



## THE NATIONAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT

186 Jones Road, Falmouth, MA 02540 | 800-838-2580 | f: 800-838-2581 | [www.ngs.edu](http://www.ngs.edu)

### NGS STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

#### **Student Grievance Procedure:**

**Informal Stage:** Students who wish to file a complaint alleging that a violation of NGS policy has caused them personal injury or harm should contact the Student Services department at the NGS administration offices within one month of the occurrence. Email: [studentservices@ngs.edu](mailto:studentservices@ngs.edu).

An appropriate NGS staff member will be designated to first hear the complaint. He or she will investigate the complaint and give guidance to the complainant and if mutually agreeable, arrange for a written statement or agreement to resolve the matter. If resolution that is satisfactory to all parties cannot be reached at this point, the complainant may proceed to the formal stage.

**Formal Stage:** The formal process begins with the complainant filing the complaint with the Director Standards of Practice and Accreditation. Upon the receipt of a formal written complaint, the Director will refer the matter, along with the informal stage findings and recommendations, to a formal hearing committee appointed by the President to hear the complaint.

If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the school grievance process, they are encouraged to enter the ombudsman process by contacting the International Ombudsman Association, 390 Amwell Road, Suite 402, Hillsborough, NJ 08844, phone 908-359-0246, <http://www.ombudsassociation.org/contact>. Students seeking assistance with strict confidentiality may begin initially with the formal stage, affording the Standards of Practice, Confidentiality 3.1

“The Ombudsman holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence and takes all reasonable steps to safeguard confidentiality, including the following:

**The Ombudsman does not disclose confidential communications unless given permission to do so in the course of informal discussions with the Ombudsman, and even then at the sole discretion of the Ombudsman; the Ombudsman does not reveal, and must not be required to reveal, the identity of any individual contacting the Ombudsman Office, nor does the Ombudsman reveal information provided in confidence that could lead to the identification of any individual contacting the Ombudsman Office, without that individual’s express permission; the Ombudsman takes specific action related to an individual’s issue only with the individual’s express permission and only to the extent permitted, unless such action can be taken in a way that safeguards the identity of the individual contacting**

*Celebrating* **20 YEARS** *of Quality Education*

**the Ombudsman Office.** *The only exception to this privilege of confidentiality is where there appears to be imminent risk of serious harm, and where there is no other reasonable option. Whether this risk exists is a determination to be made by the Ombudsman.*” (Journal of the International Ombudsman Association, 2011, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 6)

Upon Ombudsman notice of a formal complaint to the President, the matter, along with the informal stage findings and recommendations, will be referred to a formal hearing committee appointed by the President to hear the complaint. The hearing committee will receive all information presented by the parties or the investigating official and recommend its findings to the President.

Students attending classes in Florida who are not satisfied with the findings of NGS shall contact the Executive Director, Commission for Independent Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1414, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400, (888) 224-6684.

Students attending classes in Texas who are not satisfied with the findings of NGS shall contact the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The web address for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s Student Complaints pages with forms and a description of the complaint procedure is: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=051F93F5-03D4-9CCE-40FA9F46F2CD3C9D>. The web address for the rules governing student complaints – Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code, Sections 1.110-1.120 is: [http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=5&ti=19&pt=1&ch=1&sch=E&rl=Y](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=19&pt=1&ch=1&sch=E&rl=Y). The link to the NGS Student Grievance Procedure can be found from the NGS home webpage under Current Students, Information for Current Students: <http://ngs.edu/information-for-current-students/>.

Students attending classes in Virginia who are not satisfied with the findings of NGS shall contact Private & Out-of-State Postsecondary Education, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, James Monroe Building, 101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Richmond, VA 23219, (804) 225-2600.

At no stage of this process shall either party have legal counsel present. Effort shall be made at each level of review to keep discussion confined to persons who need to know about the matter, but no absolute guarantee of confidentiality can be given under the circumstances.

Reprisal against any student exercising his/her right to initiate a complaint is prohibited; however, the student must apply civility to all communications. Adherence to this policy is required in the informal and formal stage of the grievance process, as well as day-to-day interactions within the NGS Community. Violation of the civility in correspondence policy may lead to revocation of access to student privileges, immediate and/or indefinite suspension, and an official recording on the academic record.