

1. Complaints

- 1.1. uea(su) aims to provide a positive experience for all students, staff and visitors and are committed to the provision of high-quality services and activities. We value equality, diversity and inclusivity and expect individuals to be treated with respect and consideration.
- 1.2. Wherever possible the aim is to resolve complaints informally. Where that is not possible, we resolve complaints using a formal process that includes a thorough and fair investigation.
- 1.3. uea(su) is independent of the University of East Anglia and as such cannot investigate a formal complaint about the University. Similarly, complaints made about the SU to the university will usually be referred to the uea(su) to respond to in the first instance.

2. Informal resolutions.

- 2.1. If a member feels comfortable to, they are encouraged to attempt to resolve their complaint or concerns by talking to the most relevant person. The relevant person could be:
 - 2.1.1. the person you're unhappy with;
 - 2.1.2. the manager of the staff member or service;
 - 2.1.3. or any other uea(su) staff member;
- 2.2. As far as possible, uea(su) staff will work with its members to resolve issues informally. This might include helping members to resolve the problem (e.g. through mediation) or correcting the problem ourselves (e.g. through a refund).
- 2.3. If a member is not satisfied with the outcome of the attempt to resolve their concern informally, or they do not feel safe or comfortable to take an informal approach, they can raise a formal complaint.

3. Formal Complaints

- 3.1. Members can make a complaint about any of the following:
 - 3.1.1. **General complaint** - Any services and activities delivered by uea(su) (including but not limited to its communications, advice(su), venues)
 - 3.1.2. **Staff complaint** - Anything that a uea(su) staff member or uea(su) contractor has or has not done, providing it relates to their role as a staff member or contractor

- 3.1.3. **Complaints about other members** - Anything that a member or group of members has or hasn't done whilst participating in SU activities
- 3.2. The performance of student leaders (e.g. Student Officers, Chair of Council, Course Reps, Faculty reps) within their role is not covered within the uea(su) complaints process.
- 3.3. Where a member has concerns about a student leaders' performance, that is directly relates to their role is dealt with separately under bye-laws 4 and 14.
- 3.4. In all cases complaints should be submitted at www.ueasu.org/complaints. Once a complaint has been received, it will be triaged and allocated to the appropriate department.
- 3.5. All complainants shall receive formal acknowledgement of their complaint within five working days, which should include details of how the complaint will be managed.
- 3.6. uea(su) will normally conclude all investigations relating to a complaint within a further 10 working days. However, if there is a delay for a reasons outside of uea(su)'s control, this may be extended and notice will be given to the complainant of this extension.
- 3.7. The member(s) will receive an outcome of their complaint within the time frame above.
- 3.8. The outcome letter will include:
 - 3.8.1. Information considered as part of the complaint
 - 3.8.2. Relevant details of actions taken to remedy the complaint and/or lessons learnt by uea(su)
 - 3.8.3. Details of the appeal process

4. General complaints

- 4.1. If a member, group of members or member of the general public is unhappy in their services and activities delivered by uea(su), or who claim to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of their having exercised their right not to be an ordinary member are able to submit a general complaint.
- 4.2. These complaints will initially be considered by the CEO and then delegated to the relevant Director, Head of Department or Manager for investigation and to recommend actions to remedy the complaint.

5. Staff Complaints

- 5.1. If a member, group of members or member of the general public is unhappy about the conduct of uea(su) staff they have the right to make a formal complaint.
- 5.2. Once raised, the complaint will be passed to the Director for Shared Services who will implement an initial investigation.
- 5.3. In the event the matter relates to the CEO, the matter will be referred to an external trustee for initial investigation.
- 5.4. The Director for Shared Services or External Trustee(s) as appropriate will be responsible for ensuring that the matter is discussed through the established structures with the staff member(s), in consultation with the staff trade union where appropriate.
- 5.5. Where the initial investigation reveals that a disciplinary matter may have occurred, the normal staff disciplinary procedure will apply.

6. Complaints about other members

- 6.1. Students are encouraged to report incidents of inappropriate behaviour they have either witnessed or experienced either in person or online.
- 6.2. uea(su) has responsibility for the behaviour of its members whilst they are using its services, facilities or whilst representing the Union including at club or society activities.
- 6.3. uea(su) has a set of principles of how it's members should behave and treat one another these principles are known as the Code of Conduct.
- 6.4. A member of the Union can make a complaint against another member, or group of members if they feel that the behaviour constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 6.5. Responsibility for the Code of Conduct complaints sits with the Union's Trustee Board. The Trustee Board shall annually appoint a lay trustee, known in this code as the "Supervising Trustee" to supervise the formal complaints procedure set out below.
- 6.6. The Supervising Trustee is supported by a member of uea(su) staff, the Code of Conduct Lead. The Code of Conduct Lead will gather initial information from the reporter of a complaint and triage the complaint to confirm it is something within uea(su)'s responsibility. This means the complaint relates to an issue that took place:

- 6.6.1. On the Union premises;
 - 6.6.2. While the member is using the Union facilities or at a Union event;
 - 6.6.3. While a member is representing or acting on behalf of the Union at any event of whatever kind and wherever held;
 - 6.6.4. In relation to actions or incidents between two or more representatives of the Union in any or none of the settings above, or in relation to actions or incidents between the Union's representatives and other members, staff or stakeholders.
 - 6.6.5. Any of the above where an interaction or incident is on social media.
- 6.7. If a complaint falls outside the Unions responsibility, member(s) will be supported to make a complaint to an appropriate third party, such as the University, as relevant.
- 6.8. The Union may refer serious breaches of the Union's Code of Conduct that would also constitute a breach of the University's *General Regulation 10: General Misconduct* if it is felt it is the interest of the membership to do so on the grounds of safeguarding.
- 6.9. uea(su) believes in full transparency for complaints within its structures. A member(s) who raises a complaint that leads to an investigation of another member will be given regular appropriate updates including the final outcome. However, due to GDPR there may be some elements of an investigation that uea(su) is unable to share.

7. Appeals

7.1. Stage one

- 7.1.1. If a member(s) is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they have the right to appeal this decision.
- 7.1.2. Stage one appeals should be made, in writing to the Chair of Management Committee, who is a Student Officer, within ten working days of receiving the complaint outcome letter.
- 7.1.3. The member(s) should state the reason for appealing the decision which was made and what outcome the member is seeking.
- 7.1.4. The Chair of Management Committee will consider the appeal along with CEO within ten working days.
- 7.1.5. The member(s) will be provided with a stage one appeal outcome letter.

7.2. Stage two.

- 7.2.1. If a member is unhappy with the outcome of their stage one complaint, they have the right to submit a stage two complaint.
- 7.2.2. Stage two appeals do not consider the original complaint afresh. Instead, stage two appeals consider whether there was any procedural irregularity and/or prejudice or bias in the decision of the stage one appeal.
- 7.2.3. Stage two appeals should be made in writing to the Chair of the Trustee Board within five working days of receiving the stage one outcome letter.
- 7.2.4. The Chair of the Trustee Board, who is a Student Officer, and two external Trustees will consider the stage two appeal within twenty working days.
- 7.2.5. The member(s) will be provided with the stage one appeal outcome letter.
- 7.2.6. Where a stage two complaint is upheld, the Chair of Management Committee and Chief Executive Officer will be asked to reconsider the stage one appeal along with any recommendations made as a result of the stage two appeal.

7.3. Stage 3: Independent review.

- 7.3.1. Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their stage two appeal, they can write within ten working days to the Registrar and Secretary of the University of East Anglia requesting that the complaint be reviewed and determined by an independent person appointed by University Council.
- 7.3.2. The Registrar and Secretary shall consult the Chair of the University Council who shall, unless the Chair determines the complaint to be frivolous, appoint an independent person to determine the complaint and whose decision shall be final and cannot be overturned by referenda.

8. Raising complaints in democratic forums

- 8.1. Only after the exhaustion of the appeals procedure may a member raise the issue in the democratic forums of the Union, in the context of debate on the Management Committee's handling of complaints.
- 8.2. In cases relating to complaints about staff, Bye Law 7 Staff Protocol must be followed. The member shall not refer to the member of staff by name or position and shall not use this as an opportunity to go over the details of their original complaint.

8.3. Given that contractually, staff do not have a right of reply in public or democratic forums, where members fail to abide by this procedure, the matter will be dealt with via the code of conduct and shall be considered as harassment.