

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD STUDENTS' UNION

COMPLAINTS

The University of Salford Students' Union aims to provide service of a standard acceptable to all our users. If we fail to do this we want to know about it. This will enable us not only to deal with the specific problem, but also to avoid it happening again.

There is a complaints procedure which sets out how to take up matters either in an informal or formal manner. Although complaints are dealt with confidentially, you cannot make an anonymous complaint.

A complaint could be one of the following type:

1. About the services, facilities or products provided by the Students' Union
2. About the conduct of an employee of the Students' Union
3. About the misconduct or behaviour of a member of the Students' Union using facilities, premises and services or attending events provided by or organised by the Students' Union or organisations associated with the Union under reciprocal or other agreements.
4. About actions contrary to the Constitution, Bye-Laws and Guidance Documents
5. About sexual, racial, homophobic or any other form of personal harassment
6. About or by external organisations, visitors delivering a service for the Students' Union
7. About the elected officers
8. About the Students' Union Media (Student Newspaper or Radio)
9. About the Students' Union Elections
10. By an employee of the Students' Union who wishes to make a complaint or grievance

This document outlines the procedure which should be followed in relation to these complaints and signposts to relevant documents.

HOW TO MAKE THE COMPLAINT

All complaints should be directed to the President of the Students' Union. The President will work with the relevant members of the staff team to fully investigate the complaint.

Where the complaint relates to the President, this should be referred to another member of the elected sabbatical team who shall follow the procedure and responsibilities of the President.

If a member of staff wishes to make a complaint, they should direct it to their line manager in the first instance. If the complaint relates to their line manager they should direct their complaint to the Chief Executive of the Students' Union or another member of the senior management team if appropriate.

If the complaint is in relation to the Students' Union elections, this should be directed to the Returning Officer appointed during the elections and will be dealt with according to the Students' Union Election Regulations.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1

Complaints shall be submitted in writing to the President, who shall respond, or who shall pass it to another Sabbatical Trustee to respond.

A written response will be provided within 10 days of the receipt of the complaint by the President.

Stage 2

If the complainant or complainants are not satisfied with the response from the President or other Trustee, they may request that the President convenes a Complaints Panel, outlining the reason that the response of the President or other Trustee is not acceptable. Such a request should be submitted in writing within 10 days of receipt of the response.

The President is required to convene a Complaints Panel within 15 days of receiving a request to do so. The Panel shall consist of 3 Sabbatical Trustees selected in accordance with the provisions for the selection of Disciplinary Panels in the Disciplinary Procedures Guidance Document. The President shall arrange for a member of the staff of the Union to attend to record the proceedings.

The Panel shall operate in accordance with the following procedure:

- a. appoint a Chair from within the membership of the Panel;
- b. receive copies of the complaint, the response of the President or other Trustee, and the request for a Panel meeting;
- c. the complainant shall present the details of the complaint;
- d. s/he may then be questioned by members of the Panel, and by the President or other Trustee;
- e. the President or other Trustee shall present the response to the complaint;
- f. s/he may then be questioned by members of the Panel, and by the complainant;
- g. further information may be considered in writing, or from other persons attending at the request of the complainant or the President or other Trustee;
- h. such information shall be open to comment by the complainant or the President or other Trustee;
- i. the complainant and the President or other Trustee shall be given the opportunity to make a closing statement, which shall not introduce new information;
- j. the complainant and the President or other Trustee shall then withdraw and the panel shall decide on the complaint.

If the complaint is upheld, the panel shall be empowered to require any Trustee, official, or committee of the Union to take action to remedy the complaint.

In the case of Students' Union Media, the panel shall be empowered to require that the medium responsible shall publish a reply, statement or apology, drafted by the Complaints Panel, in a specified issue or programme of the medium concerned.

Such reply, statement or apology shall normally be of equal size and position as the original item against which the complaint was made, unless the Complaints Panel decides that a lesser size or less prominent position is appropriate. In addition, the Complaints Panel may refer any member responsible for an item against which a complaint is upheld to a Discipline Panel convened in accordance with the guidance document on Disciplinary Procedures.

The complainant and President shall be notified in writing of the decision of the panel within 5 days of the meeting.

Stage 3

If the complainant or President is not satisfied with the decision of the panel, s/he may appeal to the Registrar and Secretary of the University or their nominee, who shall consider the complaint and respond in writing within 25 days.

Stage Four

If the complainant or President is not satisfied with the decision of the Registrar and Secretary or their nominee, s/he may appeal to an independent person appointed by the University Council, whose decision shall be final.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS

Complaints about a Students' Union election should be directed to the returning officer and deal with in accordance to the election regulations

RECORDING AND MONITORING COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be recorded and kept on file, including those, which were resolved without being put in writing. The Complaints Monitoring Form shall be used to do this.

The Chief Executive will make a report once a year to the Trustee Board summarising the nature of complaints received and how they were resolved.

ENSURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROCEDURE

All Trustee Board members will receive a copy of the complaints procedure. Existing and new workers will be introduced to the complaints procedure via induction and training. The procedure will be reviewed annually and amendments should be proposed and agreed by the Trustee Board.

Contact details

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