

Lincoln Bishop University

Document Administration

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STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

VERSION CONTROL TABLE

<u>Version Number</u>	<u>Date Authorised</u>	<u>Summary of Key Changes</u>
1.0 – 3.0		Changes made pre-new staffing structure
4.0	10 July 2024	Key changes to process and terminology
5.0	07 May 2026	Review of nomenclature and formatting, with feedback from OIA visit in November 2025 addressed within the procedure

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Lincoln Bishop University seeks to maintain high standards both in the quality of the education which it offers to students, through administration and other services which support its academic provision. These procedures set out the steps that should be followed should a student consider that there has been a failure to maintain those standards, which would make it appropriate to make a complaint. They also set out the steps that will be followed in order to investigate complaints and, where they are found to be justified, to identify the action that should be taken.
- 1.2. The Complaints Procedure may be followed by students enrolled on a programme of study offered by the University, those accepted to study with the University (pre-enrolment) or registered for its awards and those who have recently left the University. Complaints by former students at the University will not be considered if submitted more than six months following the completion of their studies (unless extenuating circumstances can be evidenced by the complainant as to why they did not complain sooner. This will be assessed by the Contention Office and if considered reasonable, the complaint will be investigated). Complaints received from people who are not registered students, including applicants to University programmes, are outside the scope of this procedure.
- 1.3. It should be noted that this procedure is available to students in relation to complaints against the University and members of its staff. A complaint relating to an employment matter by a student who is also an employee will be supported by the Human Resources Grievance Policy and Procedure. Complaints against other students may be considered under the Student Disciplinary Procedure, depending on the risk profile of the reported incident.
- 1.4. Complaints about the role of representatives of the Students' Union should be managed through the Students' Union's own Complaints Procedure.
- 1.5. Concerns about a member of staff or student should, if possible, be reported through the University's 'Report and Support' system and will be considered in accordance with the relevant University policy. If, for any reason, a concern cannot be logged via 'Report and Support', it may be raised via the Concerns Register or emailed to regulatorycompliance@lincolnbishop.ac.uk.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 1.6. Complaints made by or against students will be considered under the three key stages noted in this policy: Stage One (Early Resolution), Stage Two (Formal Resolution), and Stage Three (Review). Prior to these three stages, a student may raise a 'concern' which are not logged as complaints but does allow for a quicker institutional response to a present issue.

2. DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

- 2.1. A complaint is defined as an escalation of a concern or expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students, about the University's action, lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the University.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROCEDURES AND CODES OF PRACTICE

- 3.1. A complaint is to be distinguished from an appeal against a decision by the University. In particular, it should be noted that the Complaints Procedure does not cover appeals against decisions made by a Module or Programme Board on student progress, assessment and awards or by a Panel investigating Academic Misconduct, Extenuating Circumstances, Support to Study or a Disciplinary Offence. The procedures to be following in such cases fall under the scope of the following Codes of Practice:
 - 3.1.1. Code of Practice for Academic Appeals
 - 3.1.2. Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct
 - 3.1.3. Code of Practice for Extenuating Circumstances
 - 3.1.4. Code of Practice for Support for Study
 - 3.1.5. Student Disciplinary Procedure
 - 3.1.6. Professional Suitability Policy
- 3.2. A complaint made by an applicant to the University falls under the Admissions Complaints Procedure.
- 3.3. Where a student raises a number of issues that do not all fall within the scope of one procedure (such as a complaint and academic appeal), the University will inform the student of which specific issues will be considered under which policy.
- 3.4. The University will also explain to the student (where possible) the implications of following more than one procedure. This may be of particular importance where one procedure may have to be suspended in order for another to come to its conclusion. In such circumstances, it may be possible (with written agreement of the parties) to consider both matters together and address all issues collectively.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 3.5. Complaints about lawful and free speech may be externally escalated to the OIA (following the completion of internal processes) in accordance with the institution's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech. In compliance with the OfS Freedom of Speech Guidance (Article 24), complaints which relate to free speech will be assessed for validity under this guidance and either processed under the Student Complaints Procedure or closed in triage to the relevant policy.
- 3.6. Complaints about University owned accommodation will be considered under this procedure with the support of the accommodation team and license agreement.

4. EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROCEDURE

- 4.1. In dealing with complaints, the following principles and protocols will be followed:
 - 4.1.1. The University will seek to ensure that the investigation of complaints under the terms of these procedures is conducted transparently and promptly in a way which is fair to all parties concerned.
 - 4.1.2. Every effort should be made to seek a resolution of matters at the 'concerns' stage which may potentially give rise to a complaint. It should be noted that such an Early Resolution (an intervention made within a small time frame not necessarily as a result of an investigation) may be sought at any stage of the process after a formal complaint has been made.
 - 4.1.3. Conciliation meetings (meetings held between the complainer and complainees to address the report) are available to all students and staff within the University as a method of alternative dispute resolution.
 - 4.1.4. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained to a level compatible with the effective investigation of a complaint. The complainant will (where possible) be informed in advance if any disclosure to a third party outside the relevant sections of the University is required in order to progress the investigation of a complaint. Complainants should be aware, however, that any person named as the subject of a complaint will (where possible) be informed of the substance of the complaint and will be offered the right to reply.
 - 4.1.5. Anonymous complaints will normally not be investigated, as anonymity limits the University's ability to obtain evidence and respond fairly. However, the information provided may be reviewed to determine whether any immediate action or referral under another policy (e.g. Safeguarding, Harassment, or Health and Safety) is required. This determination will be made by the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

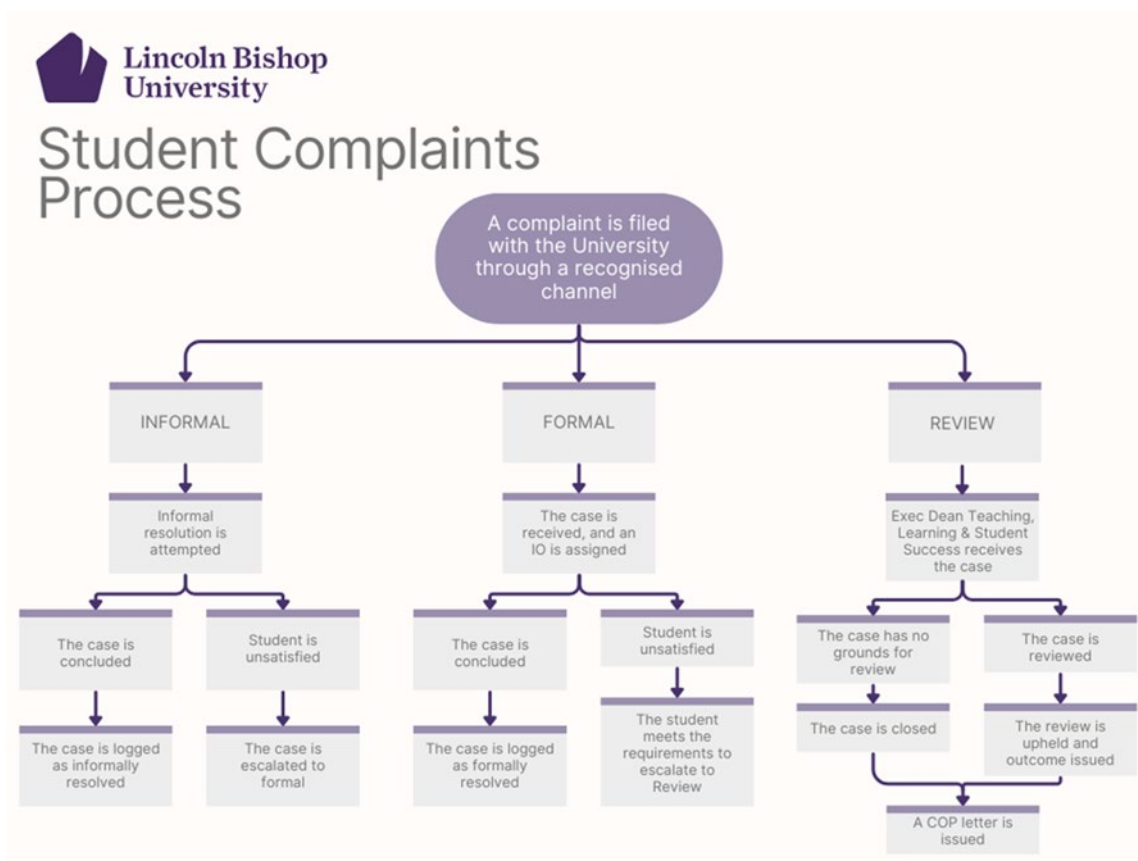
- 4.1.6. Complaints made on behalf of a student by a third party (for example, Students' Union Representative) will not be investigated without the students' express written consent, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. This includes complaints by a parent, spouse, partner, or associate of the student.
- 4.1.7. Where the issues raised may affect a number of students, those students can submit a complaint as a 'group complaint' and in such circumstances, the University can ask the group to nominate one student to act as the group representative. For further information on group complaints, please contact the Contention Officer via email to regulatorycompliance@lincolnbishop.ac.uk.
- 4.2. The University will pay due regard to the interests of those against whom complaints are made. If, on investigation, a complaint is judged to be frivolous, vexatious or malicious, the complainant will be liable to penalties under the Student Disciplinary Procedure and the University may terminate consideration of the complaint. A vexatious or malicious complaint is defined as a complaint which patently cannot be substantiated, or which has been made to defame the name and character of another person. Examples of a frivolous and vexatious complaint include:
 - 4.2.1. Complaints or academic appeals which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive;
 - 4.2.2. Insistence on pursuing non-meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner;
 - 4.2.3. Insistence on pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner;
 - 4.2.4. Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance; and/or
 - 4.2.5. Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value.
- 4.3. No student will suffer disadvantage or victimisation for raising a complaint in good faith under this procedure, regardless of its outcome. Any staff member found to have treated a student less favourably as a result of submitting a complaint may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 4.4. Complaints must be pursued in a timely fashion. Complaints filed to the institution must be reporting an incident or activity which has taken place no more than two months prior to the report. In the event that mitigating factors have resulted in delayed reporting, these must be outlined and evidenced within the complaint for consideration by the Contention Officer. The University may refuse to investigate a complaint if the Early Resolution Stage has not been initiated within two calendar months of the incident which is the subject of the complaint.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 4.5. All complaints will be considered on their merits and in accordance with the University's values, ethos, and relevant policies, e.g. the Diversity and Equality Policy.

5. THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

- 5.1. The procedure for addressing complaints by students are divided into three key stages. The first is the Early Resolution Stage in which an attempt is made to resolve the matter with the member of staff, academic programme or professional service department of the University in which the grounds for complaint arose. The second is the Formal Resolution Stage, which requires an investigation by an authorised senior member of staff. The third and final stage of the institution's internal complaints procedure is a review (stage three). A review is completed by the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success, or nominee. In order for a case to be accepted for review, it must meet the requirements for one or more of the escalations noted in the review section of this procedure.
- 5.2. Impartial advice on the Student Complaints Procedure may be obtained from the Students' Union, who can provide representation for students, or from Student Advice & Wellbeing.
- 5.3. Any and all accusations made as part of a complaint are held under 'Burden of Proof'. This means that all accusations must be backed by evidence to affirm any assertion. If insufficient evidence can be presented, the case may be closed as 'no further action' due to insufficient evidence.



6. REPRESENTATION AND ATTENDANCE

- 6.1. Though this is not an expectation, the student is entitled to be accompanied by one other person, such as a peer, family member, friend, or member of the Students' Union at a meeting or hearing from the Stage One (informal) onwards. If a student does decide to be accompanied, then they must make the Case Officer or Servicing Officer, depending on the stage of the procedure, aware as soon as possible in advance of the meeting.
- 6.2. The person accompanying may advise the student, but is not permitted to speak on their behalf. It is important to hear one voice in order to maintain clarity. The student may, however, declare in writing that they wish for a third party to represent them throughout their complaint. This representative must agree to act in this capacity. In such circumstances, the Case Officer/Servicing Officer should be informed in writing and will then liaise with the third party throughout the investigation.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 6.3. If for a good reason a student is unable to attend a meeting or hearing under the procedure, then the student may make a request to the University that their representative attends on their behalf. In such cases, the hearing will only be required to consider representations submitted by the representative and not any written or oral representations made by the student before, during or after the meeting.
- 6.4. The student must provide the name of any person accompanying them to the University as soon as reasonably possible and must always inform the University immediately of a request to be represented in lieu of their own attendance. Failure to inform the University may lead to the meeting being postponed.
- 6.5. Unless the student has provided written permission for a representative to act on their behalf, resulting in the direction of communications by the University to the representative and not the student, it is the student's responsibility to relay relevant information and communications from the University under this Procedure to any other third party.
- 6.6. All attendees must inform the Contention Officer/Investigating Officer of any requested 'reasonable accommodations' ahead of the meeting. Accommodations will be made where possible to support all access needs.

7. EARLY RESOLUTION (STAGE ONE)

- 7.1. Please note that prior to the start of this Procedure, you may be asked to display where a 'concern; has been raised/logged centrally regarding the incident or student concerned. Similarly, multiple concerns can lead to a complaint or safeguarding investigation.
- 7.2. The Early Resolution Stage seeks to resolve straightforward concerns swiftly and effectively at the point at which a complaint is made, or as close to that point as possible, at the Faculty Programme Area or Departmental level. It is expected that the majority of complaints can be resolved through information means. All informal complaints will be overseen by the Contention Officer.
- 7.3. Where it is clear that a concern will need to be considered at the Formal Resolution Stage, rather than the Early Resolution Stage, the student should be directed promptly to the Formal Resolution Stage of this Complaints Procedure using the form provided in the appendices of this policy.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 7.4. A student who is dissatisfied regarding an academic matter or with another service provided by the University should initially raise the matter with the member of staff (via email) most directly concerned. If this is inappropriate or undesirable, or if their concerns still remain, then the complaint should be raised with a senior member of staff from the Faculty or Department. In the case of an academic programme, this would typically be the Programme Leader or nominee. Students are reminded that many matters relating to academic provision can be raised and resolved through student representatives on the relevant committees. Students can receive further advice and information regarding this advocacy from the Students' Union.
- 7.5. Concerns raised at this stage may be handled by a face-to-face discussion with the student or by asking an appropriate member of staff to deal with the matter. Students and staff are encouraged to consider whether a Conciliatory meeting with an independent member of the University, not related to the Faculty Programme Area or Department concerned would be an appropriate method of resolution. Such meetings can be requested by contacting the Safeguarding, Contention and Projects Officer. For further guidance on this process, refer to the contention guidance page on SharePoint.
- 7.6. The purpose of the Early Resolution Stage is to resolve concerns in an informal and proportionate manner. For this reason, it is not normally expected that a student will be accompanied at meetings with staff during this stage. If the complaint progresses to the Formal Resolution Stage, the student may be accompanied in accordance with Section 6. However, if a student feels unable to meet with a member of staff without support, they should notify the staff member in advance. Once the student has done so, one of the following approaches will be taken:
- 7.6.1. The complaint may be progressed directly to the Formal Resolution Stage, where accompaniment is standard; or
 - 7.6.2. An Early Resolution meeting may be held with one supporting person, chosen by the student (such as a Students' Union representative, family member or friend). This person may advise the student, but is not permitted to speak on their behalf; or
 - 7.6.3. The Early Resolution Stage may proceed without a meeting, if appropriate in the circumstances.
- 7.7. The Early Resolution Stage will normally be concluded in writing to the student. The student will be informed of their right to appeal and a time limit for doing so under the Formal Resolution Stage if they remain dissatisfied.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 7.8. The Early Resolution Stage will normally be completed within one calendar month. If, because of the nature of the investigations required, this timescale needs to be extended, then consideration should be given to progressing the complaint to the Formal Resolution Stage for a more thorough consideration. In such circumstances, the staff member will assist the student in doing so. If the delay occurs because of staff not being available, then consideration should be given to another member of staff handling the issue. If this is not an option, then the staff member conducting the Early Resolution Stage should advise the student of the reason for the delay and the revised timescales.

8. FORMAL RESOLUTION (STAGE TWO)

- 8.1. Where the attempt at Early Resolution fails or where the matter is judged to be sufficiently serious and complex, then the student should write to the Safeguarding, Contention and Projects Officer within 21 days, using the form provided on the University website or via the 'Report and Support' function on the student dashboard, to outline the grounds for their complaint and refer to any supporting evidence. It should give an account of attempts at the resolution made under the Early Resolution procedures and explain why the outcome has been judged unsatisfactory. Complaints invited to indicate what form of redress they are seeking, without any prejudice to any final remedy which may be determined. The complaint will usually be acknowledged within five working days of the receipt of the form and the student will be informed that their complaint has been assigned to a trained investigator from the Senior membership of staff at the University. These individuals will act as the assigned Investigating Officer (IO).
- 8.2. Complaints made against a member of UEG will be considered by the Vice-Chancellor, and complaints against the Vice-Chancellor by a member of the University Council.
- 8.3. The case officer will consider the most appropriate way of dealing with the complaint. Normally one of the following approaches will be adopted, but the IO reserves the right to address the complaint in the most appropriate way they deem necessary.
- 8.3.1. Directing the student to attempt Early Resolution where that has not already taken place. The complaint may be dismissed if the student refuses to do so without providing a good reason for escalation.
 - 8.3.2. Dismissing the case out of hand if it appears vexatious or malicious.
 - 8.3.3. Directing the matter to be pursued under another set of procedures.
 - 8.3.4. Attempting to resolve the issue by correspondence between the parties or negotiation between the student and Head of Programme area of Professional Services Department Manager.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 8.3.5. Offering conciliation meetings between the student and the Faculty Programme area or departmental representative.
- 8.3.6. Further investigating the grounds of the complaint.
- 8.4. If both parties agree to the attempted conciliation, the student, and the member of staff from the Faculty Programme area or department concerned will be invited to attend a meeting with a conciliator, due to the informal and private nature of these meetings. This form of resolution should be agreed by both parties and is conducted by the impartially trained conciliator provided by the University. Should the student wish to attempt conciliation, then the timescales for the handing of the complaint at Formal Resolution stage would be put on hold and would be agreed in writing prior to the conciliation meeting.
- 8.5. Certain remedies such as financial redress does not fall within the scope of the remedies that may be provided through conciliation. If conciliation is agreed by both parties, the conciliator will ask both parties to sign a very brief report/agreement which includes a confidentiality statement. The report is confidential and if an agreement is assigned and then breached by either party then this may be considered under the Formal Resolution stage of the complaint's procedure by the IO, subject to the express agreement of both parties.
- 8.6. Ordinarily, detailed notes of conciliation meetings will not be produced or signed as discussions are private. The conciliator may make their own brief notes, if the issues are particularly complicated, to support the process. The conciliator may also suggest the use of a co-conciliator to assist them; this would be agreed by both parties. Following the conciliated meeting(s), the conciliator will contact the IO and the Safeguarding, Contention and Projects Officer within five working days to report whether or not conciliation has been successful. The IO will then write to the student within five working days of notification to confirm the next steps. If conciliation was successful, the student will be informed that if they have changed their mind and wish to continue the case then they are required to contact the Safeguarding, Contention and Projects Officer expressing their wishes to continue. They should do this within 21 working days of receipt of the letter to request reopening of the investigation.
- 8.7. Students may request interventions at any point of this process. If this is requested, conciliation may continue but will be done so with all pending interventions considered equally.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 8.8. In the event that the outcome of a complaint may lead to a staff disciplinary, it is the duty of the IO to contact the Human Resources Department with details of the case. The Case Officer will gather evidence, but it is expected that the student will provide all evidence that it is reasonable for them to have gathered and provide. This may include medical evidence, such as letters confirming attendance or treatment at a GP or hospital or counselling service reports by professionals such as psychologists or disability advisers, police crime numbers in the case of reported incidents, financial information such as evidence of loss of income (where relevant to the complaint) including bank statements, or receipts or statements of witnesses to incidents where it is safe and helpful to provide these. Such evidence will be managed in a confidential and sensitive manner. Should there be a requirement for such information to be shared with another member of staff elsewhere within the institution, the student will be informed of this requirement and invited to give their consent.
- 8.9. The Case Officer may wish to meet with the student in order to gain a deeper understanding of the case. Though this is not expected, the student is entitled to be accompanied by one other person, under the aforementioned list. If a student wishes to be accompanied, then they must make the Case Officer aware as soon as possible in advance of the meeting – this should be no less than two days in advance.
- 8.10. Minutes of the meeting will be taken either by the Case Officer or a third party. If the Case Officer has arranged for a third party to take notes, the student will be informed ahead of the meeting of the minute taker's presence. A third-party minute taker will not be permitted to speak at the meeting unless this is to gain clarity for the purpose of the notes. Following the meeting, the record of discussions will be sent to the student within five working days to agree them as an accurate record or suggest amendments.
- 8.11. If the Case Officer is able to resolve the issue with the student, then they will write confirming the resolution and informing the student that the complaint is now closed. The student will be informed that they will have one calendar month to change their mind and progress to the Review Stage and of the process for doing so under the Review Stage of the Complaints Procedure.
- 8.12. If, on further investigation, the Case Officer decides that the complaint is without substance, the Case Officer will write to the student informing them that the complaint has been dismissed. The student will be informed of their right to appeal under the Review Stage of the Complaints Procedure and

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

the time limit for doing so. If it is concluded that the complaint is without substantiating evidence, vexatious, or malicious, they may recommend that disciplinary action should be taken against the complainant.

- 8.13. In other instances, the Case Officer will write a report to the student notifying them that the complaint has been upheld in whole or in part. The Case Officer will inform the student of the remedy and timescales for this which have been agreed by the Faculty Programme Area or service Department and where appropriate, member of the University Executive Group, and also indicates whether this includes an apology. The student will be informed of their right to request a review and time limit for doing so under the Review Stage if they remain dissatisfied. If the student does not take the complaint to the Review Stage within the given time scale, then the University will close the case.
- 8.14. The Formal Resolution Stage will normally be completed within one calendar month. If, because of the nature of the investigations required, this timescale needs to be extended; the Case Officer will advise the student of the reason for the delay and the revised timescales.

9. REVIEW STAGE (STAGE THREE)

- 9.1. Where the complaint has been dismissed and the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, or where the student considers that the action taken in response to a complaint which has been upheld to be insufficient, then they may be entitled to appeal to the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success in writing, by requesting a review of the decision within one calendar month of the notification of the outcome of the Formal Resolution Stage. The student must explain the grounds of their appeal and where necessary, provide evidence. A request submitted outside the appeal deadline may be considered at the discretion of the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success. This may only be done within a month from the closure of the case at stage two and must be done in writing featuring evidence of reason for escalation and review. In the event that the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success is unable to take the case they may appoint a nominee, from the senior members of staff at the university, usually a member of UEG.
- 9.2. The grounds for which a student may appeal against a decision made at the Formal stage are as follows:
 - 9.2.1. There was a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the Complaint Procedures.
 - 9.2.2. Clear reasons why the complaint was rejected at the Formal stage have not been effectively communicated with the student.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 9.2.3. New evidence is now available which was not available upon reasonable enquiry or application of the time of the investigation during the Formal stage.
- 9.2.4. The decision reached was of such nature that it was one which no reasonable person could have reached on the available evidence.
- 9.3. The Review stage will not normally consider issues afresh or involve further investigation. A complaint must have been considered at the formal resolution stage before it can be escalated to the review stage.
- 9.4. The Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success may dismiss a request for review in writing to the student within five working days, if they consider the request to be outside the scope outlined earlier in this policy. In such cases, a completion of procedures letter will be issued by the Safeguarding Contention and Projects Officer.
- 9.5. If the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success considered the appeal to be well founded, they will allocate the request for review to a senior member of the university. Normally a member of UEG or nominee who has had no previous involvement with the case. The Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success will normally respond to the student within five working days, detailing the process for the review stage and confirming the identity and contact details of the member of the UEG or nominee who will be conducting the review.
- 9.6. The UEG member will review the information provided by both the student and the case officer from the formal resolution stage and if they find that there may be a case for review, will conduct any necessary further investigation they feel is required. If needed and where this is proportional, the UEG member or nominee may overturn a decision made at the formal stage or suggest alternate remedies.
- 9.7. Though it is highly unusual to consider the case afresh, the UEG member may convene a review panel in the rare circumstances that a case is so complex, or the issues are so contentious that further investigation is necessary to reach a fair and transparent conclusion.
- 9.8. In such circumstances, the UEG member will appoint a Servicing Officer, usually from The Hub, and communicate this decision to the student in writing. The Panel will be chaired by the member of UEG conducting the review and will include two other senior members of staff from the Faculty Programme Areas or Professional Service Departments unrelated to the complaint.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 9.9. The Servicing Officer will notify the students in writing of the identities of the members of the Review Panel and the date and venue of the meeting. The student will also be asked to provide a brief synopsis of their case and any further evidence/witness statements (including names and contact details for verification) if necessary. If the student wishes to attend and be accompanied as provided within this procedure, they should inform the Servicing Officer of the person accompanying and provide all other information requested 10 working days in advance of the Panel hearing. The attendance of the student and requirement for a synopsis and for any further evidence are at the discretion of the investigating UEG member.
- 9.10. The Panel will have access to all previous documentation in connection with the complaint. In addition, both parties' A4 synopsis of their case and any additional witness statements using the agreed forms will be made available to all parties at least five working days before the hearing. The Panel may wish to question witnesses in person at the meeting.
- 9.11. The order of proceedings shall normally be as follows:
- 9.11.1. Introduction of those present.
 - 9.11.2. Outline of the purpose of the review hearing.
 - 9.11.3. Reference to information provided by the Complainant and Section (Faculty Programme Area/Department).
 - 9.11.4. Reference to the synopsis summarising the main points of their case by the Complainant and Faculty Programme Area or Department.
 - 9.11.5. Presentation of not more than 15 minutes by the complainant or representative.
 - 9.11.6. Opportunity to question complainant and witnesses by Panel and Faculty Programme Area or Department.
 - 9.11.7. Faculty Programme Area or Department presentation of not more than 15 minutes.
 - 9.11.8. Opportunity to question Faculty Programme Area or Department representative and witnesses by Panel and complainant.
 - 9.11.9. Complainant's or representative's summing up (maximum five minutes).
 - 9.11.10. Faculty Programme Area or Department's summing up (maximum five minutes).
- 9.12. No new evidence may be introduced in the summing up. The Panel may refuse to hear evidence that it deems irrelevant. It has the power to adjourn the hearing to another date and to summon additional witnesses if it thinks it would be appropriate to do so in order to pursue its investigation. If the

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

student who has been invited to attend the meeting chooses not to attend, a decision will be made on the evidence available to the Panel.

- 9.13. The Panel will reach a decision in private. If the Panel decides that the appeal should be upheld, it may make any recommendations which it sees fit to the Faculty Programme Area or Professional Service Department. It may reject the appeal if it finds that it was unfounded or that the Faculty Programme Area or Department had responded appropriately at an earlier stage. If the members of the Panel cannot agree, the verdict will be that of a simple majority of its members. The brief conclusion and verdict from the panel will be communicated in writing by the Chair to the complainant and to the Faculty Programme Area or Department within two working days. Following the hearing, the Servicing Officer will write a short report of the hearing, which will be approved by members of the Panel. The report will set out the grounds for the complaint, provide a brief summary of the evidence received, and record the decision of the Panel with any recommendations. The report will be prepared within five working days of the meeting.
- 9.14. Following the Review Panel, the Chair/member of UEG conducting the review will consider the feasibility and proportionality of any recommendations of the Panel and where necessary, seek approval from the Executive Dean: Teaching, Learning and Student Success or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) or, if the relevant DVC is unavailable or already involved in the investigation of the case, the Vice-Chancellor.
- 9.15. The student will be sent a copy of the report of the Review Panel, along with a letter from the member of UEG detailing the final decision and any remedy which will be taken if appropriate; this normally takes place within 10 working days.
- 9.16. A copy of this correspondence will also be sent to the member of the UEG responsible for the section (Faculty Programme Area or Department) concerned.
- 9.17. Where the UEG member considers the Appeal without forming a Review Panel, the student will be issued with a letter/report from the UEG member detailing the final decision. Where a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, information will be provided on how and when the University will implement any remedies where appropriate and whether this includes an apology.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 9.18. The Review Stage should normally be completed within 21 working days. Where there are clear and justifiable reasons for extending the timescales at the Review Stage, then the student should be notified in writing of the reasons for the delay and the revised timescale for bringing the review to a conclusion.
- 9.19. The outcome of the Review stage represents the Final Stage of the University's internal procedures. The student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter by the Compliance Office within 28 days of the conclusion of the Review. If the student remains dissatisfied, they will be directed to pursue the matter through the procedures of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Details may be found on the OIA website (<http://www.oiahe.org.uk>) or from:

OIA
PO Box 3362
Reading
RG1 9UF

10. SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS AND APPRENTICESHIP ALTERNATIVES

10.1. Audio Recording

The audio recording of meetings or hearings under this procedure is prohibited, unless permission of those present is given prior to the recording. Transcriptions are often used to aid note taking during interviews and hearings, although this clause may be re-visited in an individual case, subject to such a reasonable adjustment as may be agreed by the University under the Equality Act 2010.

10.2. Remedy

Where a complaint is upheld or partially upheld following investigation at the Formal Resolution Stage, the Case Officer will take steps to ensure that their recommendations are implemented.

Where an appeal is upheld or partially upheld, the member of UEG conducting the review will take steps to ensure that the recommendations of the Review Panel are implemented.

Upon receipt of evidence of expenditure, the University will meet reasonable and proportionate incidental expenses necessarily incurred by a student in bringing a successful complaint.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

10.3. Collaborative Provision

Partner organisations will be expected to have complaints procedures which reflect that of the University. The procedures will be scrutinised for comparability at the time of the approval/re-approval event, and also upon request, e.g. when such procedures are proposed to be amended.

Please take note that in some instances, students may bring complaints to the University where it pertains to a University specific process, or the host institution is unable/unwilling to address concern.

By route of escalation, complaints (where relevant) can be escalated to Lincoln Bishop University, only where the student has exhausted the host institutions' processes.

10.4. Monitoring of Procedures

The effectiveness of these procedures will be kept under regular review by Senate.

The Compliance Office will prepare reports to take to Senate and the Audit Committee on the number and nature of complaints which have been considered under the Formal Resolution procedures and the proportion which have been upheld. Senate will normally also receive anonymised information on the protected characteristics of complainants and the number of complaints which have been upheld or dismissed in each group.

10.5. Apprenticeships

In the event that a student who is enrolled on an Apprenticeship course feels it is necessary to raise a complaint of any kind against their experience, they must follow the standard complaints procedure stated previously in this Procedure.

In the event an apprentice/student has exhausted all internal complaints processes in a complaint related to their study of an Apprenticeship, and they are dissatisfied with the University's response to their complaint under the Review Stage of this procedure, they may request a review of the case by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA will only consider complaints within 3 months of the Apprentice receive the Completion of Procedures letter.

Details can be found on the ESFA website:

<https://www.gov.uk/complainfurthereducationapprenticeship>

OR



STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

ESFA Complaints Team:

complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk

Complaints Team

Education and Skills Funding Agency

Cheylesmore House

Quinton Road

Coventry

CV1 2WT



STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

11. APPENDIX 1 – REQUEST FOR FORMAL INVESTIGATION

Student(s) Legal Name(s):	
If this is a group complaint, please state the name of the Lead Contact:	
Student(s) Preferred Name(s):	
Student Pronouns:	
Students Identifiable Number:	
Term Time Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
Preferred Method of Contact:	
Have you attempted to resolve the sage at Stage One (Early Resolution) of the University Complaints Procedure?	
Have you been referred to Stage Two without an attempt at Early Resolution?	
Member of Staff previously involved during Stage One:	
Initial Concern Raised with:	
Senior Member of Staff from Department:	

Outline of Complaint:



STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Attempted Resolution at Stage One:

--

If resolution was offered at Stage One, why was this unsatisfactory?

--

Desired Outcome of Stage Two:

--

Any Additional Information:

--

As part of the investigation of your complaint, any members of staff mentioned as well as their relevant teams, such as the course team, will be made aware of the complaint. This will include the Head of Programme Area/Director/Programme Leader (or equivalent) whose section is involved.

Declaration

I declare that the information given in this form is true, and that I am willing to answer further questions relating to it if necessary.

Signature:

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Date:

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STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

12. APPENDIX 2 – REQUEST FOR REVIEW

Student(s) Legal Name(s):	
If this is a group complaint, please state the name of the Lead Contact:	
Student(s) Preferred Name(s):	
Student Pronouns:	
Students Identifiable Number:	
Term Time Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
Preferred Method of Contact:	
Grounds for Review:	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedural Irregularity <input type="checkbox"/> Bias or Prejudice <input type="checkbox"/> New Evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Unreasonable Decision
Case Officer:	
Date Decision was Communicated to Student:	



STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Outline of Complaint:

--

Attempted Resolution at Stage Two:

--

If resolution was offered at Stage Two, why was this unsatisfactory?

--

Desired Outcome of Stage Three:

--

Any Additional Information:

--

As part of the investigation of your complaint, any members of staff mentioned as well as their relevant teams, such as the course team, will be made aware of the complaint. This will include the Head of Programme Area/Director/Programme Leader (or equivalent) whose section is involved.

Declaration

I declare that the information given in this form is true, and that I am willing to answer further questions relating to it if necessary.

Signature:

Date:

Signature:	
Date:	