



London School of Social and Management Sciences

Complaints Policy

STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES

Version 1	September 2019
Approved by:	Academic Board (AB)
Next Review:	September 2020
External Reference Points: UK Quality Code, Chapter B9; OIA Good practice framework for complaints and academic appeals	

Other Policies and Procedures Linked to this Policy:

Student Handbook

1. Aims of the policy:

1.1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

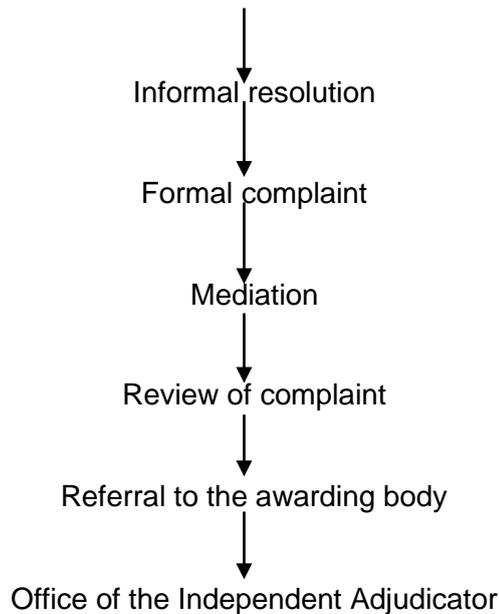
- a) Students can raise any concerns, on academic and/or non-academic matter(s), excluding review of assessment decisions.
- b) The concern is dealt with promptly and effectively by a senior officer of the School (e.g. Head of Marketing or Academic Manager).
- c) Feedback from complaints is an important source which is used in the enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.
- d) The complaints are considered as opportunities for engaging with students and obtaining individual and/or collective feedback on academic and non-academic matters.

2. Who may use the Student Complaint Procedure?

- 2.1. Students of London School of Social and Management Sciences (LSMS) may use this procedure.
- 2.2. This procedure may only be used by a student who is registered with LSMS at the time of making a complaint.
- 2.3. Complaint must be made within 30 working days of ceasing to be a registered student.
- 2.4. Should several students have a common complaint, they may make a collective complaint provided that one student identifies him/herself to act as a spoke person
- 2.5. Where a third party makes a complaint on behalf of a student, the student's consent will be required in writing. All correspondence will be sent to the student as well as their representative unless otherwise agreed.
- 2.6. This procedure does not include academic appeals as they are dealt separately under the assessment decision request review policy.
- 2.7. Anonymous complaints may not be considered unless there are evidence-based reasons to do so. Raising a concern anonymously could delay investigation and communication of the

3. Stages:

Initial complaint or academic appeal



4. Procedures:

- 4.1. A complaint can be raised for any specific concern about the School, including matters relating to facilities, customer services, student support, and/or academic matters.
- 4.2. If a student wishes to lodge a complaint about any concern, it should be first raised informally and immediately with the responsible person concerned.
- 4.3. If a student is not satisfied with the informal resolution, he/she may request a formal investigation within 10 working days of the date of occurrence other than where the student can show a good cause for the delay. The complaint form (available at the School reception) must be completed and submitted to the Academic Manager along with the evidence.
- 4.4. Upon receipt of the form, the Academic Manager will lodge the complaint and a photocopy of the completed form will be given to the student for his/her record.
- 4.5. The Academic Manager will carry out the investigation of all formal complaints including face to face interviews with involved parties where necessary, and will organise a hearing, reach a conclusion and communicate the outcome, normally within 20 working days. If the nature of the complaints should warrant more time, the Academic Manager should seek guidance from the Head of Academic Services. If the complaints are made against the Academic Manager or any other senior official, an independent member of the Principal's Executive Group will carry out the investigation, conduct a hearing where necessary and reach a conclusion.
- 4.6. Where a complaint is upheld, the Academic Manager will take appropriate remedial action and the complainant will be informed of the action taken.
- 4.7. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal investigation, he/she can request **mediation** within 10 working days through the **Student Welfare Manager** who will seek to mediate between the parties.
- 4.8. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal mediation, he/she can request a formal review with the Principal, within 10 working days from the date of the outcome of mediation. The Principal (or any other nominated person responsible for the service concerned) will conduct the review and communicate the outcome

within 20 working days with a Completion of Procedures letter which will confirm that the School's internal procedures have been exhausted

- 4.9. If the student still feels that their concern has not been adequately addressed, he/she has the right to take the complaint to their respective awarding bodies (e.g. ATHE or the validating university).
- 4.10. Following the completion of internal procedures and those of the awarding body or university, if the student remains dissatisfied, he/she has the right to take the matter up with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (www.oiahe.org.uk).
- 4.11. If the student is unable to attend meetings, this will not invalidate the proceedings and the meeting may be held in student's absence unless there is a valid reason for postponement.
- 4.12. Complaints submitted outside of the timescales stipulated in the procedure will only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances and where there is good reason, supported by evidence, for the late submission.
- 4.13. All formal complaints are recorded and the Principal as Chair of the Academic Board (AB) is briefed.
- 4.14. It should be noted that if staff disciplinary action is taken whether informal or formal the outcome will be confidential.

Extract from the UK Quality Code:

- UK Quality Code, Chapter B9:
Expectation of Chapter B9: *“Academic appeals and student complaints:
Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement”*.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

London School of Social and Management Sciences endeavours to give its students a worthwhile educational experience but recognises that things can occasionally go wrong. As such the School has a student complaints policy and procedure which explains how students can raise an issue and the various routes that are available for the student to seek resolution. This includes giving the students the opportunity to raise matters with the external awarding body, currently ATHE.

From 1 May 2015, students also have the right to take their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if they continue to be dissatisfied having exhausted all other options. The OIA is an independent body, external to the College. It looks at whether the College has followed its procedures and whether those procedures were reasonable, and whether the College's final decision on a case was reasonable in all the circumstances.



COMPLAINTS FORM

Please refer to the Student Complaints Policy before filling out this form. This form is to be only used if a student has been unable to satisfactorily resolve the complaint with the staff, students or others involved and wishes to submit a formal complaint.

Name of Complainant:

Student ID (if applicable):

Mobile Number:

Email:

Date of Incident:

Complaint Ref no:

Complaint Against: Facilities/ Customer Services/ Staff/ Student Support/Other: _____
(Delete as appropriate)

Describe in detail the nature of your complaint: Include the names of persons, locations, and dates involved. (Provide supporting evidence if possible)

Please explain what steps you have taken to resolve your complaint informally: Include the names of persons, locations, and dates involved.

Please explain why you are not satisfied with the response you have received:

Describe what actions can be taken in order to effectively deal with your complaint: What resolution would you consider fair?

(Please submit this form to the Academic Manager)

Declaration:

I hereby declare that the information given in this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I am willing to answer further questions relating to this matter if required.

Signature of the complainant:

Date:

Complaint recorded by:

Date:

Note:

1. A formal complaint should normally be submitted within 10 working days of the date of occurrence.

2. The Academic Manager may carry out the investigation of all formal complaints including face to face interviews with involved parties where necessary, and may organise a hearing, reach a conclusion and communicate the outcome, normally within 20 working days.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal investigation, he/she can request **mediation** within 10 working days through the Student Welfare Manager who will seek to mediate between the parties.
4. For further information, please refer to Students Complaints Policy.

For office use only:

Outcome of informal complaint:

Further action taken:

Outcome: