LSESU Overview of Complaints Procedure

**Introduction**

We want students to have a positive relationship with each other and, despite having political disagreements, make sure there is a strong sense of respect and solidarity within the student body. However, sometimes students will want to complain about someone or something in the Union. This guidance will help you work out whom you should complain to, and what you can do to speed up the resolution.

With any complaint, we aim to:

* Resolve the complaint as fairly and as swiftly as possible.
* Deal with the complaint in confidence.
* Keep you updated on what is happening with the complaint.

**Who to contact regarding your complaint – quick guide**

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| Who is the complaint about? |  | Who you should contact |
| Sabbatical Officer |  | General Secretarysu.generalsecretary@lse.ac.uk |
| Part-time Officer |  | Community and Welfare Officersu.communitywelfare@lse.ac.uk  |
| Member of Union staff |  | su.complaints@lse.ac.uk  |
| Student staff |  | su.complaints@lse.ac.uk |
| LSESU Trustee |  | Trustee Board Chairsu.generalsecretary@lse.ac.uk |
| Another student |  | [The School’s Complaints Process](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/comPro.pdf) |
| Chair of a society or sports club |  | Activities and Development Officersu.activitiesdevelopment@lse.ac.uk  |
| Member of the Democracy Committee |  | Democracy Committee Chairsu.democracy@lse.ac.uk |
| Anyone involved in an election |  | [LSESU’s Election Guidelines](http://www.lsesu.com/voice/elections/) |
| LSESU service  |  | LSESU staff su.info@lse.ac.uk  |
| An article in the newspaper or something that happens in the Media Group |  | Activities and Development Officersu.activitesdevelopment@lse.ac.uk |

If you are not sure, send your complaint to the General Secretary at su.generalsecretary@lse.ac.uk & su.complaints@lse.ac.uk.

**Top tip**

Give as much information early in the process as possible. The earlier we know what you are not happy about, and what evidence there is, the quicker we can resolve your issue.

**What happens next?**

Not every complaint is the same or can be dealt with in the same way. Some are complaints about the conduct of a member of staff, which have a very clear process on how we deal with them. Sometimes they are a bit more complex, particularly when it comes to elected officers – as they are covered by a number of different procedures and processes.

When a complaint is received, the responsible member of staff or Sabbatical Officer will enter the details in a log, and forward the complaint to the relevant officer or staff member for initial consideration; these are the 'complaint handlers' for the case.

The complaint handlers will first consider whether the complaint should be dealt with on an informal level, or proceed directly to the formal stages below. At this stage, they will formally acknowledge receipt of the complaint and notify you as to how it will be dealt with within five working days.

**Informal investigation**

**What happens?**

The complaint handlers will investigate your complaint; this may include obtaining written or verbal evidence from you, witnesses, or any other relevant person.

They may then either:

1. Write to you stating that no action is proposed as a result of the complaint.
2. Write to you detailing what action has been taken, or proposed, as a result of your complaint.
3. Decide that the matter requires to be referred to the formal stages below.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, then you have five working days from the date of the Union’s response to request a review of this outcome, giving the reasons why you are dissatisfied. An exception to this time limit may be authorised in the case of a special need, such as illness or disability.

**Review**

The review will be carried out by a panel made up of:

1. Union Director or nominee
2. General Secretary or nominee
3. One further member of the Union’s Management Team

**Formal investigation**

If the complaint is a clear breach of the Union Byelaws or is not resolved through the informal process, it will go to formal process outlined in the Union Byelaws, Section 9.

**What happens?**

If you are involved in a formal investigation, you will be sent through a copy of all the relevant documents including the full LSESU Complaints Procedure.

The individual(s) who the complaint is against will be invited to attend a disciplinary hearing, along with any other relevant witness(es) or complainant.

Typically, the composition of the disciplinary hearing will be at least two members of the Executive, and up to two others, which may include Union staff.

After the hearing the disciplinary hearing will decide on actions and inform the individual(s) within seven working days of the outcome of the panel.

Throughout the complaints procedure, the complaint handlers will try to ensure that you are informed of the progress of your complaint.

**Appeals**

If you have significant new evidence relating to the complaint you are able to appeal to the Discipline Appeal Body. Details of this can be found in LSESU Complaints Procedure and under Section 9 of the Union Byelaws accessible on our website under ‘Your Union' ([www.lsesu.com/yourunion](http://www.lsesu.com/yourunion)).