



## **STUDENTS' UNION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Everyone at the Students' Union wants our members and customers to be happy with our services. However, from time to time things do go wrong, and you may feel you wish to complain. This document explains what you can do.

If your complaint refers to an Officer, please refer to the Complaints Procedure in the Students' Union's Bye-laws. This is the document which governs the way that we run the Students' Union and sets out your rights as a member. A copy may be obtained from the SU Representation Development office in the Portland Building, University Park.

### **INFORMAL PROCEDURE**

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the Students' Union services, we want to solve your problem as quickly as possible. The best way to do this is for you to talk to a member of staff, explaining what is wrong and what they can do to correct it. They, or their manager, will endeavour to put it right immediately, and will check that you are happy. If this is not possible they will tell you what they are going to do.

If you are still not happy and want to take the complaint further, you will need to follow the Formal Complaints Procedure.

### **THE FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

#### **Stage 1**

Write to the Departmental Manager saying that you are making a formal complaint. Say what your complaint is, with all relevant details including what the situation is and what outcome you would expect on our behalf, your name and how you can be contacted. If your complaint is about the Manager go straight to Stage 2.

The Manager should acknowledge your letter within 5 working days. S/he will look into your complaint and decide the best way of solving the problem. Hopefully you will be able to accept the Manager's guidance.

If this does not resolve your complaint, or if the Manager has not offered a way forward within 15 working days of your writing to the Department, you should go to Stage 2 of this procedure.

#### **Stage 2**

If Stage 1 of the complaints procedure did not solve the problem or if the Manager did not respond, or if your complaint is about the Manager, you should do the following:

Write to the relevant Director. The Department will advise you how to contact him/her. Include in your letter all relevant details about your complaint, why (if relevant) you are dissatisfied with the Manager's findings, your name and how you may be contacted. Where appropriate include copies of any previous letters about the problem.

Your letter must be acknowledged within 10 working days.

The relevant Director will speak with everyone involved and will give you a written reply to your complaint within 20 working days. He/she will be aiming for a solution that everyone is happy with. If Stage 2 does not provide a result that you can agree to, you should consider the next Stage.

### **Stage 3**

If Stage 2 did not give a satisfactory result, an Executive Officers' Panel can investigate your complaint. The decision of this Panel is binding on all parties. To start Stage 3 you must write to the Students' Union President within 10 days of receiving the letter telling you about the result of Stage 2. Your letter must explain why you do not agree with the relevant Director's findings and ask that an Executive Officers' Panel is set up to consider your case.

The Panel will be made up of three people, two members of the Students' Union Executive and the Chief Executive, none of whom should have detailed knowledge of the matter. This means that the Panel cannot include any Executive Officer who may have advised you, or who may be involved in the complaint.

- The Students' Union President will arrange for the Panel to meet no later than 15 working days after this request.
- The Panel will investigate until they are satisfied that they have all the information they need. You may choose to meet them and explain your case. And you can take along a supporter if you wish. If you do this you must explain who the person is to the Panel.
- The Panel must be fair and can take any action they wish to ensure fairness.
- The Panel will reach its decision privately and will either support the earlier decision of the senior manager (Stage 2) or decide something different.
- You must be told what the decision is within 5 working days.

The decision of the Panel is final.