

## Postgraduate Advisory Service Complaints procedure

**Context:** PAS is committed to offering services of the highest quality, and to a practice of reflective development wherein our services are evaluated regularly and student feedback is encouraged. We take legitimate student complaints seriously and seek to address and resolve them in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

**Introduction:** The Postgraduate Advisory Service has established an in-house complaints procedure to deal with initial student complaints. Complaints may be made which relate to serious or sustained dissatisfaction with the quality of service provided by PAS arising from a decision, or alleged action or inaction, taken by a member of staff acting on behalf of PAS.

Students are encouraged to pursue this in-house complaints procedure in the first instance. Nothing in this procedure precludes a student from subsequently pursuing a complaint under the Trinity Student Complaints Procedure.

**Purpose:** This procedure is established to enable PAS to quickly identify and learn from legitimate student complaints and to address and seek to resolve them in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

**Scope:** This procedure applies to all postgraduate students who have engaged with PAS.<sup>1</sup> This procedure will not apply to complaints made against financial assistance regulations or decisions of the Postgraduate Financial Assistance Committees, where a separate appeals mechanism is in place.

Complaints relating to decisions or alleged actions or inactions taken more than four months previously will be entertained in only the most exceptional circumstances.

**Assistance:** Students are invited to seek assistance and advice from the Graduate Students' Union, if they deem it necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this procedure, students are defined in the same manner as in the Trinity Student Complaints Procedure: [Trinity Student Complaints Procedure link](#)

**Step 1. Informal Complaints:** Postgraduate students unhappy with the decision or service provided by PAS, including relating to an individual Postgraduate Advisor or the Postgraduate Student Support Officer are encouraged in the first instance to raise the issue with the relevant staff member, informally.

PAS staff are encouraged to engage with informal complaints constructively.

**Step 2. Written Complaint:** If the student remains dissatisfied or perceives no improvement, they may complain, in writing, to the Senior Tutor (senior.tutor@tcd.ie) who will confirm receipt of the complaint. Written complaints should outline the nature of the complaint and specify what action or accommodation the student is seeking. Complaints are normally received by email. Anonymous complaints or complaints which breach Trinity's Dignity and Respect Policy will not be entertained.

**Step 3. Preliminary Review:** on receipt, the Senior Tutor will conduct a preliminary review of the complaint to determine whether there is a case to answer. The Senior Tutor may seek further information during his/her preliminary review. The Senior Tutor will seek to conduct and report back on the preliminary review to the complainant in a timely manner.

**Step 4. Full Review:** If, after the preliminary review, the Senior Tutor believes there is a case to answer, s/he may conduct a full review. S/he may seek further information or may invite the student and/ or the relevant staff member to a meeting to discuss the complaint further.

**Step 5. Findings:** The Senior Tutor will then issue a determination to the student outlining her/his findings and what action, if any, is to be taken. The Senior Tutor will seek to issue their findings, in a timely manner.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the Senior Tutor's preliminary/ full review, or perceives no improvement in the service, they may make a formal complaint under the Trinity Student Complaints Procedure.

## **Trinity College Dublin Student Complaints Procedure**

The purpose of the College Student Complaints Procedure is to ensure that legitimate student complaints are investigated in a transparent, fair and timely manner with a view to reaching a resolution in a clear, fair and timely manner. More information linked here:

[Trinity Student Complaints Procedure link](#)

### **Review of complaints**

PAS monitors any complaints received annually in order to continually improve the service offered to students.

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