

Bye-Law 14: Complaints Procedure for Members

1. Who can make a complaint?

- a. Any Member or group of Members dissatisfied with their dealings with the Union has the right to make a complaint.
- b. UCL students also have the right to make a complaint if they believe they have been unfairly disadvantaged as a result of opting out of Union membership.
- c. Any visitors to the Union also have the right to complain if they are dissatisfied with the service they have received.
- d. The Union and UCL take all complaints regarding sexual misconduct, bullying and harassment seriously. These complaints must be made through the University's "Report and Support" to enable these to be investigated appropriately. Sabbatical Officers will review data from Report and Support regularly with UCL. Members may also report any incidents of hate crime anonymously to the Union's Hate Crime Reporting Centre.
- e. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and promptly, and will be investigated according to the procedure provided below.

2. Informal Complaint

- a. We expect that most complaints will be resolved by an informal discussion about the matter at the earliest opportunity. A Member should therefore bring the matter to the attention of the relevant Service Manager or Sabbatical Officer responsible for the area in question. This may be orally or in writing including the online informal complaint form. The (*insert job role*) can advise on the appropriate person to contact if the person making the complaint is unsure who to contact.
- b. The recipients of informal complaints are responsible for responding to them promptly and fairly. This would normally be within seven working days of receiving the complaint.
- c. This is an informal stage, and therefore no written records would be kept if the matter is resolved at this point.
- d. The Union may suggest mediation as a solution to complaint resolution where deemed appropriate.

3. Formal Complaint

- a. If the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved informally, or if the nature of the complaint is serious, the complainant has the right to raise the matter as a formal complaint. Formal complaints may be made about a service or an individual or group of persons within the Union.
 - b. A formal complaint should be made in writing within ten working days of the incident (or if relevant, ten working days from receiving the outcome of the informal complaint investigation findings):
 - i. By personal letter or
 - ii. Via email or
 - iii. By completing the online formal complaint form
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- c. We appreciate that these timeframes may not always be possible to meet; in these instances, the Leadership Team Executive Assistant should be contacted to agree an extension to the timeframe.
- d. The Union's Advice Service is available to offer support and advice to any Member submitting a formal complaint.
- e. All complaints should be addressed to the Leadership Team Executive Assistant. These will be reviewed by the Chief Executive (or nominated member of senior management) and an appropriate Sabbatical Officer (agreed by the Chief Executive or nominated member of senior management) who may delegate responsibility for handling the complaint to an appropriate person(s).
- f. Where the complaint relates to the Chief Executive or a Sabbatical Officer, these complaints will be reviewed by an external trustee.
- g. Complaints will be considered valid if the complainant:
 - i. Provides details of their name, address, and telephone number.
 - ii. Provides details of the event of occurrence giving rise to the complaint.
 - iii. Raises the complaint within 10 working days of the event or occurrence giving grounds for complaint unless there are exceptional circumstances.

4. Investigation of formal complaints

- a. Complaints will be investigated within 10 working days of receipt.
- b. During the investigation, the complainant and others involved may be asked to provide evidence for clarification and additional information.
- c. If more time is required for the investigation, any delay will be explained to the complainant and they will be kept informed of progress.

5. Outcome of the investigation

- a. The person conducting the investigation will determine:
 - i. all findings of fact and
 - ii. any mitigating circumstances and
 - iii. any appropriate further action if any.
 - b. When complaints are made regarding any Clubs or Societies activity, the person conducting the investigation will prepare a case to be heard by the Activities Network Executive as detailed in the Club and Society Regulations.
 - c. Where complaints are upheld, confirmation of this and that appropriate action will be taken will be confirmed in writing to the complainant by the person conducting the investigation.
 - d. When complaints are not upheld, the person conducting the investigation will advise the complainant within five working days of completion of the investigation. They will be informed of their right to raise the matter with the Board of Trustees for review. The decision of the Board of Trustees in respect of a formal complaint is final.
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- e. The person conducting the investigation may suggest mediation as a solution to complaint resolution where deemed appropriate.
 - f. Any disciplinary action to be taken will be done so according to the relevant Union procedures which includes:
 - i. UCL Disciplinary Procedure for Staff
 - ii. Bye-Laws relating to Disciplinary Procedures for Members
 - iii. Article 37, Removal of Trustees by the Members
 - iv. Club and Society Regulations
 - g. The Union will report annually to the Board of Trustees on the formal complaints received, summarising the volume, nature and resolutions of complaints received. All complaints referred to in that report will be anonymised.
 - h. If a complaint relates to criminal behaviour, the Union may refer the matter to the police.
 - i. If the complaint relates to “misconduct” under the UCL Student Disciplinary Code and Procedure, the Union may refer the matter to UCL.
 - j. Records of all formal complaints will be kept by the Union for 6 years.
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