



Irish Centre for European Law

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**For Members of the Public, Members and Users of the Centre**  
*(other than Staff Members)*

### **STATEMENT**

ICEL is committed to dealing effectively with any complaints you may have about our service. If we got something wrong, we will apologise, and where possible we will try to put things right. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT?**

#### ***Informal Resolution***

If possible, we believe it is best to deal with things as soon as possible and in the easiest and most direct way. If you have a complaint, raise it with the person you are dealing with. He or she will try to resolve it for you there and then or within 5 working days.

If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for your complaint to be formally investigated.

#### ***How to complain formally***

You can make a formal complaint in any of the ways below:

- You can get in touch with our Administrator at 01 896 1845 if you want to make your complaint over the phone.
- You can e mail us at [icel@tcd.ie](mailto:icel@tcd.ie).
- You can write a letter to us at the following address:

The Administrator  
Irish Centre for European Law  
House 39  
Trinity College  
Dublin 2

In order to assist you with your complaint in as timely a manner as possible, you should include the following information:

- Your name and contact details;
- A brief description of your complaint including as much information as possible including dates and times if applicable;
- A list of your specific concerns starting with most important;
- A clear idea of what you are hoping to achieve (e.g. apology, explanation etc);
- Your preferred contact method (phone, email, post)

It will be helpful to the complaints officer if you can also include any relevant documentation pertaining to your complaint.

## **WHAT NEXT?**

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days and will let you know how we intend to deal with it.

We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any particular requirements.

We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way to ensure any future interactions with us do not suffer as a result of making a complaint.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of another person we will need acknowledgment from that person that you are acting on their behalf.

## **INVESTIGATION**

We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your complaint. If your complaint is straightforward, we will usually ask somebody from the service to look into it and get back to you. In some cases, if the complaint is serious, we may ask someone from outside the organisation to investigate.

We will set out to you our understanding of your complaint and ask you to confirm that we have got it right. We will also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for.

The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen, it is important that you tell us.

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this.

We endeavour to respond investigate and resolve the complaint within 30 working days. If the complaint is more complex and will require longer to investigate and resolve, we will ensure that you are kept informed with regular updates every 20 Days).

The person who is investigating your concerns will aim first to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. In complex cases, we will draw up an investigation plan.

In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your complaint. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation or another method to try to resolve disputes.

When investigating your complaint, we will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your complaint. If necessary we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any guidance.

## **RESOLUTION**

Once an investigation has concluded we will contact you via your preferred method of contact and let you know what we have found. If necessary, we will produce a longer report.

If we find that we were at fault we will explain what went wrong and detail the actions that have been put in place to prevent what happened from occurring again. We will apologise and put right what went wrong. If you have lost out as a result of our mistake we will as best as we can put you back in the position you would have been had it not been for our error.

If your complaints we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Secretary of the Centre at [icel@tcd.ie](mailto:icel@tcd.ie).

## **WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU**

In times of trouble or distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined. We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected.

However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence.

**The Board of the ICEL  
28 October 2021**