

Schedule 5 (Partner Institution procedures: complaints, appeals, and other internal processes)

1.0 Introduction and scope

- 1.1 The University of Manchester (“**the University**”) works in partnership with several other organisations across the UK and overseas. This Procedure outlines how the University handles the review of decisions made by Partner Institutions on complaints, appeals and other internal processes.
- 1.2 We use the phrase “complaints, appeals and other internal processes” to describe any processes which result in decisions about particular students or groups of students that affect their studies, and that may result in a Completion of Procedures Letter. This includes processes that a student may initiate for example making a complaint, submitting an appeal against an academic decision, making a request for additional consideration of personal circumstances, reporting a concern about the behaviour of another person. It also includes processes that may be initiated by one or more providers in respect of an individual student for example fitness to practise investigations, academic misconduct or disciplinary investigations, non-academic misconduct or disciplinary investigations, or Fitness/Support to Study processes.
- 1.3 Where the University validates programmes of study at Partner Institutions it is responsible for the standards of the awards it makes and for the quality of the student learning experience the Partner Institution provides.
- 1.4 Where a matter relates to a student’s progression, or final award, or the quality and standards of an award, the final review stage will usually be conducted by the University, as per the procedure outlined in 3.1 below.
- 1.5 Partner Institutions must have their own policies and procedures for academic appeals, student complaints, academic and non-academic misconduct, and Fitness/Support to Study processes. These policies and procedures must be included in programme handbooks or general information for students, and be accessible to students (for example, through links on the Partner Institution’s website).
- 1.6 The University will not develop academic appeals, student complaints, and academic and non-academic misconduct policies or procedures on behalf of Partner Institutions but may offer guidance and recommendations on their content.

1.7 Partner Institutions that want to link to this document should use <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/academic-appeals-complaints-and-misconduct/partner-institutions/>

2.0 Support available to students

2.1 Students should seek support from the institution at which they are registered as a student.

3.0 Procedure for the consideration of review requests

3.1 When a student has completed their Partner Institution's internal procedures, they can ask the University for a review of the final decision. A review is not a reconsideration of the case. A review is to check that the appeals procedure has been properly followed, and that the decision made was reasonable based on all the evidence that was available.

The grounds for asking for a review are:

(a) that the case has not been handled properly;

(b) that the final decision was not reasonable based on the evidence that was available

(c) that there is new evidence that could not have been presented earlier, for a good reason.

3.2 To request a review a student should write to the University's Director of Student and Academic Services at TLD-ACD@manchester.ac.uk within **10 working days** of the Partner Institution's decision.

3.3 The student must provide a written statement giving the reason(s) for the request and attach any supporting documentation or evidence. They should explain why they think the case has not been handled properly, why they think the decision was not reasonable based on the evidence available, and/or why any new evidence could not have been presented earlier.

3.4 The student can provide new material and/or evidence with their request if they have a good reason why this information was not available to the Partner Institution that handled their case. A case-handler will then review the information and/or evidence provided and make a judgement about whether they have provided a good reason for not providing the information or evidence sooner.

- 3.5 When the student's request has been received, the University will send a copy of it to the Partner Institution and ask for a copy of the file relating to the case, including any communication with the student. The University will also ask for the Partner Institution's comments on the request.
- 3.6 The University's Director of Student and Academic Services (or someone they have nominated) will consider the request based on all the material the student and the Partner Institution have provided. The University will not normally consider the case afresh but will consider the review request with reference to the grounds listed in 3.1 above.
- 3.7 The University might apply principles of its own Regulations (for example Regulation XVII Conduct and Discipline, Regulation XVIII Student Complaints, or Regulation XIX Academic Appeals) when considering any procedural issues that might be identified in the review request.
- 3.8 When carrying out the review, the University might seek more information from the student or from the Partner Institution if appropriate. If the University requests more information, it will normally allow **5 working days** for this to be provided.
- 3.9 If the case raises serious or complex matters which need to be investigated further, the University might refer the case to a panel for consideration. If this happens the student will be provided with updates on the progress of the case.
- 3.10 The Director of Student and Academic Services (or someone they have nominated) will write to the student with the outcome of the review. This will normally be within **30 working days** of the University receiving the request.
- 3.11 Possible outcomes might be that the University makes recommendations to the Partner Institution and asks it to implement them, the University may ask the Partner Institution to reconsider the case, or the request might be dismissed by the University. No matter the outcome of the request, reasons will be given for the decision.
- 3.12 When the student is sent the outcome of the request this will usually be in the form of a Completion of Procedures letter. This means there are no further stages open to the student and that they will be able to make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) if the complaint is eligible under its rules. Information on

how to complain to the OIA will be within the Completion of Procedures letter.

3.13 Completion of Procedures letters can only be issued by members of the OIA's scheme. If this is the case, it is possible that a Partner Institution might issue a Completion of Procedures letter before the University carries out a review. Some reasons why a Completion of Procedures letter might be issued by a Partner Institution include:

- (a) Complaints which have not been submitted on time, according to the Partner Institution's own procedures;
- (b) Academic appeals which have not been submitted on time, according to the Partner Institution's own procedures, appeals that are a challenge to academic judgement or do not otherwise meet the grounds on which an appeal may be made, or appeals that have been upheld and a resolution has been offered.