



STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

1 The University of Law's Student Complaints Policy has been informed by the Office for Students Sector-Recognized Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration and has regard to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. These definitive reference points for all English higher education institutions set out how academic standards are established and maintained and how excellence in the quality of learning

- 7.2 Appeals against decisions taken under disciplinary proceedings (these are dealt with under the Student Discipline Policy and Regulations);

19 If a meeting is requested, the Campus Dean/Programme Director, or Director of Service or their nominee arranges to speak with the student as soon as practicable in order to try to resolve the matter.

20 The student can email the University Complaints Officer at any time during the process for information (complaints@law.ac.uk). A record of the outcome of informal proceedings is sent by the relevant member of staff to the Complaints team at its conclusion.

Procedures for dealing with Formal Complaints

21 The student can raise a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process. At the conclusion of the informal investigation stage, students are required to submit their formal complaint (if they wish to progress the matter) within three months of the informal outcome.

22 All formal complaints must be submitted in writing

33 As with the original investigation into the formal complaint, the student may be asked to provide further information. If the student requests attendance at the Panel meeting, and this is approved by the Complaint Appeal Panel Chair, , the student is entitled to be accompanied by a friend or colleague, who can act as a supporter, but who is not entitled to take any formal part in the proceedings. The student is not permitted to bring a legal representative to the meeting.

34 The Complaints Appeal Panel consider the original formal complaint, and the investigation outcome report alongside the complaint appeal form and the reasons for the appeal, as well as any further supporting evidence and narrative the student has provided. The Complaint Appeal Panel will, on the basis of the documents and evidence provided, decide whether the appeal should be upheld (in part or full), or rejected. The Student will receive a written outcome of the Complaint Appeal Panel's decision within 14 calendar days of the Panel meeting.

Complainants will be advised of the date of the Panel which their Appeal will be

- 40 ESFA, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, aims to deal with complaints fairly and proportionately.
- 41 Organisations should investigate a complaint in a full and fair way. ESFA can investigate whether they have done this.
- 42 For full details on the ESFA complaints services and how to contact them please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>

Process timelines

- 43 The timescales for responding to complaints are:
 - 43.1 The University will respond to, and aim to resolve, an informal complaint within 14 calendar days of initial receipt.
 - 43.2 The University will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within seven days of it being received.
 - 43.3 The University will conclude an investigation of a formal complaint and provide the initial outcome report to the complainant within five weeks of acknowledging the complaint.
- 44 The timescales for responding to applications for review are:
 - 44.1 The complainant must submit their appeal within 14 calendar days of receiving their initial outcome report, unless there are appropriately evidenced extenuating circumstances which prevented the complainant from doing so.
 - 44.2 The university will acknowledge receipt of an application for a review within seven calendar days of it being received.
 - 44.3 The university will conclude a review, and the Complaint Appeal Panel will meet within four weeks of acknowledging the application for review.
- 45 On occasion, due to factors beyond the University's control, it may not be possible to conclude the relevant investigations within the allotted timescale, the student will be



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61.3 unexpected expenditure on the part of the student, where supporting evidence is supplied;

61.4 loss of income.

Record Keeping and Reporting

62 The University's Academic Board ensures that a procedure for monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing formal complaints is in place. A report dealing with the handling of such complaints is presented to the Academic Board.

Advice

63 Students who are unsure how to proceed can contact the Complaints Team (complaints@law.ac.uk), who will assist where possible.

Freedom of Speech complaints scheme

64 The University will investigate complaints regarding Freedom of Speech under this policy, within its normal processes. However, the Office for Students operate a Freedom of Speech complaints scheme, in addition to this. Where a student raises a complaint under the Scheme at the same time as engaging with the University's complaints process, a decision will be made regarding staying the University's processes whilst the matter is considered externally.

65 The Office for Students (OfS) operates a free speech complaints scheme. Under that scheme, the OfS can review complaints about free speech from members, students, staff, applicants for academic posts and (actual or invited) visiting speakers. Information about the complaints that the OfS can review is available on its website.

Responsibility for the provision

66 Responsibility for the effective implementation of the Student Complaints Policy lies with the Head of Complaints.

Monitoring and review of the provision

67 Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Student Complaints Policy lies initially with the Head of Complaints. Formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of this provision lies with the Academic Board.

Version history

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	Centre Director – Guildford	Initial drafting group	31/05/13

V1.1	Centre Head – Bristol	QA group	05/07/13
V1.2	External Consultant	Coherence activity amendments	19/09/13
V1.3	Centre Director – Birmingham	Head of Complaints	19/09/13
V1.4	Student Officer	Review	23/09/13
V1.5	VP – AGQS	Review	24/09/13
V1.6	Academic Registrar	Review	25/09/13
V1.7	Academic Board	Approval	03/10/13
V1.8	Registry Officer	Final amendments following proofing	02/12/13
V1.9	VP – AGQS	Chair’s sign off	13/12/13
V1.10	Academic Registry	Review	22/07/15
V2.0	Vice Provost – External a		

		<p>Further details regarding vexatious and malicious complaints</p> <p>Details regarding complaint and appeal timescales</p> <p>Apprenticeship complaints information for the ESFA</p>	
V2.10	Head of Quality Assurance	Amendment to Complaint Appeal process – inclusion of Complaint Appeal Panels rather than Review Officer	October 2023
V2.11	Head of Student Casework	Inclusion of SLA for informal complaints	November 2023