

HOW CAN I APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S COMPLAINTS OFFICER?

Right of appeal to Pro-Vice-Chancellor

If you remain dissatisfied with the Complaints Officer's response, you may appeal within **20 working days** of the date of the decision by writing to the Complaints Officer, who will refer your submission to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Student Education.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor – or their nominee – will only allow appeals on the following grounds:

- any procedural irregularity which has materially disadvantaged you;
- the emergence of new and relevant material that was not available at the time the complaint was first submitted;
- evidence that the judgement of the Complaints Officer was perverse.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) will seek to respond within **one calendar month**. His or her decision will be final, and will be accompanied by the Completion of Procedures letter.

If you do not wish to lodge an appeal within the University or if you are dissatisfied with the decision of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (or nominee), you may consider asking the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review the handling of your case, as set out below.

External review – the OIA

To seek an OIA review of your case, you should first ensure that the Complaints Officer has sent you a Completion of Procedures (or COP) letter, which the OIA requires as proof that you have exhausted the University's complaints procedure. You must send the COP to the OIA within three months of the date of the letter, together with a completed copy of its Scheme Application Form (downloadable from the OIA website), which the OIA will use to assess whether your case is eligible for review under its Rules.

Further and specific details about the OIA can be obtained from the Secretariat (see Who To Contact section) or from the OIA website: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>

WHO TO CONTACT

The University's Complaints Officer is **David Wardle**, who can be contacted at:

The Secretariat

Level 11, EC Stoner Building
University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT

d.wardle@adm.leeds.ac.uk
0113 343 4452

He is supported by **Catherine Cho** and **Oliver Mansell**. They can also be contacted in the Secretariat and on:

c.l.l.cho@adm.leeds.ac.uk or 0113 343 4054
o.j.mansell@adm.leeds.ac.uk or 0113 343 3404

Other useful contacts

You may wish to speak to a member of staff at the **LUU Student Advice Centre**, located on the first floor of the Union building. Their website can be found at <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/helpandadvice/>. (0113 380 1290 or advice@luu.leeds.ac.uk)

If you have any other personal concerns, the **Student Counselling Centre** may be able to help you. The Centre is located at 19 Clarendon Place (0113 343 4107 or stucouns@adm.leeds.ac.uk). (www.leeds.ac.uk/studentcounselling)

Other useful contacts include:

- Taught Student Administration (0113 343 8877)
- Research Student Administration (0113 343 4003)
- Office of Academic Appeals and Regulation (0113 343 3990)
- The Equality Service (0113 343 3927)
- International Student Office (0113 343 3930)



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Dissatisfied? Let us know

A guide to the Student Complaints Procedure



INTRODUCTION

This leaflet is a brief guide to the University's student complaints procedure. Please contact the Secretariat for alternative formats of this leaflet.

For the full complaints procedure, please see www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/documents/student_complaints_procedure.pdf

As part of its strategy, the University of Leeds is determined that you enjoy an exceptional student experience. We recognise, however, that we may on occasion get things wrong. If you have a problem during your time at the University, you should let us know. By doing so, you will help us improve our services to you.

WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

The procedure can be used if you have a complaint about your programme of study or research, or if you are dissatisfied with any other service the University provides. Your complaint might, for example, concern the standard of academic provision; the quality of your tuition or supervision; or the standards of other key services affecting your studies or your general welfare. Broadly speaking, the procedure can be used for all complaints except those you might have about the result of degree examinations and assessments or the outcome of disciplinary procedures.

These are subject to separate procedures – see the Taught Student Guide (www.leeds.ac.uk/qmeu/tsg) or the Research Student Handbook (www.leeds.ac.uk/rds/handbooks.html) for details.

Before making a complaint, you might wish to consult the **Student Advice Centre** in Leeds University Union, whose staff can offer guidance on how to best use the complaints procedure.

HOW DOES THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE WORK?

Local resolution

Generally, complaints are most easily resolved if they are raised at the time the problem first occurs and with the person/s directly involved. Often, you will be able to resolve your complaint simply by discussing it with a relevant staff member, with your personal tutor, or an appropriate course representative. Other issues might suit discussion at your school's staff-student committee.

If you cannot, or feel unable to, resolve your concerns informally, you should put your complaint in writing to the relevant head of school or service. The head, or a nominee, will seek to provide you with a response to your complaint within **15 working days**. (You should expect to be kept informed if, for whatever reason, the school or service is unable to meet this deadline).

Central resolution

If you remain dissatisfied with the local response, or feel unable to resolve your complaint directly with the school or service concerned, you should put your concerns in writing to the **University's Complaints Officer**. Your submission should include:

- the name of your school and programme of study
- details of the main issue of concern

- an outline of any informal discussions which have already taken place
- a summary of the resolution/outcome you are seeking.

The Complaints Officer, or a member of his team, will carry out a thorough investigation of your concerns and will provide you with a written account of any findings.

There will be a number of possible outcomes:

- the complaint may be resolved informally (through mediation or reconciliation)
- the complaint may be upheld
- the complaint may be referred back to the school or service (where local procedures have not been exhausted)
- the complaint may be dismissed on the grounds of there being no case to answer, or where the complaint is judged to be malicious or vexatious ^[1].

The Complaints Officer will aim to provide a response – a reasoned judgement – within **20 working days** of receiving a complaint; however, complex cases will, unavoidably, take longer to investigate with due care and thoroughness. You will, in any event, be kept informed of the progress of any investigation.

^[1] Students making malicious or vexatious complaints may be subject to disciplinary action – please refer to the Taught Student Guide for more information <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/qmeu/tsg/15disc.htm>