

Student complaints procedure

The University welcomes feedback from its students. Whilst most of the feedback we receive is positive, we recognise that from time to time problems do arise and students may occasionally wish to express concern or dissatisfaction with aspects of the University or the services it provides. We aim to use the feedback gathered from such complaints positively to help us improve the services we offer and to enhance the University experience for all students

The following circumstances need to be distinguished, one from the other:

- x Student appeal: where a student is dissatisfied with a formal process which has culminated in a decision, for example decisions by examination boards, the outcome of disciplinary procedures, or the investigation of examination offences. The University has in place appropriate internal procedures for appeals to be considered; information is given in student handbooks and in the student web pages www.reading.ac.uk/internal/student/stdserv/home.aspx or available from the RUSU advisers www.rusu.co.uk/advice/
 - x Student complaint: where a student has a complaint against the University relating to the delivery of teaching, support services, administration, facilities, or other aspects of the
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The procedure outlined below applies to Student Complaints

Before embarking on any stage of the Procedure, students are strongly recommended to seek advice from the RUSU Advice Service (www.rusu.co.uk/advice/)

Time limit for raising a complaint

It is generally in the best interests of both the student and the University if complaints are raised as soon as

X Any student who makes a complaint in good faith will not be adversely affected by the fact of the complaint, whether or not the complaint is upheld.

X

All parties are

3. an apology, where it is appropriate to do so
4. the University may deem that it is not appropriate to consider the issue or concern informally, and direct the student to submit a formal Stage 1 complaint within 5 working days.

Examples of reasons why the University may deem that the issue or concern is not suitable for informal consideration includes, but is not limited to:

- a) If a detailed investigation is required;
- b) If the student is seeking a financial outcome;
- c) If it is not appropriate to grant the outcome the student is seeking on an informal basis;
- d) If the complaint is of a sufficiently serious nature.

0.7 Where it is reasonable to do so, or at the request of the student, staff members should issue a written outcome of this stage of the procedure within five working days.

0.8 If the student is dissatisfied with the Stage 0 outcome and the student wishes to pursue the matter as a formal complaint or if the University has deemed that it is not appropriate to consider the issue or concern informally, the student should submit a formal complaint by submitting a Stage 1 complaint form no later than five working days after receiving the Stage 0 outcome. Section 1.1 of this procedure explains how a student can submit a formal complaint.

Stage 1: Raising a formal complaint

1.1 To submit a formal Stage 1 complaint, the complainant must complete the Stage 1 complaint form (www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/Complaint_FormStage_1.doc) and email it to studentcomplaints@reading.ac.uk from their University email account.

1.2 A student may submit a Stage 1 complaint form:

- a. if the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 0; OR
- b. if the University has informed the complainant that it is not appropriate to consider the issue or concern informally, and the University has directed the student to submit a Stage 1 formal complaint, as described in section 0.6 of this procedure.

1.3 A Stage 1 complaint form will only be considered if it is received within 5 working days from the Stage 0 outcome, or within 5 working days of informing the student that the issue or concern is not suitable for informal consideration.

1.4 If the student has not engaged in Stage 0 of the procedure, the Student Complaints and Discipline Officer may refer the student to Stage 0 if it is appropriate to do so. Examples of reasons where it might not be appropriate to consider an issue or concern at Stage 0 are listed in Section 0.6 of this procedure.

1.5 Information to be entered on the Stage 1 complaint form includes:

- x FRPSODLQDQW1V QDPH DGGU University of Wales, WHOHSK student number and programme of study;
- x the nature of the complaint (attaching any supporting evidence where available);
- x an outline of the steps taken to resolve the complaint informally at Stage 0 applicable
- x details of the outcome the complainant is seeking.

1.6 Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged by the Student Complaints and Discipline Office within three working days (subject to the availability of the relevant contact).

1.7 The Student Complaints and Discipline Office will then refer the complaint to the person responsible for the area within which the complaint arose. In the majority of cases this will be the Head of School, the Head of Programme (for HBS students), the Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies (for PGR students), the

1.14 The Stage 1 outcome letter should include:

- x the procedure(s) followed
- x whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld;
- x the remedy for the complaint, if the complaint is upheld or partially upheld;
- x inform the student that they may request a review of the outcome at Stage 2.

The Stage 1 investigation report should include:

- x A report of the complaint and the findings
- x Minutes of any interviews/meetings held to investigate the complaint;
- x A copy of all evidence considered relating to the complaint
- x A copy of correspondence with the student, and any relevant emails between University staff.

1.15 The Stage 1 complaint and the response will be formally recorded, and anonymised details will be reported to the Student Experience Committee.

1.16 If the complainant is not satisfied with the Stage 1 investigation or its outcome, they may wish to pursue the complaint at Stage 2 of the procedure. If the student wishes to request a Stage 2 review of the complaint, they must submit a Stage 2 complaint form within 5 working days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome letter and the Stage 1 investigation report.

Stage 2: Review stage

2.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the Stage 1 investigation or its outcome, they may wish to pursue the complaint at Stage 2 of the procedure.

2.2 If the student wishes to request a Stage 2 review of the complaint, they must email a Stage 2 complaint form (<https://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/stdserv/Complaint-Stage-2.pdf>) to studentcomplaints@reading.ac.uk from their University email account within 5 working days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome letter and the Stage 1 investigation report.

2.3 The complainant should also include:

- x whether the student has been provided with clear reasons for the outcome of the complaint at Stage 1.
- x consider any new information which the student was unable to provide for valid reasons earlier in the process; and
- x consult as appropriate with a view to determining a suitable resolution of the complaint.

2.5 The Stage 2 review will not usually consider the issues afresh or involve further investigation.

2.6 The University Secretary will submit a report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) with a recommendation as to remedy, if appropriate. The Pro Vice-Chancellor will

- x The complainants age, gender, ethnicity and whether the complainant is disabled.
The complainants name shall not be reported if the student considers that this information may make them identifiable, at the request of the student this shall not be reported.

x