



NALP Complaints Procedure

What is a complaint?

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the provision of an examination or any other service provided the awarding body or its representatives. A complaint is not defined as an appeal unless it concerns the decisions made by an individual Examiner or a breach of examination procedures (please see Appeals Policy for the grounds for Appeal).

Who can complain?

Anyone who seeks or receives a service from NALP or its representatives may lodge a complaint under this Policy. Matters of concern may be raised individually or collectively and candidates and teachers should feel assured that they will not encounter any disadvantage having lodged a complaint in good faith.

Anonymous or third party complaints will not be dealt with under the Procedure. It is at the discretion of NALP as to how these are handled. Where there is reason to believe that a complaint is vexatious or malicious, the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive who may decide to reject the complaint without full consideration of its merits. Reasons will be given as to why the complaint is considered to be an abuse of process.

In the event of uncertainty about the scope of the Procedure or if general advice is required on the most appropriate way to pursue a complaint, the candidate should contact NALP in the first instance for clarification. All stages of the Complaints Procedure are internal proceedings.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be preserved during the investigation of a complaint to safeguard the interests of everyone concerned unless disclosure is necessary to progress the complaint. NALP expects that all parties will respect the confidentiality of the process. Any individual about whom a complaint is made will have the right to be informed of the fact and nature.

Procedure for complaints

In the case of all complaints, NALP seeks to ensure that appropriate and reasonable action is taken. Where a complaint is justified, any appropriate remedial action will be notified as part of the decision. If a complaint is not justified at any stage, the reasons for the decision will be communicated to the candidate.

Any complaint received by NALP will be treated as official unless the complainant informs NALP otherwise within ten days of the original complaint made. All complaints must be made in writing to be deemed official. Complaints are recorded and a copy of the complaint is sent to the person about whom the complaint has been made for their response.

Complaints will be investigated in the first instance by the Chief Executive. If it is found that the nature of the complaint warrants further investigation, the Chief Executive will pass on the

information to the Executive Board who will make a decision about whether the complaint should be upheld after reviewing all the evidence presented. The Board may decide to contact the candidate/teacher and the person about whom the complaint was made for further information.

NALP expects to deal with all complaints in a timely manner. Candidates and teachers will be informed if there are likely to be any delays in the process. In the event that key staff are unavailable to progress the complaint, alternative arrangements may be made, if appropriate, to ensure the matter is dealt with appropriately.

Monitoring the Process

In order that NALP can improve services to candidates and other clients, the receipt of complaints and responses to them will be monitored. A regular report on the outcome of the monitoring process will be made to the Executive Board via the Chief Executive. This will enable NALP to continuously improve its services and ensure an inclusive consistent and constructive approach to complaints. The effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure will also be kept under review and, where appropriate, changes will be made.