

IADT Complaints Policy and Procedures

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Purpose	This is the policy and procedures for dealing with complaints at the Institute
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Who needs to know about this document	Registrar, Heads of School, Heads of Department, all staff and students.
Revision History	Revision of version 1, 2008
Policy Author	Dr. Annie Doona, Registrar
Policy Owner	Registrar



IADT Complaints Policy and Procedures

July 2010

1. Introduction and Context

IADT is committed to providing a high quality service for all our learners, potential learners and customers. We regard complaints as an important source of information for improving our services and provision for the future.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction concerning the provision of a service or services by IADT.

This Complaints Procedure enables matters of concern to be brought to the attention of the Institute, and to enable investigation of those concerns with the aim of a satisfactory resolution. Most matters can be dealt with through informal processes in a spirit of conciliation and the procedures for doing this are outlined; the aim of this procedure is also to enable those that cannot be dealt with informally to be resolved formally in a fair and consistent manner. This process provides welcome feedback to help improve services for Learners' potential Learners and members of the public in partnership with the Institute

If the complaint is about bullying and/or harassment, the complainant is directed to use the procedures outlined in the IADT Mutual Respect Policy, which specifically deals with these issues.

The Complaints Procedure is an integral partner to the Learner Charter, which is the reference point for Learners and potential Learners who believe they have a legitimate concern for investigation. It clarifies what is reasonable for Learners and potential Learners to expect as part of their learning experience, and enables them to review whether we have met our commitment to them as a learning provider.

2. Principles and Scope

This Procedure aims to be simple, clear and fair to all parties involved, with informal resolution an option at any point. Complaints will be handled sensitively and with due consideration to confidentiality for Learners, potential Learners and staff. Any person named in a complaint will be informed of the substance of the complaint and will have the right to reply as part of the investigation. Information contained within the complaint will be made available only to those members of staff involved in its resolution. The relevant Head of School/Service will also be informed of the complaint.

3. Informal procedures

Our aim is to resolve as many complaints as possible through the informal process.

- Informal complaints should be directed initially to the relevant area of the Department or Service. Staff there will try to deal with the problem without delay or - if the complaint does not relate to a service provided by IADT - they will direct the complainant to the appropriate body. If the staff of the area cannot resolve the complaint - or the complainant is unhappy with the response – they can ask for the matter to be reviewed by a senior member of staff from that area.
- If there is no resolution at this stage, a formal complaint can be made to the Manager of Academic and Student Affairs who will make sure the complaint is investigated using the formal complaints procedures.
- It should be noted that in the interest of natural justice to all parties anonymous complaints cannot be processed.

Formal complaints

Initially the formal complaint should be sent to the Manager of Academic and Student Affairs using the formal complaint form, which is designed to aid people in formulating their complaint.

- The Manager of Academic and Student Affairs will liaise with the Head of School or Service to resolve the complaint. Where the Head of School or Service is the subject of the complaint the Registrar will deal with the complaint.
- No complainant bringing a complaint under this Procedure, whether successfully or otherwise will be treated less favourably by any member of the Institute than if the complaint had not been brought. If evidence to the contrary is found in this regard the member may be subject to disciplinary proceedings under Institute policy.
- Any student making a malicious or vexatious complaint could lead to disciplinary action being taken against them.

- Separate procedures exist for the following:
 - Disciplinary issues
 - Allegations of discrimination (covered by the Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedures)
 - Academic Appeals and Deferrals Procedure
 - Allegations of bullying or harassment (covered by the Mutual Respect Policy)

4. IADT's Commitment when dealing with Complaints

- We will acknowledge all complaints within 3 working days.
- We will investigate all complaints and issue a reply to the complaint within 15 working days or, where this is not possible, an interim reply will issue explaining the position and advising when a substantive response will issue.
- All complaints will be treated promptly, fairly, impartially and in confidence.
- We will keep records of complaints separate from other records.
- We will ensure that no complaint made in good faith will be used to disadvantage any person in the future.
- We will endeavour to learn from mistakes to ensure that errors are not repeated.

5. Appeal procedures

- The Registrar will acknowledge appeals within three working days and respond within one calendar month.
- If the response to the complaint following completion of the formal procedure is not considered to be satisfactory, you may appeal in writing, within ten working days of notification of the decision. The request should be addressed to the Registrar outlining why you were not happy with the outcome of your appeal.
- Taking into account the substance of the complaint and the previous attempts at resolution, the case will then be reviewed by the Registrar who will provide the complainant a decision in writing within one calendar month of receipt of the request under the Appeal Stage. The Registrars decision will set out the steps to be taken to remedy the complaint or the reasons why the appeal has failed.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they have a right to appeal to the Office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is completely independent of the Government and the service is free. Nothing in this complaint procedure affects statutory rights under Freedom of Information, Data Protection or other relevant legislation.

Office of the Ombudsman

18 Lower Leeson Street

Dublin 2

www.ombudsman.ie

LoCall: 1890 22 30 30

Tel: 01 639 5600

Fax: 01 639 5674

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- The Registrar's office will oversee the tracking and monitoring of complaints progressed through the Procedure and will ensure that records show the nature of the complaint, how it was dealt with, the time taken for each part and the outcome. All complaints will be monitored in accordance with the Institutes Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedures.
- The Complaints Procedure is one aspect of the Institute's quality assurance procedures; complaints are therefore considered as useful feedback and, where appropriate, will be used to facilitate improvements to services and facilities. This will be achieved through annual reporting to the Quality Enhancement Committee of the Academic Council and an audit trail to ensure that outcomes and recommendations from the formal procedure are actioned. All complainant details will be anonymous at this stage.

7. Outcomes of the Complaints Procedure

- Should a complaint be upheld, the Registrar may make recommendations to the Head of School/ Service Manager
- Recommendations may also be made to the appropriate College Committees in respect of quality assurance procedures or policies.
- If a complaint is not upheld, the complainant will be informed in writing with reasons why it was not upheld.
- Any conclusions and recommendations will be communicated in writing to the complainant and the Head of School/Service.

8. Role of the Student Union

The Student Union staff are available to advise and assist students with the complaints procedure.

9. Training and Awareness

The Registrar's Office will facilitate activities to raise awareness of the Complaints Procedure. The Office of Student and Academic Affairs will also provide support and guidance for staff, Learners, potential Learners and the public in handling complaints and resolving them as close as possible to their point of origin.

IADT Formal Complaint Recording Form

Please complete all sections of this form where possible. Thank you.

1. Your Details

Dr	Ms.	Miss	Mr.	Mrs.	Other	
First Name					Last Name	
Full Address						
Contact Number/s						
Student ID Number (if applicable)						
Programme coordinator name (if applicable)						
PLEASE TICK	Student <input type="checkbox"/>	Parent or guardian <input type="checkbox"/>	Employer <input type="checkbox"/>	Member of the public <input type="checkbox"/>	Other	

2. Outline of Complaint, including dates of actions (please use additional sheets if necessary)

Have you used the informal procedures first? Yes No

3. How would you like this complaint resolved?

Signed..... Print Name.....

Date.....

**Please forward this form to David Doyle, Academic and Student Affairs Manager at IADT,
david.doyle@iadt.ie**