



Document Control

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UUSU Bye-Law 7 – Officer Disciplinary Scheme

1 Officer Bearer Standards

- 1.1 All office bearers are expected to behave in a way that does not bring UUSU into disrepute. They must be mindful of their own health and safety, as well as that of other members of staff, members and University colleagues. They must not act in any way that could be deemed disrespectful to others, aggressive, violent or fraudulent. These behaviours are not exhaustive but illustrate the type of behaviour that may give rise to complaints and referral to a disciplinary committee.
- 1.2 All office bearers will be furnished with a copy of their role description and appropriate training, and they will be asked to meet the expected minimum standards laid out within these.
- 1.3 For the purposes of clarity, full time student officers must also adhere to the employment policies of UUSU – these are in parallel to this procedure and the existing political processes described elsewhere in these documents.

2 Core Process

- 2.1 Student Council shall, at the beginning of its term, appoint a 'Designated Staff Member' who shall be the first point of contact for any complaints made within UUSU. Where student council has not yet met, the default official will be the Operations Director of UUSU.
- 2.2 The above staff member will be clearly labelled on the UUSU website under the 'Contact Us' tab as a clear means for complainants to communicate with the designated individual.
- 2.3 Where a complainant comes directly into an SU Office, a member of staff should take their details and refer these to the designated individual to contact said complainant for an in-depth discussion.
- 2.4 The designated staff member will discuss in detail with the complainant to ascertain the seriousness of the allegations and the proposed course of informal or formal action suggested.
- 2.5 If the complaint can be evidentially substantiated and the complainant wishes for an informal course of action the designated staff member should discuss the complaint with the respondent and offer some informal counselling as to how to improve the behaviours demonstrated.
- 2.6 Informal complaints are not registered against an individual in any formal channel, however multiple informal complaints received in a 12-month period may lead to a formal 'accumulative' approach being taken.
- 2.7 If the complaint is deemed too serious to warrant informal action then the designated staff member should discuss with the Senior Staff Member, the possibility of escalating the complaint to a formal investigation.
- 2.8 Should a complainant request that a formal process is undertaken then the designated staff member will consult the Senior Staff Member to discuss the evidential base for this and decide on the suitable progression of the case within 5 working days from the entry point of complaint.
- 2.9 If sufficient evidence is provided to uphold a complaint, then the formal process will be undertaken.
- 2.10 Once upheld the designated staff member will appoint an investigatory officer who will look into and gather the facts of the case to compile a report and select an appropriate disciplinary committee to oversee an investigation process and decide on the complaint outcome (see section 3).

- 2.11 If after the initial provision of evidence from the complainant a lack of basis is found to substantiate the claim; or further information is found which calls into question the complaint accuracy and/or motives, then the complaint will be dismissed, and no further action taken.
- 2.12 Where a complaint is serious enough to warrant a formal investigation, the complaint will be governed by said formal process outlined.
- 2.13 Formal action may include:
 - 2.13.1 First Written Warning
 - 2.13.2 Final Written Warning
 - 2.13.3 Removal from membership/role/office
- 2.14 Dependent upon the severity of the offence UUSU may deem it reasonable and appropriate to omit the early stages of the formal disciplinary procedure.
- 2.15 An anonymised summary on complaints and outcomes will be available to Student Council on a quarterly basis.

3 Investigation & Disciplinary Committee Governance

- 2.1 On the triggering of a formal process, the designated staff member will convene a Disciplinary Committee receive the report of the investigating officer.
- 2.2 The complaint should be investigated over the 10 working days directly after the formal process has been triggered.
- 2.3 The members of the Disciplinary Committee will be determined based on the role of the respondent, and as below:
 - 2.3.1 Should the respondent hold the role singularly of member of the students' union, a committee comprising two sabbatical officers from a campus other than that of both the complainant and respondent will be formed. The investigating officer will be required to carry out an investigation and make recommendations to the committee.
 - 2.3.2 Should the respondent hold the role of member of the Student Executive, a committee comprising one sabbatical officer, one external trustee, and one student trustee should be brought into session, recognising the sabbatical officers' duties as a UUSU member of staff. On the opinion of the Operations Director, the sabbatical officer may be placed on protective suspension for the period of any investigation. The investigating officer assigned will be required to investigate the complaint and make recommendations to the committee.
 - 2.3.3 Should the respondent hold the role of society member or society committee member, a committee comprising one sabbatical officer (usually the chair of the societies subcommittee of Student Council), one student trustee and the relevant student activities co-ordinator for the campus will be convened. An investigation will be undertaken by the investigating officer who shall make recommendations to the committee.
 - 2.3.4 Should the respondent hold the role of academic representative, a committee comprising the relevant campus sabbatical officer, one student trustee and the Academic Representation Co-ordinator will be convened. The investigating officer shall be responsible for carrying out an investigation and making recommendations to the committee.
 - 2.3.5 Should the respondent hold the role of student councillor, a committee comprising of one sabbatical officer, one student trustee, and the Democracy and Policy Coordinator will be convened. The investigating officer shall be responsible for carrying out an investigation and making recommendations to the committee.

- 2.4 The make-up of a disciplinary committee will be confirmed no later than 5 working days after a formal investigation has been triggered.
- 2.5 At the first or only meeting of the relevant disciplinary committee, in discussions with the designated staff member, a chair will be elected from the panel hearing the disciplinary.
- 2.6 The Designated Staff member shall act as clerk to all disciplinary committees and will be responsible for ensuring members have relevant information relating to the complaint.
- 2.7 The investigating officer shall have the power to request to interview the respondent, complainant and any relevant witnesses, although individuals have the right to decline to be subjected to interview.
- 2.8 A meeting of the disciplinary committee shall be called together to receive the report of the investigating officer, review the investigation and take a final decision on any or no sanctions no more than 5 working days from the end of the investigation period ending. The respondent will be invited to the meeting to answer any questions and make any statements/mitigations on their behalf. The respondent will have the right to be accompanied by a fellow employee of your choice or trade union official.
- 2.9 Should the investigating officer deem at any stage of the investigation that the complaint is of a criminal or safeguarding nature, he or she will convene immediately with the Senior Staff Member with a view to reporting to the relevant authorities. The Committee will be informed of this action as soon as is reasonably possible.
- 2.10 The investigating officer may deem it necessary to refer the complaint to the relevant University Officer, where they feel the issue requires this intervention.

4 Disciplinary Sanctions

- 4.1 The investigating officer will provide a detailed report to the panel for them to form a basis for questioning/decision making.
- 4.2 The disciplinary panel will use the report to dismiss the allegations or make any appropriate sanctions in line with 2.13.
- 4.3 Once a sanction is agreed the designated staff member feeds this back to the respondent and complainant within 5 working days.
- 4.4 If an appeal process wishes to be lodged via either party this should be done as per section 4 covering appeals.
- 4.5 As per clause 1.14 an anonymised summary on complaints and outcomes will be available to Student Council on a quarterly basis.

5 Appeals Process

- 5.1 Once a committee has delivered its decision to the both the respondent and complainant, there will be a 5 working day period when either can appeal against the decision of the committee on any reasonable grounds.
- 5.2 Appeals must be made in writing to the designated staff member outlining why the decision is deemed unacceptable and the rationale to seeking an appeal.
- 5.3 On receipt of an appeal, the designated staff member will convene an appeals panel consisting of one sabbatical officer, one student trustee and one external trustee, none of which would have been involved in the initial investigation.
- 5.4 The appeals panel will have the authority to seek clarity from any member or staff member on any aspect of the investigation carried out or the final decision of the initial committee.
- 5.5 The appeals panel can reduce, increase, maintain or completely remove any previous sanctions that have been decided.



- 5.6 The appeals panel will deliver its decision to the respondent and complainant no later than 5 working days from lodging of the appeal.
- 5.7 The appeal panel's decision will be final.

6 Disciplinary Timeline

- 6.1 Should the process work through to the final appeal stage then the entire process will take no longer than 35 working days, although every attempt will be made to shorten this timeline. This consists of a maximum of:
 - 6.1.1 5 working days to consider the validity/evidential rationale of the formal complaint
 - 6.1.2 10 working days to investigate the evidence related to the complaint
 - 6.1.3 5 working days for the disciplinary committee to reach conclusion on any sanctions
 - 6.1.4 5 working days to feedback the decision to the respondent and complainant
 - 6.1.5 5 working days for respondent or complainant to lodge an appeal
 - 6.1.6 5 working days for a final appeal decision to be reached