
Guidance 5(vii) Serious problems and complaints in collaborative partnerships

1 Serious problems

Nominated Link Tutors for each institution should be contacted to deal with all routine matters and any problems. If a problem is deemed to be more serious, the University Academic Dean should be informed immediately. If a Partner Institution, or the University Faculty, has a concern which is felt to be serious enough for the attention of University Executive, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement should be informed by either party, in writing.

2 A procedure for dealing with complaints in relation to Collaborative Partner Institutions of the University

- a. This procedure relates to complaints received by the University relating in whole or in part to collaborative partner institutions of the University. This procedure does not apply to complaints from students studying in collaborative partner institutions; procedures for such complaints are available in the University regulations.
- b. Such complaints must always be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement, who shall at once inform the collaborative partner institution of the nature and substance of the complaint. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement shall decide whether a complaint has substance, prima facie. In so deciding, they shall have regard to the following considerations:
 - Where the University receives a complaint or complaints against a collaborative partner institution, it shall at the outset determine which complaints, if any, are within its jurisdiction.
 - The University shall decline absolutely to deal with any complaint against a collaborative partner institution unless the internal procedures of that institution have been fully exhausted and the procedures of any professional accrediting body have likewise been fully exhausted.
 - The University shall decline absolutely to deal with any complaint against a collaborative partner institution if legal proceedings have been commenced in relation to that complaint, and shall continue to so decline until legal proceedings have been fully ended.
 - Anonymous complaints or grievances will not normally be considered.
- c. Where a complaint is deemed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement to have substance prima facie, the complaint shall be referred to a panel chaired by the Director of the Academic Quality Service and whose other members shall be an internal expert (preferably of professorial status) and an external expert, the panel aided by a secretary and, if deemed necessary by the chair, a legal assessor.
- d. The panel shall report its findings as quickly as practicable to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement, copies of its report being sent simultaneously to the complainant and the collaborative partner institution.
- e. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement shall consider the report, and any representations made to him/her by either the complainant or the collaborative partner institution, and shall forward his/her conclusions to the Vice-Chancellor, together with a summary of the complaints in respect of which the panel was established.

- f.** The Vice-Chancellor shall reach a determination in relation to the matters which formed the substance of the complaint, and shall inform either the Board of Governors or the Academic Board, as they deem appropriate; the Vice-Chancellor shall at the same time inform the complainant and the partner institution of the outcome.
- g.** There shall be no grounds of appeal against the determination of the Vice-Chancellor.
- h.** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement and the Director of the Academic Quality Service shall have the joint discretion to require a complainant to lodge with the University a sum of money which is liable to forfeit in whole or in part should the complaint, once investigated, be deemed to be frivolous, vexatious, malicious and/or without substance.