NON-ACADEMIC RELATED MATTERS COMPLAINTS POLICY (NARCP)

1. Situations may arise where students, or a group of students, are dissatisfied with a non-academic related aspect of their experience or service at the University. The University welcomes input from students as this enables us to develop and improve our non-academic offerings and support we provide to students.

2. The Non-Academic Related Matters Complaints Policy (NARCP) applies when students have a complaint or concern about University functions which include but are not limited to:

    2.1 Admissions, Marketing and Recruitment

    2.2 Estates and Facilities, including accommodation and catering

    2.3 Financial matters

    2.4 Computing and information technology

    2.5 Student Affairs

    2.6 Issues or complaints related to official university polices or procedures

    2.7 Other matters

3. There are many informal routes by which students may voice a concern. Students should speak to their student government representative, their advisor, give comments in the course evaluations, or speak to a member of the University that they are comfortable approaching. If these routes still do not help, then a student may wish to initiate a complaint.

4. The information in this document outlines the procedure to follow if there is a complaint. This document does not override the wider legal obligations of the University or to employees under contract, or the obligations of students and employees to the University.

5. All complaints will be treated in strict confidence and the University confirms that bringing a complaint or raising an issue will not have a negative impact on academic treatment.

6. The University is often required to work with a range of external bodies, and delays or problems may arise beyond the University's control. A student complaint will only be considered where responsibility lies within the University.

7. If students wish to raise a complaint about the service of an external body with which the University conducts business, the student should contact the relevant organisation directly.

8. Where appropriate, the University will provide advice and support to students where errors arise on behalf of external bodies, but it will not actively participate in a complaint procedure in such circumstances.

9. If a complaint involves more than one department or non-academic support office, then one person will be designated to respond to the complaint with consultation from the relevant parties. If it is found that the complaint involves an appeal, the student will be pointed to the relevant appeals policy.

10. Students using the complaint process to bring frivolous or vexatious matters to the University's attention will be subject to disciplinary action.

11. Students found to have provided fraudulent evidence or falsified a claim will be subject to disciplinary action.

Complaint Resolution Process

12. The University offers a Three-Stage Resolution Process to resolve complaints made against a given University function/department.

Stage I: Informal Resolution

13. An informal complaint should be raised in writing with a member of the relevant team who will attempt an informal resolution of the issue.

14. Students are also encouraged to contact the Complaints department at complaints@richmond.ac.uk who will advise on the University's complaints procedure.

Stage II: Formal Resolution

15. If students are not satisfied with the result or proposed solution, a formal complaint should be raised in writing to the Head/Director of the relevant team using the Formal Complaint Form. The complaint should include:

    15.1 A detailed description of the issue and valid evidence to support the claim;

    15.2 An indication of desired outcomes i.e., a short statement of what you hope your complaint to achieve.

16. In the case of a group complaint, one student, identified on the Group Formal Complaint Form, will act as the lead student, with the other group members' names listed in the relevant section on the form. The University will only contact the lead student in connection with the group appeal. The University will expect the lead student to

distribute the University's communications among the group and collate the group's response to the University's enquiries to give to the University. The University cannot be held responsible if the lead student does not accurately provide the views of any member of the Group or if they do not pass on information from the University.

17. The University reserves the right to propose individual solutions to any group complaint.
18. A group complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction by two or more students about the University's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by the University.
19. The Head/Director of the relevant team will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, normally in ten working days, and provide a provisional response to the issues raised. This response may also indicate what formal action, if any, the Department will take.
20. If the complaint concerns the Head/Director of the relevant team, it should be referred to a designee.

Stage III: Further Review of Complaint

21. If students are not satisfied with the decision received from the Head/Director of the relevant team, they should submit a Further Review of Complaint form, along with the response of the Head/Director, within 10 working days of receipt, to the Office of the President.
22. The President, or their designated representative, will review the complaint and, where necessary, make recommendations for further action at the relevant University committee or board.
23. In the case of a group complaint students should use the Group Further Review of Complaint Form. One student, identified on the form, will act as the lead student, with the other group members' names listed in the relevant section on the form.
24. The University reserves the right to propose individual solutions to any group complaint.
25. The grounds for Further Review are:

    25.1 New evidence exists that could not have been reasonably presented in the previous stage

    25.2 A procedural irregularity occurred in the conduct of the complaints process

    25.3 A decision was manifestly unreasonable or influenced by prejudice or bias, or perception thereof, on the part of the decision-maker(s).

26. The Office of the President will review the complaint and, where necessary, make recommendations for further action within 10 working days of receiving the request.

27. Should a significant or cross-institutional issue be identified, it may need to be referred to the relevant committee.

28. In line with Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) expectations, once a student has finished the University's internal complaints or appeals procedures, the University will promptly send a Completion of Procedures Letter. This Letter will set out clearly what issues have been considered and the University's final decision.

29. If, upon the conclusion the University's institutional procedures students are dissatisfied with the decision, they may take their complaint to the OIA (http://www.oiahe.org.uk/). Students must first have exhausted all appropriate internal procedures at the University before approaching the OIA.

Advice and Support

30. Students may also raise issues at the Student Experience Committee, as well as ask for informal advice and support at any time, from the Department of Student Affairs, Academic Advisors, the Student Government, and/or Registry Services.

31. Students may also wish to refer to the following documents:

    31.1 Admissions Policy

    31.2 Complaints Policy: Academic Related Matters.

VERSION MANAGEMENT

Responsible Department: Provost Office			
Approving Body: University Board (on recommendation of Academic Board)			
Version no.	**Key Changes**	**Date of Approval**	**Date of Effect**
001	Initial Version	24 July 2018	28 August 2018
002	Corrected typos	13 February 2019	13 February 2019
	Corrected typos	11 April	
003	Added Formal/Further Review forms and Complaints email.	25 June 2020	11 August 2020
004	Added Group Complaints.	3 September 2021	6 September 2021
005	Updated turnaround timeframe to match Academic Complaints.	1 September 2023	1 September 2023
006	No changes to the policy; reviewed and approved by University Board for AY 2026–27.	2 June 2026	September 2026
		Restricted Access? *Tick as appropriate*: **Yes ☐ No X**	