Hughes Hall
Code of Practice for Student Grievances
adopted 3 July 2014

1. Principles

1.1. In this code, ‘complaint’ means ‘grievance brought by a college student’ and ‘complainant’ refers to the student, without prejudice concerning the validity of the grievance.

1.2. This code covers complaints about any matters under the control of the College which affect the academic progress or personal wellbeing of any student(s). Complaints about matters not under the control of the College must be taken elsewhere.

1.3. This code covers matters of personal grievance, not matters of College policy. The latter should be raised through the MCR, whose President and other committee members sit *ex officio* on College Council and other committees.

1.4. The College seeks to provide fair procedures for examining and resolving complaints, and to ensure that these are free from bias due to conflict of interest or other reasons.

1.5. No student will be disadvantaged by making a genuine complaint. However, the College expects that students will not make frivolous, vexatious or malicious complaints and may take action against any such offences.

1.6. If a complainant requests confidentiality, this will be respected as far as possible in the investigation of the complaint. Investigation often requires sharing necessary details with relevant people, but the complainant will be kept informed of this throughout the process.

1.7. Students are welcome to seek advice as appropriate from relevant people, including:
   - the Domestic Bursar, their Tutor or the Senior Tutor
   - MCR Committee members, e.g. President or Welfare Officer
   - CUSU or Graduate Union
   - Director of Studies (BA, etc), Course Director (Masters) or Supervisor (PhD)

   However, the College maintains the right to follow its own procedures.

1.8. There are three stages for resolving a complaint: informal, formal and appeal. It is hoped that most complaints can be resolved at the informal stage.

2. Informal Stage

2.1. If the matter concerns housekeeping, maintenance, catering, portering or college grounds, the complainant should speak first to the Domestic Bursar, who will follow it up informally and report back to the student. If the complaint is against the Domestic Bursar, the student should speak to their Tutor.
2.2 For any other matter the complainant should speak first to their College Tutor, who will follow it up informally and report back to the student. If the complaint is against their Tutor, the student should speak to the Senior Tutor.

2.3 A student should bring their complaint within four weeks of its cause.

3. Formal Stage

3.1 If the complainant is unsatisfied, they may bring their complaint formally. They must do this in writing to the Senior Tutor within two weeks of their Tutor reporting back to them in the informal stage. They must also submit any relevant documentation. The Senior Tutor will acknowledge receipt and conduct an investigation. If the complaint is against the Senior Tutor, or the Senior Tutor has handled the informal stage, the formal complaint should be submitted to the President, who will appoint another senior College member to investigate it.

3.2 The investigating officer will examine the complaint and speak to all relevant parties. Any students summoned to speak to the officer (whether the complainant or others) may be accompanied by another member of the college or university.

3.3 The investigating officer will report back to the complainant within three weeks. Any recommended remedy should be implemented without delay.

3.4 The Senior Tutor will keep records of formal complaints and their outcome.

4. Appeal

4.1 If the complainant remains unsatisfied, they may appeal, on the basis that:
   (a) a significant procedural irregularity occurred, or
   (b) important evidence was ignored or emerged subsequently, or
   (c) the remedy is inappropriate.

   The appeal must be addressed in writing to the President, stating clearly the reason for the appeal. The appeal must be presented within two weeks of receipt of the investigating officer’s decision. If this is not possible, the complainant must give notice of appeal and the reason for requesting a delay.

4.2 The President will then conduct an appropriate investigation into the appeal. They will then make a ruling and convey it in writing to all parties within three weeks. If this is not possible, the parties will be kept informed of progress. There is no restriction on this ruling: it may dismiss the appeal, or it may accept it partially or wholly and may propose a different remedy. This constitutes the final college ruling.

4.3 Any further appeal must be addressed to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, see www.oiahe.org.uk.