

COMPLAINTS POLICY



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COMPLAINTS POLICY

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COMPLAINTS POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION AND PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The University aims to provide a high standard and quality of service in the delivery of its academic programmes, services and facilities but recognises that occasionally things can go wrong. When they do, complaints will be properly and promptly addressed and any lessons learned applied to enhance the student and staff experience and that of other users.
- 1.2 This Policy explains how people may make a complaint. There are five stages:
 - 1.2.1 Early Resolution
 - 1.2.2 Local
 - 1.2.3 Ombudsman
 - 1.2.4 Review
 - 1.2.5 Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)
- 1.3 Every reasonable effort will be made to deal promptly and efficiently with all complaints, to investigate them thoroughly, objectively and independently and to seek to resolve them satisfactorily. Complaints will be determined on the balance of probabilities on the basis of the evidence available. If a complaint is upheld, the University will provide an appropriate response including, where appropriate, remedy and redress.
- 1.4 All complaints will be treated seriously but the objective is always to resolve the complaint rather than to apportion blame. The University respects the rights of both the complainant and those of any person complained against. All parties shall be treated with dignity and respect in the application of this Policy. No one should expect to suffer any reprisals for making a complaint in good faith, and any evidence of recrimination should be brought immediately to the attention of the Ombudsman. However, where a complaint is shown to be frivolous, vexatious or motivated by malice, it will be dismissed by the Ombudsman and action may be taken against the complainant including, for students and staff, disciplinary action.
- 1.5 All complaints will be dealt with in confidence with the proviso that enquiries will usually have to be made with others to investigate the complaint. An individual against whom a complaint is made has the right to be supplied with a copy of the complaint and to comment on it. All parties will have equal access to all the evidence that will be used as a basis for determining the complaint (subject to any constraints due to data protection law and policy). Complainants should understand that in exceptional circumstances it may not be possible for confidentiality to be respected, for instance where a criminal offence has been disclosed. Where disclosure is necessary, subject to any legal requirements, the complainant will be contacted before any disclosure to confirm that they wish to pursue the complaint.
- 1.6 The time limits set out in this Policy will normally be followed but where, for good reason, this is not possible, the complainant will be advised of any revised schedule.

2 UNIVERSITY OMBUDSMAN

- 2.1 The Ombudsman, who reports to the Vice-Chancellor, is responsible for the oversight of how complaints from students, staff, third parties and the general public are handled. S/he also advises on how complaints should be raised and handled at all stages of this Complaints Policy. At the formal Ombudsman Stage, s/he is personally responsible for investigating and, as appropriate, determining complaints, acting independently of the University.
- 2.2 A full job description is provided at Appendix 1 along with contact details.

- 2.3 The Ombudsman is charged with identifying any systemic weaknesses that may give rise to complaints and making recommendations to Senior Management, Deans and Directors on changes to policies, processes, procedures and practices that may be required to address them.
- 2.4 The Ombudsman is also the point of contact for all University dealings with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

3 DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the University's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the University

3.1 Academic related complaints

A specific academic related concern about matters that affect the quality of a student's learning opportunities qualifies as a complaint to be addressed under this Policy. These must be raised at the time in accordance with the time limits specified in this Policy. An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on assessment, student progression and awards and does not come under the aegis of this Policy (see Appendix 2 (a) below).

4 WHO MAY RAISE COMPLAINTS UNDER THIS POLICY?

This Policy deals with complaints, both individual and collective, from members of the University (staff, students and governors) and from others external to the University, specifically:

- 4.1 Students registered on programmes of study at the University, including those attending for a limited time. Students on programmes validated by the University but undertaken at another institution may also invoke these procedures once the complaints procedures of their home institution have been exhausted and if the complaint refers to something over which the University has jurisdiction and power to deliver a remedy. Normally, the procedure will be accessed at the Ombudsman or Review Stage
- 4.2 Former students of the University where the complaint relates to their experience as a student or as an alumni
- 4.3 Prospective students. However, appeals relating to admission decisions from prospective students are covered by a separate policy (see 5.2 and Appendix 2 below)
- 4.4 Staff of the University
- 4.5 Governors of the University
- 4.6 Visitors to the University
- 4.7 Members of the public
- 4.8 Other organisations, including contractors working in the University, placement providers, suppliers, customers of the University and other organisations with which the University works.

5 WHAT CAN BE COMPLAINED ABOUT?

- 5.1 Complaints must relate to an act or omission on the part of the University, including its staff and governors.

- 5.2 Some complaints are concerned with issues that are covered by their own specific policy and procedures and are not normally addressed through this Complaints Policy. These are listed at Appendix 2 along with URL links to the appropriate specific policy or procedure on the University's website. Advice on the most appropriate procedure may be obtained from the Ombudsman.

6 ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINANTS

The table at Appendix 3 indicates some potential sources of advice for complainants seeking help in using this Policy. Except in the case of vulnerable adults, those under 18 and those with a relevant mental health condition, complainants are not normally expected to be accompanied at meetings at any of the Stages but they may be if they so wish. Appendix 7 includes a list of people who may accompany them. Attendance by a solicitor is not permitted. In exceptional circumstances, where it is impossible or inappropriate for a student to represent themselves, the Ombudsman may permit a student to be represented by the Student Union, a member of staff or another student. Representation by a solicitor is not permitted.

7 ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE COMPLAINED ABOUT

The table at Appendix 4 indicates some potential sources of advice for anyone who is the subject of a complaint. Except in the case of vulnerable adults and those under 18, those complained about are not normally expected to be accompanied at meetings at any of the Stages but they may be if they so wish. Appendix 7 includes a list of people who may accompany them. Attendance by a solicitor is not permitted.

8 ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

Those dealing with complaints may call on specialist advice for whatever reason.

9 HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

- 9.1 Complaints should be raised as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after the event being complained about, normally directly with the member of staff concerned in the first instance under the Early Resolution Stage (see 11.5 below).
- 9.2 Working days throughout this Policy are defined as Monday-Friday, all year round, excluding public holidays and any other day when the University is closed for whatever reason.
- 9.3 The University will not consider complaints that are made more than 20 working days after the events complained about except, at the sole discretion of the Ombudsman, in exceptional circumstances, for example serious illness
- 9.4 Complaints made directly to the Ombudsman or to Senior Management of the University will normally be referred in the first instance for resolution at the Early Resolution Stage to the appropriate member of staff who is closest to the point at which it arose or, as appropriate, to the Local Stage.

10 MEDIATION

- 10.1 At the Local and Ombudsman Stages of the procedure, the complaint may be addressed by means of mediation, including a conciliation meeting. Unless agreed otherwise by all parties in advance, the outcome of any mediation will not be binding.

- 10.2 The person dealing with the complaint may act as mediator or appoint another neutral third party.
- 10.3 Mediation is entirely voluntary for all parties concerned and participants must be willing to engage in facilitated discussion, which aims to seek a suitable, mutual agreement.
- 10.4 In the event of mediation, the complaints procedure will be stayed pending the outcome with all time limits put on hold.

11 EARLY RESOLUTION STAGE

- 11.1 Concerns are most easily resolved if they are raised informally as soon as the problem arises without recourse to the Complaints Policy. Dissatisfaction often stems from a misunderstanding, which is why the best starting point is with the person whose actions are thought to be the cause of the problem. When raised in this way, most concerns are quickly resolved with an explanation and solution. Complaints should be raised first under the Early Resolution Stage of the procedure as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after the event being complained about, normally directly with the member of staff concerned in the first instance.
- 11.2 It is recognised, however, that raising the complaint directly with the person being complained about may not always be appropriate and the complainant may, with good reason, proceed directly to the Local Stage (see 12 below).
- 11.3 The person who receives the complaint at the Early Resolution Stage may also refer it to a manager under the Local Stage procedure, for example where they agree with the complainant but are not in a position to rectify the problem.
- 11.4 Collective complaints by students about academic programmes must be raised in the first instance through their student representative at the Programme Committee, or via the Student Union. If use of the relevant representation system has not achieved a satisfactory outcome, or this is not deemed by the Ombudsman to be an appropriate route, this Complaints Policy may then be used, normally starting at the Local Stage with the Head of Department.

11.5 Early Resolution Stage Procedure

Action	By whom	By not later than
Raise the complaint	The complainant	20 working days of the incident
Acknowledge the complaint	The person receiving the complaint	3 working days of receipt of the complaint
Deal with the complaint, including, if appropriate, meet with the complainant; gather any evidence; discuss with other staff involved; and provide a full response to the complainant including an explanation of why the outcome has been decided, details of any remedy or redress agreed (subject to due authority), any apology required and what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome	The person dealing with the complaint	15 working days of receipt of the complaint

- 11.6 Communication may be face to face, by telephone, by letter or by email.

11.7 In the interests of transparency, fairness and integrity, the investigation will be conducted through a process of open correspondence, unless there are pressing reasons for any information or communications to remain confidential. The complainant and those complained about are entitled to see what is being said about them and have the opportunity to comment.

12 LOCAL STAGE

12.1 If the matter remains unresolved following the Early Resolution Stage, the complainant may escalate the complaint to an appropriate local manager – the Local Stage.

12.2 The list attached at Appendix 5 identifies those members of staff who should normally be approached at the Local Stage, listed by the main categories of complaint. These staff may refer the complainant on to a more appropriate member of staff who is better able to deal with the complaint.

12.3 Advice on the most appropriate person to approach at the Local Stage may be obtained from the Ombudsman.

12.4 Local Stage Procedure

Action	By whom	By not later than
Submit the complaint in writing, using the Complaints Form at Appendix 6 (email is preferable). Complainants should copy in the relevant Dean and Faculty Manager/Director of Professional or Academic Service	The complainant	20 working days of the incident; or 10 working days after a failure to resolve the complaint at the Early Resolution Stage, whichever is the later
Acknowledge the complaint, informing the complainant that the Local Stage procedure is in play, and inform the Dean and Faculty Manager/Director of Professional or Academic Service	The person receiving the complaint	3 working days
Deal with the complaint including, as appropriate, meet with the complainant; meet with anyone complained about; gather any evidence; send details of the complaint to any individual being complained about, their line manager and, where a Faculty or Professional Service is being complained about, the relevant Dean/ Director; discuss with any other staff involved; seek to resolve the complaint, for example through mediation; and provide a full written response to the complainant, copied to anyone complained about, any other staff involved and the relevant Dean and Faculty Manager/Director of Professional or Academic Service, including a full explanation of why the outcome has been decided, details of any remedy or redress agreed (subject to due authority), any apology required and what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome	The person dealing with the complaint	15 working days of receipt of the complaint

- 12.5 Following the submission of the written complaint, subsequent communication may be face to face, by telephone, by letter or by email.
- 12.6 In the interests of transparency, fairness and integrity, the investigation will be conducted through a process of open correspondence, unless there are pressing reasons for any information or communications to remain confidential. The complainant and those complained about are entitled to see what is being said about them and have the opportunity to comment.

13 OMBUDSMAN STAGE

- 13.1 Only when the Early Resolution and Local Stages have been exhausted and the complainant remains dissatisfied should the Ombudsman Stage be instigated. It is recognised, however, that there may be occasions where the Early Resolution and Local Stages are not appropriate and the complainant may, with good cause, wish to proceed directly to the Ombudsman Stage of the procedure. In such circumstances, they should contact the University Ombudsman who shall decide, at her/his sole discretion, whether or not to conduct their own investigation into the complaint or whether it would be more appropriately referred to an earlier stage in the Policy.
- 13.2 The Ombudsman must receive the complaint in writing before any action can be taken. Email correspondence is preferred. Following receipt of the complaint, communication may be face-to-face, by telephone, by letter or by email.
- 13.3 In the absence of the Ombudsman, or if s/he is party to the complaint in any way, the Director of Estates and Facilities Services or another officer of appropriate standing will fulfil that function.

13.4 Ombudsman Stage Procedure

Action	By whom	By not later than
Submit the complaint in writing to the University Ombudsman, using the Complaints Form at Appendix 6 (email is preferable) , including full details and supporting evidence	The complainant	20 working days of the incident; or if appropriate, 10 working days after a failure to resolve the complaint at the Local Stage, whichever is the later
Acknowledge the complaint, informing the complainant that the Ombudsman Stage procedure is in play, and inform the relevant Dean and Faculty Manager/Director of Professional or Academic Service	University Ombudsman	3 working days of receipt of the complaint
Deal with the complaint including, as appropriate, meet with the complainant; meet with anyone complained about; gather any evidence; review correspondence between the parties; send details of the complaint to any individual being complained about, their line manager and, where a Faculty or Professional Service is being complained about, the relevant Dean/–Director; seek to resolve the complaint, for example through mediation; and provide a full written response to the complainant, copied to anyone complained about, any other staff involved	University Ombudsman	20 working days of receipt of the complaint. Complex cases may take longer in which case all involved in the complaint will be kept advised

<p>and the relevant Dean and Faculty Manager/Director of Professional or Academic Service, including a full explanation of why the outcome has been decided, details off any remedy or redress agreed (subject to due authority), any apology required and what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome</p>		
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- 13.5 The Ombudsman will deal with the complaint, attempting to resolve it by a means appropriate to its nature and circumstance. Such means may include negotiation with the complainant, appropriate members of staff and any others concerned and mediation.
- 13.6 The Ombudsman may decide that it is necessary to hold a formal hearing. All parties involved with the complaint may be required to attend any such hearing including those against whom a complaint is made.
- 13.7 In any meetings with the Ombudsman, the interested parties may be accompanied. A list of those who may accompany them is provided at Appendix 7. In exceptional circumstances and at her/his sole discretion, the University Ombudsman may vary the permitted categories. Attendance by a solicitor is not permitted.
- 13.8 At her/his sole discretion, the University Ombudsman may require other staff or students of the University to attend and any other people associated with the complaint.
- 13.9 In the interests of transparency, fairness and integrity, the investigation will be conducted through a process of open correspondence, unless there are pressing reasons for any information or communications to remain confidential. The complainant and those complained about are entitled to see what is being said about them and have the opportunity to comment.

14 OUTCOMES

13.11.1 At all stages, Early Resolution, Local and Ombudsman, possible outcomes include:

- (a) The complaint is upheld in whole or part
- (b) The complaint is dismissed in whole or in part
- (c) The complaint is dismissed and, if it is judged to be trivial, vexatious or malicious, action against the complainant may be taken
- (d) The matter is referred for consideration under another University policy or procedure (e.g. Dignity at Work, Grievance Policy or the Student Disciplinary Regulations)
- (e) The matter is referred to an external agency (e.g. the Police, Environmental Health)
- (f) Any combination of the above

13.11.2 Whatever the outcome, those determining the complaint may make recommendations to the relevant authority within the University on how any lessons learned should be addressed.

13.11.3 No determination shall include a commitment to change any University policy, procedure or process without having the agreement of the relevant authority within the University.

15 REVIEW STAGE

15.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Ombudsman Stage, they may ask the Vice-Chancellor to review the outcome in whole or in part but only on the basis of:

- a) A serious procedural or other irregularity at the Ombudsman Stage that affected the outcome; or
- b) The outcome was unreasonable, plainly contrary to the evidence presented

The Review Stage is not an opportunity to have the complaint re-heard. No new evidence relating to the complaint is permitted at the Review Stage.

15.2 The complainant must request a review in writing, to be received by the Vice-Chancellor within 10 working days of receipt of the response from the Ombudsman. The complainant must include details of why they remain dissatisfied, the resolution they are seeking and any evidence in support of their case relating to 14(a) and (b) above.

15.3 Receipt of the request for a review will be acknowledged within three working days. The Vice-Chancellor will review the case on the basis of the correspondence provided by the complainant and information made available by the Ombudsman. The Vice-Chancellor may decide to seek further information from those involved in the complaint or from any other staff of the University and may choose to meet in person with some or all of the parties involved.

15.4 The Vice-Chancellor shall determine the review within 20 working days of its receipt.

15.5 The Vice-Chancellor may delegate consideration of the review to a Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

15.6 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Ombudsman Stage but not on the grounds outlined in 14.1 above they may to seek a review by the Office of the Independent adjudicator (see 16 below).

15.7 Outcomes

15.7.1 The possible outcomes of the review include:

- (a) The determination is upheld in whole or part
- (b) The determination is overturned in whole or in part
- (c) The request for a review is judged to be trivial, vexatious or malicious and action against the complainant may be taken
- (d) The complaint is referred back to the Ombudsman for further consideration
- (e) Any combination of the above

15.7.2 The Vice-Chancellor will give reasons in writing for her/his judgment to the complainant, to those complained about and to the Ombudsman.

15.7.3 Whatever the outcome, the Vice-Chancellor may, subject to the Articles of Association of the University, take action to make changes related to the complaint.

15.7.4 This completes the University's internal process for addressing complaints under this Policy. The Vice-Chancellor's response will include the *Completion of Procedures* letter that students and ex-students need if they are to seek a review of the outcome by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (see 16 below).

16 PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNORS

Where a complaint is against a governor or a member of Senior Management of the University, it will be handled at the Ombudsman Stage by an authority other than the Ombudsman as follows:

Person complained against	Ombudsman’s role undertaken by:	Vice-Chancellor’s review role undertaken by:
A governor other than the Chair of the Board of Governors	Chair of the Board of Governors, who shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman	The Board of Governors, which may delegate its responsibility in whole or in part to its Human Resources Committee. The Board and/or the Human Resources Committee shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman
The Chair of the Board of Governors	The Board of Governors, which may delegate its responsibility in whole or in part to its Human Resources Committee. The Board and/or the Human Resources Committee shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman	No internal review available. The complainant may seek a review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) – see below
A member of Senior Management other than the Vice-Chancellor	The Vice-Chancellor, who shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman	The Chair of the Board of Governors, who shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman
The Vice-Chancellor	The Chair of the Board of Governors, who shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman	The Board of Governors, which may delegate its responsibility in whole or in part to its Human Resources Committee. The Board and/or the Human Resources Committee shall take advice on procedural matters from the Ombudsman

17 OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR

- 17.1 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education is an independent body established by Government to review student complaints (including former students). Information about the OIA and the procedure for submitting complaints can be obtained from the Ombudsman or from the OIA website: www.oiahe.org.uk.
- 17.2 The guidance below is not exhaustive and may not always be up to date. It must not be relied upon by students and former students to inform their decisions who should instead directly contact the OIA or seek advice from its website.

- 17.3 Only complaints by current or former students may be considered by the OIA and only then once the University's internal complaints procedures have been exhausted and a *Completion of Procedures* letter has been issued. The University's internal procedures are exhausted once a student or former student is informed by letter of:
- a) the outcome of the review by the Vice-Chancellor. The *Completion of Procedures* letter is issued automatically if the determination is upheld. If the determination is overturned in whole or in part, the student or former student can ask for a *Completion of Procedures* letter if they remain dissatisfied; or
 - b) the outcome at the Ombudsman Stage and the complainant has decided not to request a review by the Vice-Chancellor on the limited grounds specified in 14.1 above. A *Completion of Procedures* letter is available on request from the Ombudsman.
- 17.4 For their request for a review to be considered, students must normally complain to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the *Completion of Procedures* letter issued by the University and, normally, the complaint must mainly concern issues that arose not more than three years previously.

18 LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

The University is committed to learning any lessons that may arise from dealing with complaints and taking remedial action where appropriate, especially in improving the student and staff experience. The Ombudsman monitors complaints as well as student satisfaction data from a range of other sources. In addition to immediate action being taken following individual complaints, periodic reviews of complaints and related data are used to inform an annual report from the Ombudsman for consideration through the University's committee system.

19 MONITORING

- 19.1 All complaints raised at the Local and Ombudsman stages shall be recorded and reported on annually to PRC, Senate and Student Academic Council via the Student Experience Committee.
- 19.2 All correspondence, including emails, shall be kept for a period of five years from when the complaint is received.

UNIVERSITY OMBUDSMAN

CONTACT DETAILS

The University Ombudsman
 MB 117
 University of Winchester
 Winchester
 SO22 4NR

complaints@winchester.ac.uk
 1962 826 365
 07841 070 671

JOB DESCRIPTIONTHE POST

Manage the University's complaints system and, where appropriate and subject to the requirements of the relevant policies, investigate and determine student, staff and other complaints, acting independently of the University.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Receive and investigate complaints from students, staff, external organisations and members of the public in accordance with the Complaints Policy.
- Seek to resolve complaints in a fair and independent way, including through making recommendations and through mediation.
- Subject to the requirements of the Complaints Policy and acting independently of the University, determine complaints or make recommendations for their determination to the relevant committee or member of staff.
- Advise and support other staff dealing with complaints as required, ensuring that the Complaints Policy is adhered to.
- Make recommendations to managers on any changes that may be advisable in the light of complaints.
- Monitor and record complaints, analysing the data to identify any systemic weaknesses and make recommendations for action to address them.
- Submit an annual report on complaints for the consideration of the appropriate committees of the University and the Board of Governors.
- Make recommendations for staff development and training that may lessen the likelihood of complaints arising, participating where appropriate.
- Oversee and monitor the operation of complaints related policies, making recommendations for their revision as and when required.
- Respond on behalf of the University with respect to any complaints in the public domain.
- Ensure that the University takes appropriate legal advice when dealing with complaints.
- Act as the point of contact for all University dealings with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.
- Investigate allegations as required by the person to whom a disclosure is made under the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy and procedures.
- Undertake projects to address potential causes of dissatisfaction and complaints as directed by the Vice-Chancellor.
- Such other duties as may be reasonably required by the Vice-Chancellor.

COMPLAINTS ADDRESSED BY OTHER POLICES AND PROCEDURES

Some complaints are concerned with issues that are covered by their own specific policy and procedures and are not normally addressed through the Complaints Policy. These are listed below along with URL links to the appropriate specific policy or procedure on the University's website. For advice on the appropriate procedure please contact the Ombudsman.

- a) **Appeals relating to examinations or assessments or to academic progress or against expulsion or exclusion on academic grounds.**

See instead: [Academic Appeals Regulations](#)
[Academic Appeals Guidance Leaflet](#)

- b) **Appeals related to academic misconduct.**

See instead: [Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

- c) **Anonymous complaints**

Anonymous complaints will not be dealt with under this Policy. It is at the discretion of the University Ombudsman to determine how, if at all, an anonymous complaint is addressed.

- d) **Third party complaints**

Third Party complaints will not be dealt with under this Policy. Students and staff are required to pursue any complaint personally. At her/his sole discretion, exceptions may be allowed by the Ombudsman, for example where a student is ill. Complaints raised by a solicitor on behalf of a client will not be dealt with under this Policy.

- e) **Appeals relating to admission decisions from prospective students.**

See instead: [Appeals by Student Applicants Policy](#)

- f) **Complaints by staff of intimidation, harassment, bullying and discrimination.**

See instead: [Dignity at Work Policy](#)

- g) **Complaints by students of intimidation, harassment, bullying and discrimination by other students.**

See instead: [Disciplinary Procedures for Students](#) and [Harassment and Bullying among students - Guidelines for Support](#)

Complaints by students of intimidation, harassment, bullying and discrimination by the University or its staff should be raised under this Complaints Policy.

- h) **Employment related complaints and grievances made by staff.**

See instead: [Grievance Policy and Procedure](#)

- i) **Complaints relating to the application of the Data Protection Policy**

See instead: [Data Protection Policy](#)

- j) **Staff disclosing confidential information relating to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace, be it of the University as employer or a fellow employees**

See instead: [Public Interest Disclosure \(Whistleblowing\) Policy](#)

- k) **Complaints about student behaviour which may be a breach of the University's disciplinary regulations**

See instead: [Disciplinary Procedures for Students](#)

- l) **Appeals against a decision to rescind the offer of a place or a requirement to withdraw from the University under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy**

See instead: [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) Policy](#)

SOURCES OF ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINANTS

The table below indicates some potential sources of advice for complainants seeking help in using this Policy.

Complainant	May seek advice from any of the following:
Students	Student Services; Student Union; Academic Advisor/Personal Tutor; University Ombudsman
Former students	University Ombudsman
Prospective students	University Ombudsman
Staff	Human Resources. Recognised trade union; University Ombudsman; Dignity at Work Contact
Governors	Clerk to the Governors; University Ombudsman
Visitors	University Ombudsman
Members of the public and other organisations	University Ombudsman

SOURCES OF ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE COMPLAINED ABOUT

The table below indicates some potential sources of advice for anyone who is the subject of a complaint.

Person complained about	May seek advice from any of the following:
Students	Student Services; Student Union; Academic Advisor/Personal Tutor; University Ombudsman
Staff	Human Resources; Recognised trade union; University Ombudsman
Governors	Clerk to the Governors; University Ombudsman

LOCAL STAGE COMPLAINTS

The table below identifies the staff who should be approached under the Local Stage of this Policy for most categories of complaint. The staff listed should be approached in turn in the order listed.

Nature of Complaint	Who to approach
Academic administration (central)	1 Academic Registrar
Academic programmes, including teaching, assessment, administration and facilities	1 Programme Leader 2 Head of Academic Department 3 Dean of Faculty
Buildings (non-residential) , including heating and cooling	1 Building Maintenance and Workshop Manager 2 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Buildings (residential accommodation)	1 Residential Operations Manager 2 Student Housing Services Manager 3 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Catering	1 Catering Manager 2 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Conferences	1 Facilities and Business Manager 2 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Finance	1 Director of Finance
IT	1 Director of IT
Library	1 Librarian
Noise	1 Security Manager 2 Head of Housing and Security 3 Director of Estates and Facilities Services 4 Student Union if from their premises
Parking	1 Security Manager 2 Head of Housing and Security 3 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Postgraduate research including supervision and facilities	1 Research Supervisor 2 Faculty Head of Research 3 Head of Department 4 Director of Postgraduate Research Students 5 Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange

Publicity and marketing, including prospectuses and the University website	1 Director of Communications and Marketing
Research, consultancy and knowledge exchange	1 Faculty Head of Research 2 Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange
Safety	1 Faculty/Departmental Safety Representative 2 University Safety Manager 3 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Security	1 Duty Site Steward 2 Security Manager 3 Head of Housing and Security 4 Director of Estates and Facilities Services
Staff conduct	1 Immediate line manager of the person complained about and then their line manager (s) up to Dean of Faculty/Director of Professional Services 2 Human Resources
Student recruitment and admissions, including schools liaison and open days	1 Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions
Student Services	1 Director of Student Services
Student Union	1 President of the Student Union

COMPLAINTS FORM

All complainants raising complaints at the Local and Ombudsman Stages must complete the following Complaints Form and the attached Equality and Diversity Monitoring form

Family Name:

Forename(s):

Student Registration Number (if applicable):

Programme of Study (if applicable):

Faculty (if applicable):

Postal address for all correspondence:

Telephone:

Email:

Date:

Details of the Complaint:

Please include full details, including information on who, if anybody, the complaint has already been raised with and the outcome (continue on more pages as required)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MONITORING FORM

The University is committed to equality and diversity, ensuring that all its practices are intrinsically fair, including those pertaining to complaints. All decisions will be made with regard only to the circumstances of the case and shall not be influenced by any unlawful consideration of age, colour, disability, family responsibilities, gender identity, marital and civil partnership status, national origins, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, or other inappropriate distinction.

Complainants are asked to provide the following information which will be used only for monitoring purposes, in support of the University's commitment to equality and diversity.

Date of Birth:

Sex: Please indicate your sex: Female Male Prefer not to say

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth? Yes No Prefer not to say

Disability: Please indicate if you have a disability relevant to this employment: Yes No Prefer not to say
*

* If you have indicated 'yes' to the above question, please tell us which category or categories apply to you from below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific learning disability - 51
(e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia) | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical impairment or mobility difficulty - 56
(e.g. difficulty using arms, wheelchair user) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General learning disability - 52
(e.g. down's syndrome) | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf or serious hearing impairment - 57 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social/ communication impairment - 53
(e.g. autistic spectrum disorder, Asperger's syndrome) | <input type="checkbox"/> Blind or serious visual impairment - 58 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-standing illness or health condition - 54
(e.g. cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, epilepsy) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other type of disability - 96 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health condition - 55
(e.g. depression, schizophrenia) | <input type="checkbox"/> Two or more impairments/ disabling medical conditions - 08 |

Ethnic Origin: Please indicate, from the categories below, what you regard your ethnic origin to be:

White

- British – 10
- Irish – 10
- Other White background - 10

Black or Black British

- Caribbean - 21
- African - 22
- Other Black background - 29

Asian or Asian British

- Indian - 31
- Pakistani - 32
- Bangladeshi - 33
- Other Asian background - 39

Mixed

- White & Black Caribbean - 41
- White & Black African - 42
- White & Asian - 43
- Other Mixed background - 49

Other Ethnic Group

- Chinese - 34
- Gypsy or Traveller - 15
- Arab – 50
- Other Ethnic background - 80

- Prefer not to say - 98

Nationality: Please indicate what you consider to be your Nationality:

Religion and Belief :

Please indicate your religion or belief:

- No Religion– 01
- Christian – 03
- Jewish – 11
- Sikh - 13
- Any other religion or belief - 80

- Buddhist – 02
- Hindu – 10
- Muslim– 12
- Spiritual – 14
- Prefer not to say- 98

Sexual Orientation :

Please indicate your sexual orientation:

- Bisexual – 01
- Gay woman/lesbian – 03
- Define sexuality in another way - 05

- Gay man – 02
- Heterosexual/straight – 10
- Prefer not to say- 98

PEOPLE WHO MAY ACCOMPANY INTERESTED PARTIES AT MEETINGS

For any meetings, the interested parties may be accompanied as indicated in the table below.

Complainant	May be accompanied by
Student	Personal Tutor/Academic Advisor; or another member of staff of the University; or an Officer of the Student Union; or another student of the University
Ex-student	A member of staff of the University; or an officer of the Student Union
Staff	Representative of one of the trade unions recognised by the University (UCU and UNISON); or another member of staff of the University
Governor	Another governor
Member of the public	No entitlement to be accompanied
Another organisation	No entitlement to be accompanied
Staff complained about	Trade Union representative; or another member of staff of the University
Manager of service complained about	None