



## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Informal stage**

Many complaints can usually be easily and amicably resolved and as such it is expected that in the first instance, a complainant should follow the informal process as found on our website and copied below.

If you have any concerns about a service that you have received, then you have the right to raise an informal complaint. Depending on your complaint please get in touch with us through the relevant contact as below:

- If your complaint is about any of the below areas, we would ask that you please contact Gavin Boyd, our Director of Membership & Communications on [g.boyd3@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:g.boyd3@ulster.ac.uk).
  - Our UUSU representative structures.
  - A UUSU activity you have attended or taken part in.
  - Is regarding any of our UUSU Sport structures or activity.
  - The service you have received from our UUSU Advice Bureau.
- If your complaint is around any aspects of our physical spaces, or behaviour/conduct within these, please contact Colin Campbell, our Director of HR, and Campus Operations on [cr.campbell@uusu.org](mailto:cr.campbell@uusu.org).
- If your complaint concerns any of our elected officials (full time and voluntary) please contact the UUSU President on [president@uusu.org](mailto:president@uusu.org).
- Finally, if your informal complaint relates to any of the named individuals above, you should contact David Longstaff, CEO of UUSU on [d.longstaff@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:d.longstaff@ulster.ac.uk)

There may be occasions where UUSU deem that an informal complaint is of such a serious nature that it needs to progress the matter under its formal process. UUSU therefore reserves the right to progress informal complaints in this way where this is deemed to be the case.

Anyone who feels dissatisfied following this informal process, or if you feel it should be immediately considered formally, you can proceed to making a formal complaint. No complainant shall be victimised for raising a complaint, however complaints that can be proven to be vexatious will not be tolerated. In addition, anonymous complaints will not be investigated.

### **Formal complaints**

A specific byelaw exists that covers a Members Code of Conduct, and this can be found here: <https://www.uusu.org/about/papers-documents/bye-laws/>. This covers the general membership as well as those in elected positions and will usually be applied where the complaint is specifically regarding a member or an elected official of the organisation. If you make a complaint on this basis, the process detailed in this Byelaw will be followed.

However, if the complaint relates to UUSU staff or services, this should be directed to Colin Campbell, our Director of HR, and Campus Operations at [cr.campbell@uusu.org](mailto:cr.campbell@uusu.org) in the first instance. Your complaint may need to be shared internally to establish the most appropriate way to fully investigate

the matter. If for whatever reason the complaint cannot be shared with the Director of HR and Campus Operations, it should be sent to David Longstaff, the CEO of UUSU at [d.longstaff@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:d.longstaff@ulster.ac.uk). Finally, where a complaint may be regarding the Chief Executive, these shall be made to the President by emailing [president@uusu.org](mailto:president@uusu.org), who, if they cannot resolve the complaint themselves, shall have the power to refer the matter to the UUSU Board of Trustees.

### **Raising formal complaints**

Complaints should be made in writing by completing the relevant form that is provided on the complaints page of our website <https://www.uusu.org/pageassets/complaints/Complaints-Form-October-2022.pdf> or as an [appendix below](#). The complaint must clearly define:

- The reason(s) for complaint.
- The evidence to support the complaint (please attach any relevant documents).
- Any action(s) taken so far to resolve the issue.
- Name(s) and contact details for the complainant.

UUSU will initially consider the validity of the complaint and where appropriate appoint an investigating officer to consider it. The relevant individual investigating the complaint will ensure:

- The complaint is dealt with confidentially except where there is a need to involve third parties for investigative purposes.
- Full records of all complaint investigations will be kept in line with the data retention policy.
- The complainant receives a fair hearing and due consideration of their complaint.
- That any complainant receives the right to be accompanied, if applicable, to any hearing by another full member of the Union.
- Keep all parties up to date with the progress of the investigation.
- Findings are communicated to the complainant within a timely manner.

Wherever possibly investigations will be conducted as quickly as possible and will ordinarily be completed within 90 days.

### **Appeals**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the result of the internal complaints procedure, s/he can appeal and UUSU will usually employ a third-party to oversee the appeal. Any appeal must be lodged within 10 calendar days of receiving the outcome of your complaint. Subject to your consent to share the relevant reports and minutes from the previous investigation, these will be supplied to the appeal body via a member of Senior Management at UUSU. This individual shall have power to act appropriately and will ordinarily deal with the matter within a further 90 days from receiving your consent to share any required documents. This external decision will be final, with no further rights of appeal.

The Chief Executive shall keep a record of any complaints upheld in line with data retention policies and where appropriate shall share anonymously with the Student Executive, Trustee Board, and senior staff to ensure any circumstances around the complaint (wherever possible) are not repeated and learning can be taken from such incidents.

**APPENDIX 1: COMPLAINTS FORM**

You should complete this form with your details if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your informal complaint.

Name:	
Address:	
Student Number: (If applicable)	
Phone	
Email	
What is the reason(s) for your complaint?	
Please give an overview of, and provide, evidence to support the complaint (please attach any relevant documents):	

Have there been any action(s) taken so far to resolve this issue, for example an informal resolution or spoken to anyone within the organisation?	
What is your desired resolution(s) of issue(s)?	
I consent to the sharing of the above information to the extent that is required for UUSU to investigate the matters that are outlined (please delete as appropriate):	YES / NO
Signed:	
Print Name	Date:

Once completed, your complaint should then be sent to Colin Campbell, our Director of HR, and Campus Operations at [cr.campbell@uusu.org](mailto:cr.campbell@uusu.org). in the first instance.