



# Complaints

*What to do if you're unhappy with any aspect of University life.*

## Complaints

If you're unhappy with any aspect of University life, you can make a complaint.

You can make a complaint as an individual or as a group of students and you should normally make your complaint within a month of the action (or lack of action) that prompted the complaint. Issues will not normally be considered if submitted more than three months since the actions (lack of action) concerned.

It is normally expected that you make your complaint personally; however, you are allowed to nominate a third party to act on your behalf.

You **must follow all of the steps below** when making a complaint.

### Informal Resolution of Concerns

Before submitting a complaint you must always try to resolve your concerns “informally”; that is by raising it with the person responsible either orally or in writing. We would always recommend that you submit your concerns in writing. For your statement you will need to submit;

1. A statement of concern
2. Any supporting evidence

In your statement you need to cover the following;

- the nature of the concerns (clearly explain the situation)
- the remedy sought (and why you feel this is appropriate)

A response to your concerns should usually be provided from the person responsible within fourteen calendar days. If this is not possible, you should be informed of the timescale for the receipt of a full response.

If you are not satisfied with the response to your concerns, then you should submit it to the most appropriate person above them via Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure.

If you don't feel comfortable raising the complaint directly with the person responsible, for example, you are putting in a complaint about an individual member of staff, then you should submit a written complaint, following Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure.

### Stage one

If you are not satisfied with the response to your concerns or if you feel unable to approach the person responsible directly, then you should submit a complaint to the most appropriate person above them.

The complaint should be submitted in writing and should include:

1. A completed form, available [here](#)
2. A statement of complaint
3. Any supporting evidence
4. All correspondence (if any) exchanged during the informal process

Your statement should cover:

- The nature of the complaint
- Informal steps already taken

- Details of the response received
- An explanation of why you remain dissatisfied
- Remedy sought (and why you feel this is appropriate)

You can expect acknowledgement of receipt within 3 working days.

The Head of the School/Institute or line manager for the service shall investigate the complaint or appoint an investigator and will send you a written response to your complaint normally within five weeks (35 calendar days). If this is not possible, you should be informed of the timescale for the receipt of a full response.

In some circumstances, the University may decide to refer your complaint to Stage 2, in which case see below.

As a part of the investigation, you will normally be offered a meeting in person or over the telephone to discuss the complaint. The person about whom the complaint has been made may also be involved, or a separate meeting will be held between them and the investigator.

A Guild Adviser can help you make sure that you are raising your complaint with the most appropriate person. They can also help you to put your complaint together and accompany you to investigation meeting(s) for advice and support.

If you remain unsatisfied with the response you receive at this stage you can then progress your complaint to Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.

## Stage two

If you find the informal response to your complaint unsatisfactory you can then submit a formal complaint to the Chief Operating Officer of the University. Stage 2 complaints must be received by the University within **14 calendar days** of the written Stage 1 response.

If you wish to submit a formal complaint, contact a Guild Adviser who will be able to help you do this.

For your formal complaint you will need to submit;

1. A completed form, available [here](#)
2. A statement of complaint
3. Any supporting evidence
4. All correspondence exchanged during the informal procedure

In your formal statement you need to cover the following;

- Nature of the complaint (clearly explain the situation)
- Remedy sought (and why you feel this is appropriate)
- Informal steps you have already taken to resolve the situation
- Details of the informal response received
- Why you still feel dissatisfied with the informal response
- Conclude by reiterating the remedy you are seeking

You can expect acknowledgement of receipt within 5 working days.

If the Chief Operating Officer is satisfied that you have taken the steps to resolve the complaint informally an investigator will be chosen to look into the situation. The investigator will be a neutral party, with no material interest in the complaint.

The investigator will make a decision about whether the complaint is justified or not and will submit a written report to the Chief Operating Officer, containing any recommendations for resolution. The Chief Operating Officer will then make a decision about what action (if any) will be taken and will communicate this to you in writing.

This process will normally be completed within six weeks (42 calendar days) after the date you received the email acknowledgment from the Chief Operating Officer that your complaint has been received.

## Options for appeal

You can only appeal the decision if you believe that there has been a procedural irregularity during the investigation of the complaint.

You can only appeal on the basis that you are dissatisfied with the outcome if your complaint was referred to Stage 2 by the University, in which case your request must be made within **14 calendar days**.

A Guild Adviser can help you submit an appeal if you feel that you have grounds.

If you have completed Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure and received a Completion of Procedures letter, you can then request a review of your case by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education if you remain dissatisfied.