

ABOUT

This leaflet is designed to give you more information about the complaints procedure at the University of Glasgow.

Turn overleaf to view a selection of frequently asked questions about representation and find out more information about the correct procedures to follow.



SRC ADVICE CENTRE

If you have a problem or enquiry about any aspect of student life, you can drop in to the SRC Advice Centre for a confidential chat with one of the professional advice workers.

**No appointment is necessary
and the service is free.**

The Advice Centre is run by the SRC which is independent from the University and there to fight your corner in academic matters like academic appeals, complaints, student conduct procedures and other issues.

SRC Advice Centre staff also deal with welfare issues including: benefits/tax credits, council tax, debt, national insurance, tax, housing, student financial support and employment rights.

SRC ADVICE CENTRE
JOHN MCINTYRE BUILDING
UNIVERSITY AVENUE
GLASGOW
G12 8QQ

MON - FRI 11.30AM-4PM

0141 330 5360
advice@src.gla.ac.uk

THE SRC ADVICE CENTRE GUIDE TO THE UNIVERSITY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

2014 EDITION



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN I COMPLAIN?

A complaint under the University Complaints Procedure can be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, action or lack of action by or on behalf of the University. It does not cover academic decisions on progress, assessment or award (these types of decision are covered by the appeals procedure)

It currently also includes complaints about bullying and harassment. The time limit for submitting a complaint is normally 6 months from the date you first became aware of the problem although in some circumstances an extension of up to 12 months may be permitted by the University's Clerk of Senate. GUSRC, the GUU and QMU have their own separate complaints procedures.

The first stage of the University Complaints Procedure is known as "frontline resolution" and this simply requires you to raise the complaint with a member of University staff. This does not have to be in writing although it may be helpful to submit the complaint in this way as this may assist you in presenting your complaint as concisely as possible. If you wish to put the complaint in writing the University has a Stage 1 Complaint form which you can download from their website.

If you feel that your complaint is potentially complex, requiring investigation, or if you are dissatisfied by the outcome at Stage 1, you can request that your complaint be dealt with under Stage 2 of the procedure and you can do so by emailing your complaint directly to the University's Senate Office at: complaints@glasgow.ac.uk It's worth noting that the University may also automatically upgrade your complaint from Stage 1 to Stage 2 if they feel it is complex or requires extensive investigation.

WILL THE SRC REPRESENT ME?

In most circumstances the SRC Advice Centre can assist you with organising your case, and represent you through the investigation. Assistance can vary from simply looking over your argument, to full representation at hearings or appeals. It is important to remember that this is your case, and you have both responsibility for it, and freedom to choose how you would like to be represented.

HOW CAN I COMPLAIN?

The Advice Centre can give you more information, assist you with completing your Complaint Form and, if necessary, represent you. These procedures are listed in the University Calendar at: www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/calendar

CAN I COMPLAIN ANONYMOUSLY?

Anonymous complaints will be considered if there is enough information in the complaint to enable the University to make further enquiries. If, however, an anonymous complaint does not provide enough information to enable the University to take further action, the University may decide not to pursue it further.

It's also worth noting that by putting your name to a complaint you're enabling the University to come back to you if they need more information or clarification on any aspects of your complaint. Make sure you keep a note of the name(s) of the staff dealing with your complaint.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The member of staff you report the complaint to is responsible for investigating the complaint and it may be handled by way of a face to face discussion with you, or by asking a more appropriate member of staff to deal with the complaint.

Frontline resolution (i.e. Stage 1) should normally be completed within five working days, though a resolution may be achieved more quickly. In exceptional circumstances a short extension of time may be necessary to increase the possibility of resolving the complaint at the frontline resolution stage.

This would be decided by the Director of Senate Office and you would be told of the reasons for extending the deadline and advised of the new timescale. The maximum extension which can be granted is five working days (i.e. not more than 10 working days in total from the date of receipt of the complaint).

A stage 2 complaint will be allocated to an Investigating Officer, and should be resolved within 20 working days. Again, extensions may be granted if the Clerk of Senate agrees that this is necessary.

Unless both parties agree to a joint meeting, the complainant and the person(s) against whom the complaint was made will meet with the investigator separately.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The outcome of your complaint will be communicated to you and may be done so face to face, by phone, in writing or by email. The University's response must address all the topics for which the University is responsible, and explain the reasons for the decision. If you have lodged a Stage 2 complaint, you will receive an initial acknowledgement within 3 working days, and will be notified of the outcome as above.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE COMPLAINT IS UPHELD?

A complaint that is upheld can lead to a change in the way a service or department is run, or to a change in supervisory, teaching or assessment arrangements. If the complaint was against a student or member of staff, it will not lead directly to disciplinary action. However, any such cases may be referred for investigation under the relevant procedure. A complaint cannot change an academic decision. If this is what you are aiming for, you should use the Appeals Process instead.

WHAT IF I AM NOT HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME?

If you are unhappy with the outcome of a Stage 1 complaint you can automatically request your complaint be reviewed by a senior member of University staff under the Stage 2 complaints process. The University then has 20 working days to investigate and communicate a decision to you. If you are still not happy after the completion of Stage 2 you can request an external review by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Here again the Advice Centre can provide assistance and support.

USEFUL LINKS

SRC ADVICE CENTRE

www.glasgowstudent.net/advice

GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE COMPLAINING

www.glasgowstudent.net/advice/academic/complaints

UNIVERSITY STUDENT POLICIES

www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/studentcodes/students/complaints/

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

www.spsso.org.uk

