

## **Complaints Procedures (Part 1) – Informal**

### ***Aim of the Service***

The Student Counselling and Advisory Service is committed to providing a quality service to the University and its members. We try to give the best service possible, but there may be times when you feel this has not happened. We are interested to know of any concerns you have about the work of the Service, and encourage you to make these known as early as possible.

### ***Concerns about a counsellor***

Here is what you can do first if you have a complaint about one of the counsellors.

Most difficulties can be settled informally at an early stage by talking directly to your counsellor. Doing so provides the opportunity to discuss your concerns in detail. The counsellor concerned will understand that you are taking responsibility for yourself in the counselling relationship. This can be very helpful, as it allows for the possibility of clearing up any inadvertent misunderstandings and/or correcting possible mistakes.

If you feel unable to do this, or have done so but still feel dissatisfied; you can ask to speak to the Head of Counselling, Bea Gavin, by phone or in person.

The Head of Counselling will speak to the counsellor concerned and may also suggest a 3-way meeting if this is mutually agreed. If it is not appropriate to approach the Head of Counselling, e.g. if she is your counsellor, you can ask to speak to Mary O’Riordan, Vice President with responsibility for Student Services.

Your concern will be listened to and (s)he will do what is possible to promote clear communication aimed at resolving the problem.

### ***Concerns about any other aspect of the Service***

Where your complaint is to do with Service policy or delivery, as opposed to the work of an individual counsellor, you can raise your concern informally with any member of staff at any time, or you can ask to speak to the Head of Counselling by phone or in person. Alternatively, you can take the opportunity to comment anonymously by completing the annual user survey.

### ***Contact details***

Miss Bea Gavin  
Head of Student Counselling  
Student Counselling Service  
5 Distillery Rd.,  
NUI Galway.  
Tel: +35391 492484  
Mail: [bea.gavin@nuigalway.ie](mailto:bea.gavin@nuigalway.ie)

### ***Formal complaints***

The Service also has procedures in place for addressing complaints more formally. You can find out more about these by reading the document entitled *Complaints Procedures (Part II) – Formal*. Copies are available from the office.

### ***Acknowledgements***

This policy is based on the Complaints Procedure developed by Glasgow University Counselling Service. We gratefully acknowledge their assistance.



National University of Ireland, Galway  
*Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh*

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