought on inadmissible grounds will be rejected with, if appropriate, a recommendation for the student to pursue an alternative process i.e. student complaints.

Appeals rejected by Student Services at the initial review stage will complete the formal stage of the process.

Student Services Case Officer – Preparation for Panel

Following the initial review by a member of Student Services which confirmed that the appeal meets the initial requirements for consideration by an Academic Appeals Panel, a case officer will be assigned from Student Services to prepare the papers.

The case officer's role is to provide the panel with a coherent and concise factual report of the appeal and to provide guidance on any specific regulations or course information that may be required. The case officer will not make a judgement on the case.

During the review of the appeal by the case officer, the School/Mitigating Circumstances Panel/Chair of Fitness to Practise Panel/Decision maker for Academic Misconduct may also be approached for further information to be supplied if it is found that there are matters outstanding. A response will be required in a specific timescale and will be shared with the student prior to the Panel meeting.

The case officer may also need to request further information from the student within a specific timescale.

All information will be shared with the student and the representative of the decision-making body prior to the panel meeting with the formal invitation to attend the Panel.

Where in the opinion of the case officer there is a clear and obvious reason to uphold the appeal, the case will be referred to the Chair of the next Academic Appeals panel for consideration by Chair's

action. Examples include a mathematical error; new evidence not available at the local stage which has a material bearing; or a clear breach of College regulations. [B9: Indicator 3]

Cases which have been confirmed as being referred to a panel may not be rejected by Chair's action.

Academic Appeals Panel

Academic Appeals Panels will be scheduled in advance to take place at regular intervals throughout the academic year.

It is the responsibility of the Panel to:

- consider the evidence presented by the student and decision-making body
- consider the case officer's report
- determine if the evidence provides that the grounds have been met
- make recommendations to the original decision-making body, if appropriate, to reconsider the decision in the light of the grounds that have been established.

Once a case officer has completed the review, the case will be added to the agenda of the next Academic Appeals Panel scheduled to take place (or the following meeting if less than 10 working days remain). The student and representative will be notified of the date and time of the Panel and be provided with the full documentation. [B9: Indicator 5]

The student will be invited to attend the meeting. If a student is unable to attend the Panel on the date and time set, they may ask for their case to be deferred to the next scheduled meeting. Further postponement will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances.

If a student chooses not to attend or is unable to make a second proposed Panel date, the appeal will be decided in the student's absence based on the evidence presented.

The decision-making body will be invited to send a representative to the meeting, normally the individual who investigated the appeal at the local stage. The decision of the Panel will not be invalidated by failure of the representative being available.

The Academic Appeals Panel will comprise:

- a senior member of College staff, at the equivalent level of Head of School or higher;
- two academic staff nominees;
- the Student's Representative (or nominee);
- a secretary provided by Student Services.

The Chair may also invite observers or co-opt additional panel members to provide specific expertise. In order for the panel to be quorate, a minimum of one of the academic staff nominees must attend the panel.

A student attending a Panel has the right to be accompanied by one other person acting as a

supporter or representative.

If a student is not currently attending the College campus, for instance during vacation or on placement; or if a student is undertaking distance learning and is unable to attend for good reason they will be invited to join the meeting by telephone or other electronic means.

If the student does not attend owing to unforeseen circumstances and is able to submit evidence to support this, in the interest of fairness the Panel's decision will not be confirmed and the case will be referred to the next scheduled Academic Appeals Panel.

The Chair will ensure that both the student and representative of the decision-making body are given an opportunity to present to the Panel and to answer questions posed by the Panel for clarification. After both parties have presented their cases, the Chair will ask them to leave and the meeting will be concluded in private. The Chair of the Panel may at their discretion either defer the appeal to be concluded at a later date or defer it to be heard at the next scheduled Panel. Examples of why this may be required are: if the representative of the decision-making body is ill on the day and cannot be replaced at short notice; if there is additional information that the panel requires to make its decision; or if additional information is raised in the meeting to which either the student or representative has been unable to respond, and which may have a material bearing on the decision.

Outcomes [B9: Indicator 6]

The secretary to the Panel will inform both the student and the representative, in writing, of the Panel's decision within 5 working days. The Student Services will also be informed.

If an appeal is upheld it will result in a recommendation to the relevant decision making body to reconsider the case in the light of the findings of the appeal. [B9: Indicator 6] The recommendation may cover one or more of the following:

- guidance to the decision-making body in terms of correct procedure or the interpretation of procedure for the case in hand and/or in general;
- highlight an error or errors which have been made, or information which has not been taken into consideration;
- suggest a change in practice or procedure;
- suggest a potential remedy or course of action.

It should be noted that even in the case of a successful appeal this may not make a difference, significant or otherwise, to a student's overall position or final award.

For appeals against the decisions of the Assessment Board or Mitigating Circumstances Panel, they must be re-convened, or a decision taken by Chair's Action within 10 working days of the notification of the Appeals Panel decision. The student and the Appeals Panel secretary will be notified in writing within 5 working days of the decision taken.

For appeals against a decision of Academic Misconduct, the Academic Dean will be required to reconsider the decision within 10 working days of the notification of the Appeal Panel decision. The student and the Appeals Panel secretary will be notified in writing within 5 working days of the decision taken. [B9: Indicator 5]

For appeals against the decision of a Fitness to Practise Panel, the case will be referred to a new panel with no prior involvement to consider.

Finding of Bias or Prejudice

Where an Appeals Panel makes a decision that there has been prejudice or bias in the original decision-making process, the case will be referred to the Academic Dean to consider the most appropriate route for the new decision to be deliberated. This may be:

- referred to the Mitigating Circumstances panel, with specific members excluded;
- a mitigating circumstances claim be reviewed by the Academic Dean in liaison with 2 members of Academic Staff with experience of the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure;
- referred to a new Fitness to Practice Panel;
- referred to another Course Leader to consider an allegation of Academic Misconduct.

Rejected Appeals

If the appeal is rejected by the panel the student will be informed of the right to request a 'review of appeal' (Stage 3).

If the student does not request a review within the specified time scale, the case will be closed.

The College will provide a 'Completion of Procedures (CoP) Letter' to the student. This may be used by the student when making a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Stage 3 – Review of Appeal Stage

If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal appeal, the student has the right to request a 'Review of Appeal' (review) on limited grounds. [B9: Indicator 3]

Grounds for a Request for Review

The grounds for a review are limited to:

- Material procedural irregularity; for example:
  o Decision-making body not properly constituted o Decision-making body did not act in accordance with College Academic Appeals process o Prejudice or Bias
- Manifest Unreasonableness; i.e. was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstances?
- New material evidence that could not have been reasonably provided in the formal appeal. The additional evidence must: o not be available at the time of the meeting of the panel; and o have a material bearing on the basis on which the panel's decision was made.

It should be noted that for evidence to be considered 'not available' it must not have been accessible to, or known to, the student at the time they were required to make their submission to the panel. Information available but not requested of the information holder by the student or not provided to the panel will not be considered valid grounds for an appeal.
The review will not consider any new issues raised by the student or normally reconsider the issues that have been raised in the formal appeal.

Submitting a Request for Review
In order to request a review, the student must submit a statement in writing to studentservices@clclondon.ac.uk, addressed to the Academic Dean, within 10 working days of receiving notification of the conclusion of the formal appeal process. Any evidence to support the request for review should be provided with the statement, or if in hard copy, listed in the statement and forwarded to Student Services.

The request for review will be assessed within 5 working days of being submitted to Student Services to ascertain if it meets the criteria above (i.e. made in time, citing appropriate grounds and with explanation of the grounds).
If the request for review does not meet the criteria, the request will be denied and the student will receive a Completion of Procedures letter, which will outline the reason(s) for denying the review and will advise the student of the right to further action through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Consideration of a Request for Review

If the request for review is considered to meet the criteria, the case will be considered by a Nominee from Student Services who has not previously been involved, hereafter referred to as the 'Reviewer'. The Reviewer will undertake the review, which would be expected to be completed within 10 working days.

It is the remit of the Reviewer to decide if:

- The grounds cited have been proven;
- If the proven grounds have a material effect on the case; and therefore that the case should be reconsidered at a new Academic Appeals Panel.

If the Reviewer finds in favour of the student, the student will be written to, normally within 10 working days of completing the review, informing them of the decision and explaining the procedure for the appeal to be re-heard.

If the Reviewer does not find in favour of the student, they will provide the student with a Completion of Procedures Letter, which will outline the reason(s) and advise the student of the right to further action through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Monitoring and Review

In order to maintain a rigorous and equitable procedure, the appeals process will be subject to regular monitoring carried out by the Quality and Enhancement Committee.

Students will be able to access information regarding the process, and case studies, through the College's website.

All informal appeals are required to be tracked and all Local Appeal Record Forms must be forwarded to Student Services at the point they are provided to the student, whether or not an appeal is taken to the formal stage.

An annual report on Academic Appeals, collated by the Quality and Enhancement Committee, will be presented as part of the College annual monitoring process. This report will publish statistics relating to the Appeals received throughout the academic year. [B9: Indicator 7]

Conduct and Behaviour

The College has zero tolerance towards those whose behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and will take action to protect its staff.

The College's definition of unacceptable behaviour includes communicating with the College in a malicious, vexatious or aggressive manner. For example:

- making frivolous appeals, or multiple appeals regarding the same subject;
- • acting in a threatening manner either verbally, through an e-mail or by letter;
- making appeals that are knowingly false or unfounded.

If the behaviour of a student is unacceptable the College will normally tell them why their behaviour is considered unacceptable and give them an opportunity to amend it. If the behaviour continues, the College will take action.

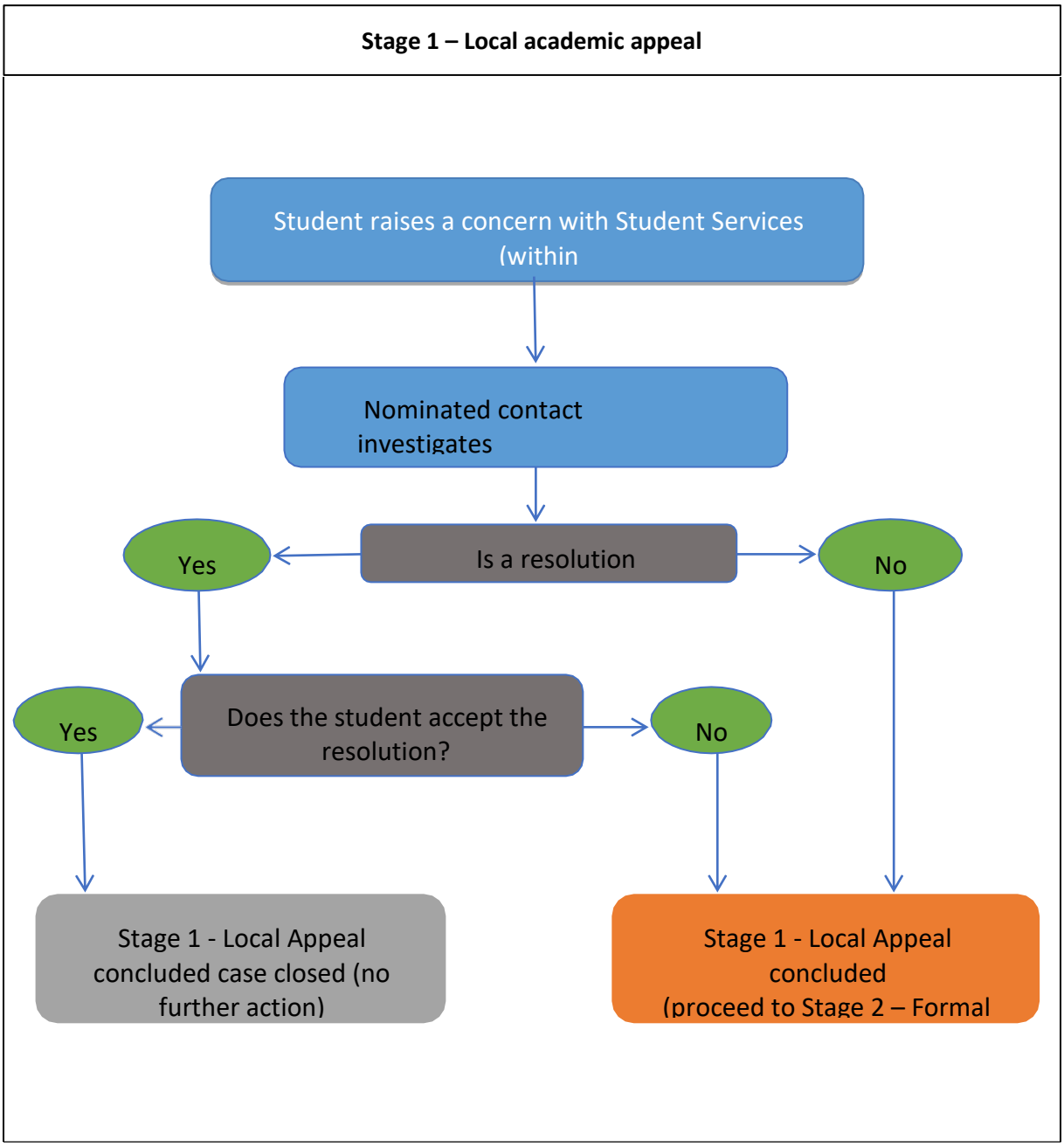
Action that may be taken may include, but is not limited to:

- requesting contact in a particular form (for example letters only);
- requiring contact to take place with a named person;
- restricting telephone calls or emails to specified days and times; • asking the student to appoint a representative for all correspondence;
- asking the student to enter into an agreement about their conduct.

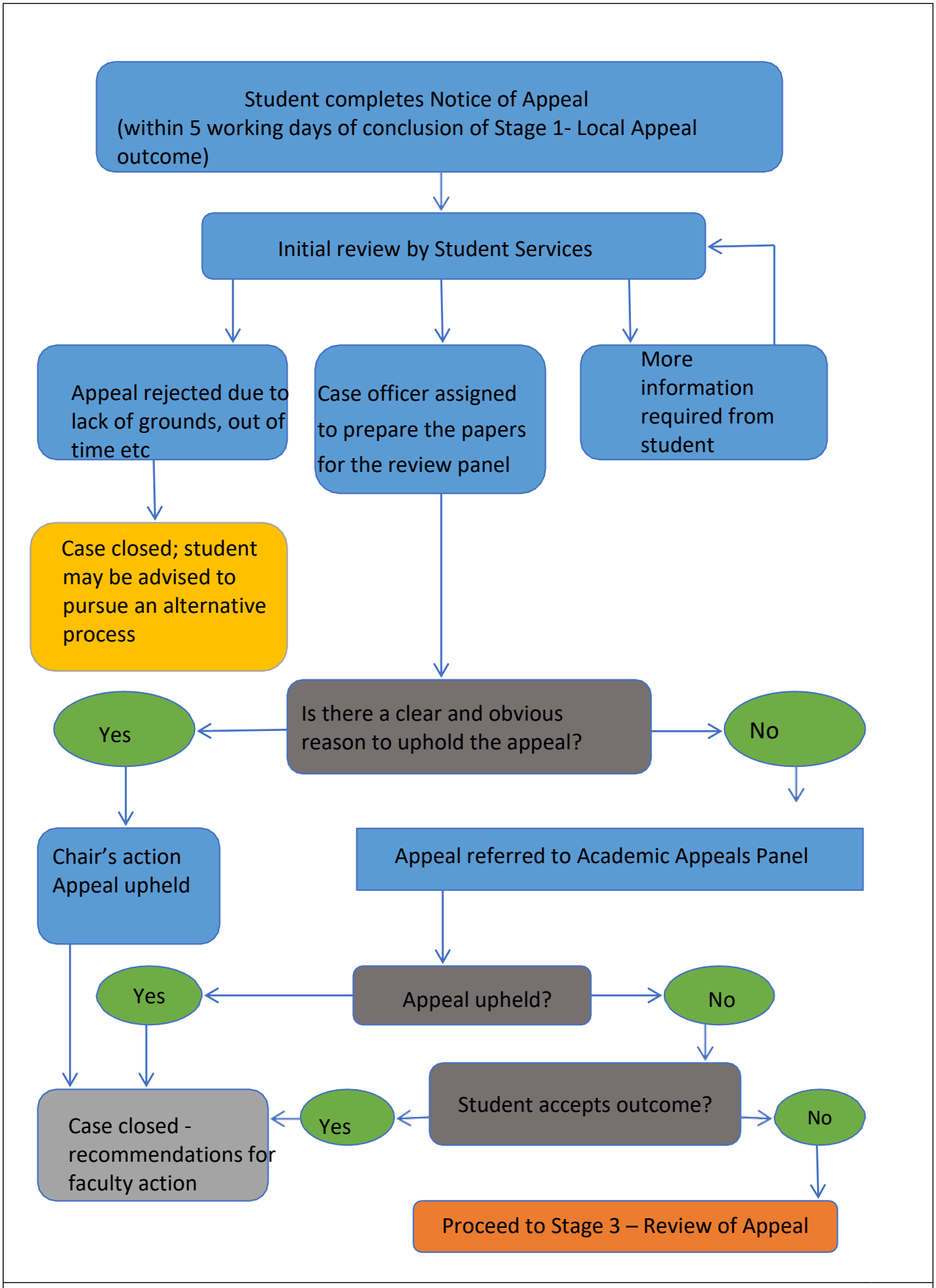
Where a student continues to behave in a way considered to be unacceptable, they may be referred under the College disciplinary and/or Fitness to Practise procedure if appropriate.

Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, the College will consider reporting the matter to the Police or taking legal action.

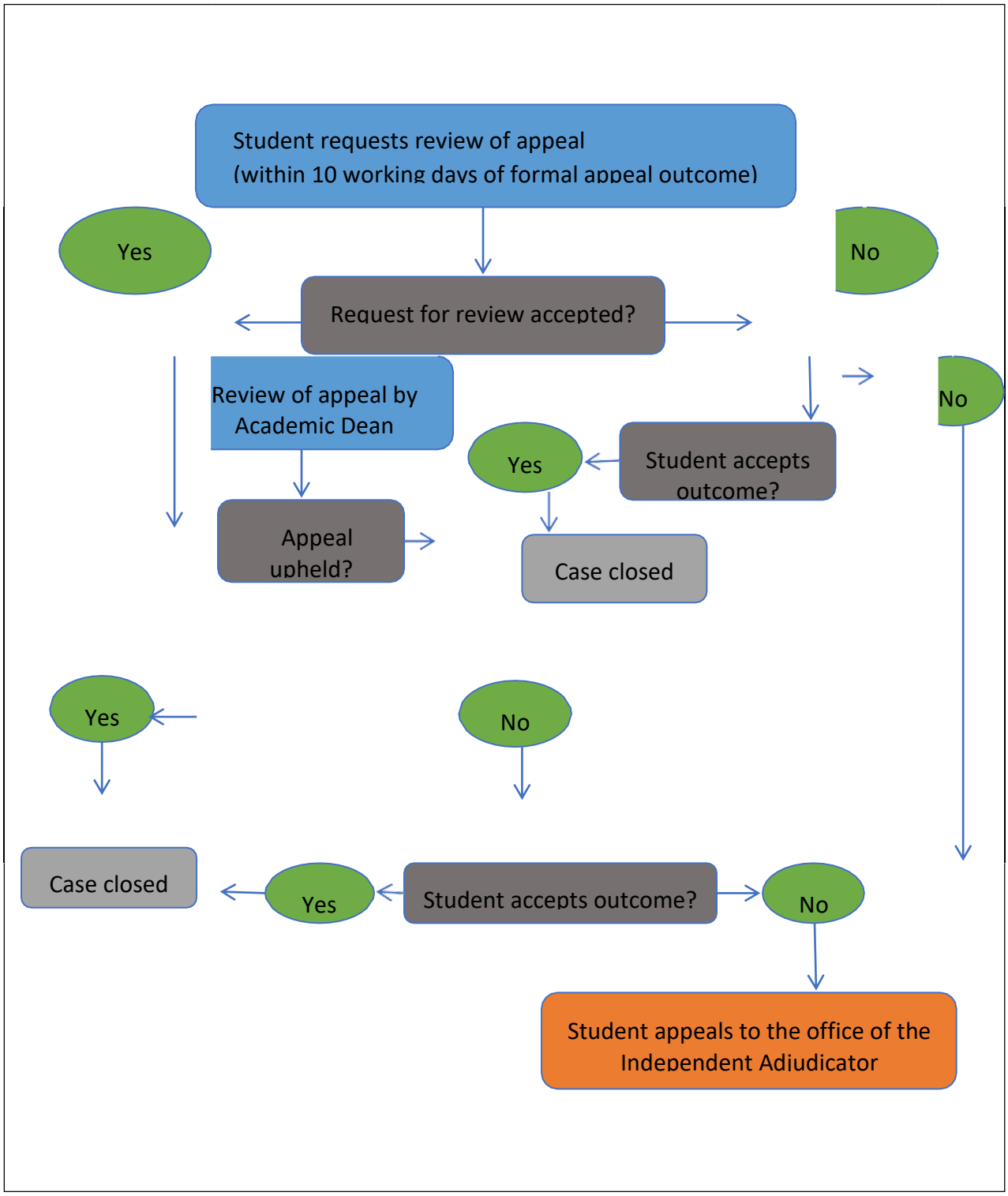
Academic Appeals Process Flowchart



Stage 2 – Formal Academic Appeal



Stage 3 – Review of Appeal


Student requests review of appeal
(within 10 working days of formal appeal outcome)
Yes
No
Request for review accepted?
Review of appeal by Academic Dean
No
Yes
Student accepts outcome?
Appeal upheld?
Case closed
Yes
No
Case closed
Yes
Student accepts outcome?
No
Student appeals to the office of the Independent Adjudicator

Complaints Procedure & Policy

Policy

City of London College is committed to providing high quality services for all learners, employers and the community. To improve the quality of service the College actively seeks feedback from its current and potential customers and makes every effort to address concerns should they arise. City of London College welcomes feedback from students, employers and members of the public about courses and other matters, services and facilities for which the College is responsible. All formal complaints are fully investigated and the information gained as a result of these investigations will be used in pursuit of corrective action and/or continual improvement. City of London College aims to respond quickly and positively and to reach an outcome that is satisfactory and fair for all concerned. [B9: Indicator 5]

Scope of the Complaints Procedure

This is designed to incorporate:

- complaints from students about other students, staff or any service provided by the College;
- complaints from employers in relation to any service provided by the College (or its subcontractors);
- complaints by members of the public;
- complaints in relation to any Health and Safety or Equality duties of the College.

Student Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal

In order to ensure early and speedy resolution, complainants MUST attempt to resolve complaints informally before being escalated to the formal stage. Complaints will not be accepted directly to the formal stage.

The student should raise any concerns as soon as possible, and in any case within 21 days of the issue arising.

A complaint should be raised by the student contacting, in writing, the Academic Dean, Course Leader or other senior member of staff. The student should give details of their complaint and ensure they include any relevant evidence, such as copy emails, screenshots, reference to the specific area of a publication, dates of meetings, etc. An acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint should be sent to the student within 3 working days.
The outcome of the complaint dealt with informally should be briefly recorded and a copy sent to the student, along with any additional evidence and including reasons for the decision.

Normally, complaints handled through Informal Stage 1 shall be dealt with within 10 working days. [B9; indicator 6]

Anonymous complaints are normally ignored. Unsigned complaints are only accepted if they are sent via email. Complaints delivered by hand or by post that are unsigned will be returned to the sender with request for a signed resubmission.

Stage 2 – Formal

If there is no informal resolution, or if the student remains dissatisfied with the result of the outcome of the informal stage, then, within 10 days of receiving the College's written response to the informal complaint, the student should submit the formal complaint in writing on a **Notification of Formal Complaint Form** and send it to Student Services. It is important to include as much relevant information as possible, and submit the form with supporting documentary evidence. If a complaint is about, or concerns, Student Services, it should be addressed to the Academic Dean. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Student Services will conduct an initial review of the complaint to confirm whether it can be accepted for investigation. If the complaint cannot be accepted, the student will be informed, with full reasons why, and advice on any further action that may be taken.

The key questions considered in the initial review will be:

- Is this the appropriate procedure for the matter raised to be considered?
- Was early resolution attempted? If not, can it be referred back to that stage?
- Is it clear what the complaint is about, and which areas of the College are involved?
- Has appropriate evidence been provided?
- What outcome is the student hoping for? Can that outcome be achieved?
- Is the complaint suitable for mediation?
- Should any assistance or support be provided to the student in taking this forward?

If the complaint is accepted Student Services will refer the complaint to the Complaint Committee, which appoints an Investigating Officer, with no previous involvement in the subject matter of the complaint, as soon as possible. The Investigating Officer will carry out an investigation into the complaint within the timelines prescribed below, with support, advice, and guidance on any aspect of the procedure as required from Student Services. A thorough and unbiased investigation is considered by the College as paramount.

If a complaint is sent directly to the Academic Dean or another member of the senior management team, it will be referred to Student Services in the first instance.

The Investigation

Within 48 hours of the referral, the Investigating Officer will contact the complainant to

confirm the main issues detailed in the complaint, and let the complainant know the expected outcome date.

The Investigating Officer will undertake a thorough investigation into the matters raised in the complaint, and compile a report setting out the findings and recommendations.

The Investigating Officer will aim to conclude the investigation within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. However this will depend on a number of factors, for example (this list is not exhaustive): the nature and circumstances of the complaint; the availability of resources; and the availability of any members of staff or students who need to be interviewed.

The Investigating Officer will continue to keep the complainant informed of when he/she expects to conclude the investigation.

The investigation report, which must be forwarded to the Complaint Committee (copy to Student Services), must confirm whether the complaint is upheld (fully or partially), or is not upheld, with detailed reasons given to support the decision. Each point raised by the complainant must be addressed individually and a detailed response made within the report. The report must also list details of the investigation, including any meetings held (either in person or by telephone) as well as all evidence considered as part of the investigation.

All parties to the complaint have the right to see any and all evidence pertinent to the matter.

In certain circumstances, in order to facilitate the investigation, the Investigating Officer has the discretion to hold a meeting with the relevant parties including:

- the complainant;
- any employee or student involved in the case.

Investigation meeting

During the investigation, the Investigating Officer may hold meetings with all or any of the parties involved in the matter. The intention of holding a meeting is to give all parties a chance to air their views, and to clarify the salient points the complainant wishes to raise. The meeting should be conducted in as informal manner as possible. Although the complainant and respondent would always be encouraged to present their case in person, all parties can ask to be accompanied to the meeting by one other person for support; this may be a friend, colleague or by a student representative. Neither party can be accompanied by legal representation. It should be made clear that if either the complainant or respondent chooses not to attend the meeting it will not prejudice the investigation; however the outcome will be reliant on the evidence available at the time.
Meetings will follow the format:

- introductions will be made;

- the complainant (or his/her representative) will be asked to explain the issue and present any supporting evidence. Questions may be asked to clarify certain points;
- other parties to the complaint will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint. Questions may be asked to clarify certain points.

Notes must be made during the meeting. These will be held on file and forwarded to the Student Services with the investigation report.
An agreement of the outcome may be made at the end of the meeting. In some circumstances the Investigating Officer will wish to make further investigations, in which case, he/she will confirm to the complainant when the outcome is likely to be known.

Outcome of the investigation

On receipt of the investigation report the Complaint Committee will consider the case and make a decision whether or not to accept the findings. This decision must be communicated to Student Services within 2 working days.
Student Services will be responsible for making a formal response to the complainant, and this will be sent to him/her within 3 working days of receiving the written report and confirmation of the decision from the Complaint Committee. The response will include recommendations for resolution, which may include one or more of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- that there is no case to answer and the matter should not be pursued, or that it should be pursued under another procedure;
- that the complaint appears to have substance and is sufficiently serious to warrant an apology;
- another form of redress that can be offered to the student in writing;
- that the matter is a disciplinary one in which case the matter should be referred under the relevant disciplinary procedure and the complaints procedures is discontinued. In that case the complainant will be updated, but may not learn the outcome of the disciplinary procedure, due to data protection legislation;
- that the complaint is frivolous, malicious or vexatious in which case it will not be pursued and a disciplinary allegation may be made against the student.

Correspondence from the College regarding the complaint

Every attempt will be made to resolve the complaint within 15 working days of receiving it, although sometimes this time frame may be extended in order for all relevant parties to be allowed time to respond to any queries etc. Where this is the case, the Investigating Officer will email all parties by no later than the 15 working day to inform them of the revised timescales. [B9: Indicator 4] Once the investigation is completed a report will be written (using the template). The report must include information about why the complaint has not been upheld or confirmation that it has, and details of any redress and/or remedial action which is being offered. Recommendations for improvements in practice or regulations will also be included in

the report.
The report must be submitted to the Complaint Committee, with a copy to Student Resolution Officer. The Complaint Manager must confirm in writing to the Student Resolution Officer whether they accept the findings within 48 hours of receipt.
The Student Resolution Officer will write to inform the student of the outcome, and include a copy of the investigation report and any other appropriate documents.

The outcome letter will also include information about the next stage of the complaints process. The student will be requested to confirm if they accept the proposed resolution and any related form of redress, within 10 days of the date of the outcome letter.
The student may confirm in writing that he/she wishes to accept the recommendations and the redress, in this case the formal complaints procedure is then closed. Alternatively the student may confirm in writing he/she wishes to reject the proposed resolution and the redress. He/she must then decide whether to pursue the matter, or not. If not, no further action is required. If he/she does wish to progress to the next stage, he/she should go to Stage 3 – Request for Review (see below) N.B. – this must be done within 10 days of receiving the outcome letter. If a response is not received from the student within 10 days, it will be assumed that the student has accepted the outcome and no further action is required.
If the student does not respond at this stage, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued once the 10 day deadline has passed which states that the matter is closed and that the complainant has not completed the College procedures in full.
If the Student Services accept the recommendation that the complaint is frivolous, malicious or vexatious, an allegation may be made against the student under the Student Disciplinary Procedures which will then govern the case.

Redress

Redress is what is offered to the complainant if the investigation concludes that there should be a remedy offered to address the problems raised. Redress will fit the circumstances of the case and may include one or more of the following:

- an apology;
- an opportunity to repeat the experience under better circumstances (not applicable to academic assessment process or results which constitute academic judgment);
- the return of a tuition fee, or proportion of fee, or other financial compensation;
- the provision of a change to the organisation or nature of the College's service or facilities or regulations if found at fault;
- any other appropriate action such as counselling or other support.

The Decision letter notifying the redress is kept on the student's personal file and is treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the College's data retention policy. If a request for review (see below) is not received within 10 days then the Decision letter constitutes the final stage of the University's procedures.

Stage 3 – Request for Review

It should be noted that a request for review does not necessarily constitute a new investigation, but in the first instance is intended to ensure the College procedures have been correctly followed. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint he/she can request a review of the case using the grounds detailed below, providing that it meets the following criteria:

- submitted in writing using the Request for Review form.
- sent to the Academic Dean and received within 10 days of the date of the outcome letter;
- specifies the grounds of request for review as below;
- accompanied by supporting evidence if any;
- signed and dated by the student.

The valid grounds for Request for Review are (one or more may be used):

- material procedural irregularity;
- disregard of material evidence;
- perversity of judgement in the face of the evidence presented;
- demonstrable bias or prejudice on the part of any person forming the judgement;
- the redress is not proportionate to the complaint;
- new evidence has become available which may have a material bearing on the outcome of the complaint

The Request for Review must clearly explain the reasons for each of the grounds claimed. If full reasons are not given the Request for Review will not be accepted.

If a Request for Review is received within 10 days, and satisfies the above criteria, the Academic Dean (or their nominee) will review the case to establish how the complaint was handled, and whether the outcome was fair.

The Academic Dean (or their nominee) will compile a report within 15 days confirming whether or not the request for review has been upheld and will indicate one or more of the following:

- whether the complaint was dealt with correctly under the procedure;
- whether any variation in the procedure was material and led to a prejudicial or unreasonable outcome;
- whether the case should be referred for further investigation;
- whether the case should be referred to another College procedure (e.g. Academic Appeal Procedure);

- whether by submitting a request for review the matter is deemed to be vexatious;
- the full reasons for the decision.

A response will be sent to the complainant within 15 working days of receiving the Request for Review, including information about how the decision has been reached and any other relevant information.

If there is no further action to be taken this letter will constitute the Completion of Procedures Letter, and will include information to the student of the right to take the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

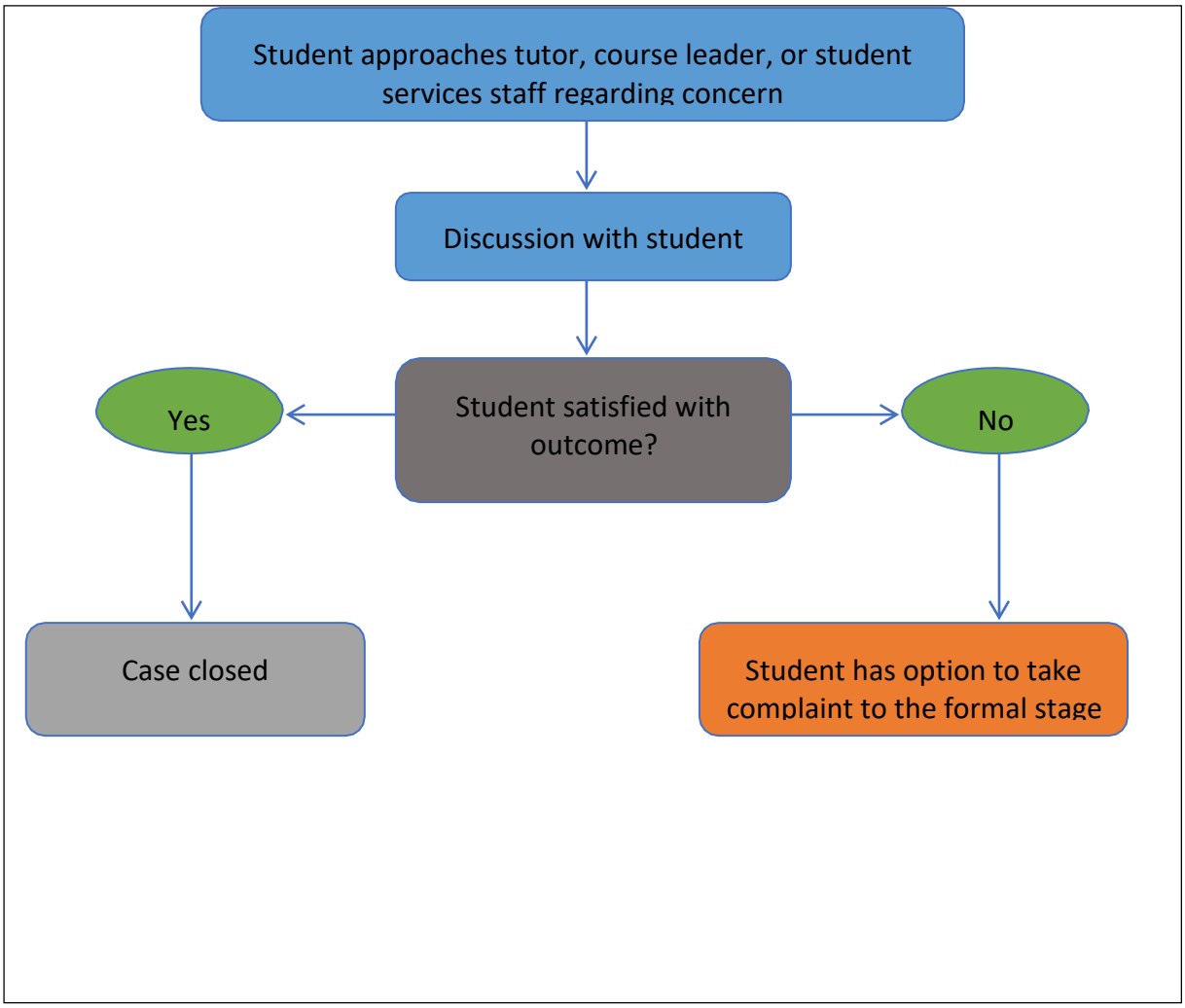
Complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator

If you are not satisfied with the provider's final decision and would like the OIA to review your complaint, you should complete an OIA Complaint Form. The easiest way to submit a complaint is by creating a MyOIA account. MyOIA is a new secure online portal for providers and students (and their representatives) which provides an easy and more intuitive way to submit a complaint, and to track the progress of cases. You can also contact us by e-mail, post or telephone and we will send you a form.
If you require an adjustment to the way we communicate with you due to a specific accessibility or disability need please contact us by e-mailing accessibility@oiahe.org.uk or calling 0118 959 9813. We must receive your signed OIA Complaint Form in this Office within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter; otherwise we will consider your complaint to be out of time. For example, if your Completion of Procedures Letter is dated 7 January, we should receive your Complaint Form by 7 January the following year.
Please also send us a copy of the Completion of Procedures Letter and a copy of your complaint or appeal (if you have it). Keep proof of posting or sending us your OIA Complaint Form.

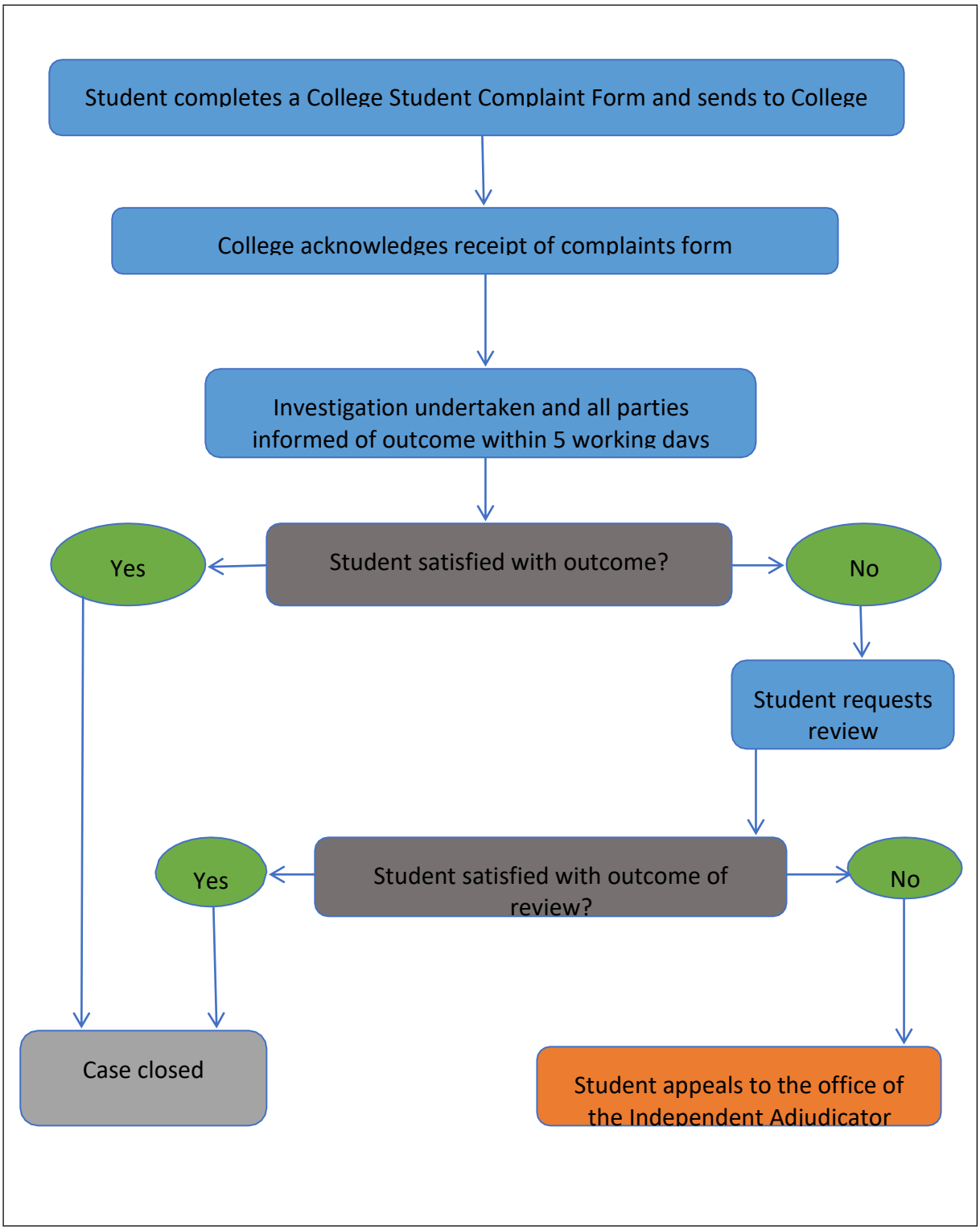
The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education may be
contacted at: Office of the Independent Adjudicator
Second Floor, Abbey
Gate 57-75 Kings Road
Reading RG1 3AB
Tel: 0118 959 9813
Email: enquiries@oiahe.org Website: www.oiahe.org.uk

Student Complaints Process Flowchart

Stage 1 – informal



Stage 2 – formal



Stage 2 - Notification of formal Complaint Form

This formal complaint form should only be used when you have tried to resolve the problem directly with the person or persons concerned and are dissatisfied with the outcome. **You must attach a copy of the Record of informal complaint and any other relevant documents. If you have not had a form, attach copies of correspondence etc.** Anonymous complaints will not be considered. The completed form and supporting evidence should be submitted either by hard copy, in which case it should be signed and dated below, or via email, in which case the signature is not essential.

Please note that all sections must be completed before we can consider your complaint.

1 Your personal details

Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss or other title:	
First name:	
Family name:	
Student number:	

2 Your contact details

Your address: (*we will usually contact you by email, but please provide a postal address in case we need to send you some documents)*	
Address 1	
Address 2	
Address 3	
City/Town	
Post code	
Country	
Email address	
Daytime telephone number	
Mobile telephone number	

Have you completed Stage 1 – informal stage (delete as appropriate):	Yes	No
If yes, YOU MUST attach a copy of the Record of informal complaint form and any other relevant documents. If you have not had a form, attach copies of email correspondence etc. If no, please contact Student Services at studentservices@clc-london.ac.uk before proceeding.		

1 Please summarise the main details of your complaint below and attach any separate information that you feel is relevant to your complaint.

(Please use additional sheets if required. Note that you cannot complain about academic judgement. If you feel there may have been a procedural irregularity in the marking of academic work you should submit an academic appeal, and not a complaint.)

2 Please explain what steps you have taken to resolve your complaint so far. (Please enclose copies of any letters or emails relating to your complaint).

3 Please explain why you are not satisfied with the response you have received.

4 What would you like the College to do to resolve your complaint? (i.e. what reasonable solution(s) are you hoping to achieve?)

5 Your declaration and signature.

I confirm that the information given on this form is true and correct and in submitting this form I understand that the College;

- will not accept complaints from third parties or anonymous sources;
- may need to share information with other persons or organisations as part of any investigation to resolve my complaint;
- will deal with any complaint that it believes to be malicious and unfounded under the provisions of its Student Disciplinary Policy.

Signed …….

Date ……..

If you have additional documents in relation to your complaint which cannot be sent electronically, please send all of the documents/papers, including this form by post to:

City of London College
3 Boyd Street, Aldgate East,
London
E1 1FQ

If you are able to submit all of your complaint information electronically, you may e-mail this form and the associated papers to;

Complaints@clc-london.ac.uk
Please keep a copy of the completed complaint form and any associated documents for your own records.

Stage 3 - Student Complaint Review Form

Before completing this form you should read the College's Student Complaints Procedure. You must only use this form to appeal against the outcome of a formal complaint you have submitted to the College.

You must attach a copy of the letter issued by the College responding to your formal complaint and complete all sections on this form before we can consider your appeal.

2 Your personal details

Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss or other title:	
First name:	
Family name:	
Student number:	

3 Your contact details

Your address: (*we will usually contact you by email, but please provide a postal address in case we need to send you some documents)*	
Address 1	
Address 2	
Address 3	
City/Town	

Post code	
Country	
Email address	
Daytime telephone number	
Mobile telephone number	

3 Which Department's Service is the subject of your formal complaint?

4 Please clearly outline the reasons for your appeal below and attach any separate information that you feel is relevant to your appeal.

Please use additional sheets if required.

5 Please explain why you are not satisfied with the response you have received to your formal complaint.

Please use additional sheets if required.

6 What would you like the College to do to resolve your complaint? (i.e. what reasonable solution(s) are you looking for?)

7 Your declaration and signature.

I confirm that the information given on this form is true and correct and in submitting this form I understand that the College;

- will not accept complaints from third parties or anonymous sources;
- may need to share information with other persons or organisations as part of any investigation to resolve my complaint;
- will deal with any complaint that it believes to be malicious and unfounded under the provisions of its Student Disciplinary Policy.

Signed …….

Date ……..

If you have additional documents in relation to your complaint which cannot be sent electronically, please send all of the documents/papers, including this form by post to:

City of London College
3 Boyd Street, Aldgate East,
London
E1 1FQ

If you are able to submit all of your complaint information electronically, you may e-mail this form and the associated papers to;

Complaints@clc-london.ac.uk

Please keep a copy of the completed complaint form and any associated documents for your own records.

The End