



# Student Complaints Policy

For Staff Complaints please refer to the Staff Grievance Policy

BY LAW of

**CHESTER STUDENTS' UNION**

Passed at Trustee Board on  
26 November 2018

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. It is recognised that occasionally an individual may wish to complain about the services or treatment they have received from Chester Students' Union. Where possible this should be dealt informally with the individuals concerned, but where this is not possible, or does not produce a satisfactory outcome, this policy sets out the procedure for formal complaints.
- 1.2. Any complaints regarding the elections or referendum should be raised with the Returning Officer, in accordance with the Election Regulations.
- 1.3. Complainants should note that Chester Students' Union is an independent organisation and not a department of the University, or branch of the National Union of Students. Therefore, complaints can only be addressed to the company itself, and not to any third party organisations.

## **2. Submitting a Complaint**

- 2.1. A complaint should be submitted using the complaint form (Appendix A) to the department manager.
- 2.2. If the complaint is about the department manager, the complaint should be submitted to the CEO who will assign an appropriate alternative manager.
- 2.3. If the complaint is about the CEO, the complaint should be submitted to the President.
- 2.4. If the Manager has any conflict of interest in the complaint, then another suitable Manager will be assigned by the CEO.
- 2.5. The complaint should be submitted as soon as possible after the issue so that the Union can take swift investigation and remedial actions as necessary. It must be submitted within 3 months of the issue taking place.

## **3. Investigating the Complaint**

- 3.1. The Manager receiving the complaint will acknowledge receipt within 5 calendar days, and inform the complainant of the procedure.
- 3.2. Depending upon the nature of the complaint, it may be necessary to immediately refer the complaint to an alternative policy or procedure, for example:
  - 3.2.1. the Staff Disciplinary Policy if the complaint is an allegation of misconduct by a Union staff member;
  - 3.2.2. the Trustee Board if the complaint is regarding a Union policy or procedure;
  - 3.2.3. the Membership Disciplinary Process if the complaint is regarding the actions of another student;
  - 3.2.4. the Articles of Association if the complaint is regarding a member(s) of the Trustee Board;
  - 3.2.5. the complainant will be written to explain the change in procedure and the reasons why.
- 3.2. The Manager will fully investigate and evaluate the complaint, gathering as much evidence together as possible which may include CCTV, witness statements, verbal accounts, further information from the complainant etc.
- 3.4. The Manager will endeavour to respond to the matters within the complaint within a reasonable timescale, with due regard for the individualism of each situation.

## **4. Outcomes**

- 4.1. Following the investigation, the complainant will be informed of the outcome, and any actions taken as a result, where appropriate. They will also be informed of the appeals procedure.

4.2. The Manager may make appropriate recommendations following the complaint to any relevant part of the Union, via the CEO.

## **5. Appeal**

5.1. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they may request an appeal within 7 calendar days of receiving the outcome.

5.2. The appeal will be investigated by the CEO and a member of the Trustee Board not involved in the original decision, or in any case where the CEO was a party to the original complaint it will be heard by 2 members of the Trustee Board.

5.3. The complainant will be written to and informed of the decision of the appeal and any actions that are being taken as a result.

## **6. Review**

6.1. If a student remains dissatisfied, they may request the University to review the matter. The review will be in respect of procedural matters only.

6.2. Requests for review should be submitted to the Secretary to the University Council not later than ten working days after notification of the decision of which the student seeks review.

6.3. The University Secretary may conduct the review or may appoint an appropriate independent person to do so.

6.4. Having reviewed the complaint the University Secretary or other independent person (as the case may be) will inform the complainant, the University and the Students' Union of their findings/recommendations.

