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Electro Diagnostics Unit

Document No.	:	ED/QMS/05
Title	:	Complaints and feedback
Effective Date	:	
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Training Requirements	A	B	C	D
	✓			

A = New procedure requiring documented assessment of competence
B = Modified procedure requiring documented reassessment of competence
C = Familiarity with new procedure required (no assessment of competence necessary)
D = Familiarity with changes required (no assessment of competence necessary)

	Signature	Name (print)	Date
Prepared by			
Reviewed and approved by			

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The aim of this SOP is to ensure that all Visual Electrodiagnostic Testing Service (VETS) service users and staff are fully aware of the complaints and feedback procedures and that any complaints or feedback are reported promptly and fed into the VETS quality system.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This SOP provides guidance in distinguishing feedback from complaints.
- 2.2. This SOP details what information must be given to VETS service users regarding complaints and feedback before any diagnostic procedures commence.
- 2.3. This SOP applies to any complaints raised, or feedback given, by VETS service users.

3. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Patient Declaration and Feedback Form (VETS 005)
- Patient Information Form (VETS 004)
- University Procedure for complaints (UoB 010)

4. COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

- 4.1. Before commencing any diagnostic testing, all service users should be given both verbal and written information (see: *Patient Information Form, VETS004*) regarding the VETS complaints and feedback procedures and sign *Patient Declaration and Feedback (VETS 005)* to this effect.
- 4.2. Written information is contained in patient information sheets that are supplied to patients in advance of attending the VETS.
- 4.3. On attending the VETS service users must be reminded of the VETS's policy to gather feedback and complaints before diagnostic testing commences.
- 4.4. At the end of any diagnostic testing, all service users should be asked to give their feedback regarding the services provided.
- 4.5. As a minimum form *VETS 005* should be completed for all service users.
- 4.6. Where service users express dissatisfaction with the services provided by the VETS, this should be regarded as a complaint and the complainant asked to provide details using form *VETS 005* in the first instance.
- 4.7. If a complaint is made to staff at the EDU, every effort should be made to resolve the issue at the time to the satisfaction of the complainant.

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- 4.8. Satisfactory informal resolution should be documented - as a minimum the nature of the complaint, date, complainant details and actions taken must be recorded for management review.
- 4.9. Particular attention must be given to any event that:
 - 4.9.1. has caused harm or had the potential to cause harm to the service user
 - 4.9.2. led to or had the potential to lead to a breach of confidentiality
 - 4.9.3. caused or had the potential to cause damage to dignity and respect of the service user.
- 4.10. If an informal complaint cannot be resolved at the time, the complaint will be dealt with in accordance with Stage 1 of the University of XXXXXX External Complaints Procedure (appendix 1).
- 4.11. If informal resolution cannot be achieved at Stage 1 then the complainant will be asked to put their complaint in writing and send it to the Dean of the School of Life Sciences – Stage 2.

5. DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

- 5.1. All written complaints received by the Dean will be acknowledged within 10 working days by the Dean or an appointed deputy and dealt with in accordance with the University of XXXXXX's External Complaints Procedure.
- 5.2. Subsequent investigation should highlight areas of poor performance / practice, systems failure, violation of procedures or the need for a change of practice. Table 1 summarises key pointers that should be addressed.
- 5.3. A final report detailing the above and any actions required will be produced and follow up on actions monitored by the Quality Officer.
- 5.4. Copies of this report and actions will be sent by the Quality Officer to the CQC.

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Table 1 Investigation – Key Pointers

SOP	Is an SOP in place to cover the procedure?	Yes / No
	If yes -	
	Is the SOP adequate?	
	Does it need to be revised?	
	Did the individual know about and follow the SOP?	
Training	Was the individual appropriately trained?	Yes / No
	If not -	
	Was training available?	
	Was training available but not advertised appropriately?	
	Was training available and advertised but the individual did not attend?	
	Other reasons (use separate sheet if necessary)	
Equipment/ facilities	Was the equipment/facilities/ security fit for purpose?	Yes / No
	If not, why not?	
Previous occurrence	Have similar incidents happened before?	Yes / No
	If yes, give details (use separate sheet if necessary)	

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Appendix 1: University of XXXXXX External Complaints Policy

Procedure for complaints by persons or organisations external to the University

1. Who can use this procedure?

The University welcomes all constructive feedback on its activities, whether positive or negative, and understands that, from time to time, people or organisations external to the University may feel their expectations have not been met by the University, its staff or students. This procedure aims to provide a mechanism which will deal with any such complaints in a timely and open way.

This procedure is not to be used by students (who should use the student complaint procedure) nor staff (who should use the grievance procedure)

2. What information should the complaint contain?

- The background to the complaint including dates and times of any particular incidents and the names of any people against whom you are complaining or who can provide evidence in support of your complaint.
- Any specific issues which you want to be addressed.
- What outcome(s) you hope to achieve from the complaints process.

3 Stage 1 - Making an initial complaint (informal)

3.1 Complaints can often be resolved satisfactorily and dealt with quickly on an informal basis. If possible, talk informally to the person most directly involved in the situation you wish to complain about and as soon as possible after the situation arises. You should, in any event, make your complaint within 1 calendar month of the event.

3.2 The staff member will attempt to resolve the complaint and, within 7 working days of it being received will acknowledge its receipt and as soon as possible thereafter, will write to you, or make alternative contact if preferred; with one of the following outcomes:

- The complaint has been resolved.
- The complaint requires more time to investigate the matter(s) raised.
- The complaint can be resolved (stating a specified timescale for resolution, if possible).
- The complaint cannot be resolved in the way you require and you can pursue a formal complaint if you wish.

4 Making a formal complaint

4.1 Stage 2 – Initiating a formal complaint

4.1.1 To initiate a formal complaint you must put the complaint in writing, or in an alternative format, clearly stating the following information :

- Personal Details, including, address for correspondence in connection with the complaint and Postcode and Telephone/Mobile number

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- Outline of complaint, including dates of actions
- Please explain what steps you have taken,(if any) together with dates, to resolve your complaint locally (as per the informal procedure):
- Please explain why you are not satisfied with the response you have received to date:
- Please indicate what outcome or further action you are expecting:
- Formal complaints must be submitted within 1 month of the event complained of occurring, or if you have made an informal complaint in accordance with clause 4.1 above, within 12 working days of the date of the letter or contact occurring, notifying you of the outcome to your informal complaint.

4.1.2 The complaint letter, or if in an alternative format is used, should be passed to the appropriate Dean of School, Director or Head of Service who will acknowledge receipt (and, if possible, make an initial response) within 7 working days. S/he will then undertake a full investigation. If you are unsure about the identity of the person to whom you should submit the form, you can send it to: The University Secretary, University of XXXXXX... who will forward it to the appropriate person.

4.1.3 A full and considered response will usually be made within 20 working days of receipt of your complaint. If the investigation cannot be completed in that time for good reason (such as staff unavailability due to holidays) or the matter is complex, you will be advised of a revised timescale.

4.1.4 If the complaint relates to the conduct of a member of staff, this may be investigated under the staff disciplinary procedure. You will receive a response in accordance with the timescale of that procedure (the University reserves the right to maintain confidentiality in relation to staff disciplinary matters). This will signal the conclusion of the matter. No stage 3 Final Review process is available for staff disciplinary matters.

4.2 Stage 3 – Final Review

4.2.1 If you are dissatisfied with the decision from Stage 2, you may refer the matter to the appropriate member of the University's Senior Management Team. The letter you receive at the end of Stage 2 will tell you who this is but it will usually be one of the following:

- Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic Development): complaints against students.
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources): complaints relating to any other service supplied by the University or complaints about University Council

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members or otherwise relating to the business of the University Council or its committees.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer): complaints about the conduct of our research or about University Knowledge Transfer partnerships, both home and abroad.

4.2.2 To initiate a final review you must write to, or make contact with the appropriate person above and indicate in your letter who has previously dealt with your complaint and why you are dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2. To initiate a final review you must write to the appropriate person within 12 working of the date of the letter notifying you of the outcome to your formal complaint.

4.2.3 The final review will be completed within 20 working days of receipt of your letter and the outcome will be reported to you in writing. This decision is final and there will be no further avenue of review in the University. If there is an external review body to whom the matter can be referred, (such as the Information Commissioner) we will advise you of this when we report the outcome of the final review.

5 What you can expect from the University

We will:

- Deal impartially with your complaint within the time frames set out above and in a polite and straightforward way.
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the complaints process, revealing information to others only to the extent necessary to complete a proper investigation and make a considered response and keeping the record of your complaint separate from other records.
- Ensure that no complaint made in good faith will be used to your disadvantage in the future.

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Vexatious and malicious complaints (ie repeated or persistent complaints which are trivial or untrue, made purposely to abuse this complaints procedure) or those accompanied by abusive or aggressive behaviour will not be dealt with under this procedure.