

LONDON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Complaints Procedures

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1 General Principles

The London School of Business and Management Studies (LSBS) seeks to maintain high standards in the courses, services, and facilities it provides to its students. This policy is concerned with the procedures where any student is not satisfied with any aspect of these provisions. LSBS has established its student complaints procedures to deal with legitimate complaints from students efficiently, fairly, and promptly, and has adopted and incorporated the standards and guidelines set out in the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)'s *Good Practice framework for handling complaints and appeals*.¹

1.1 Addressing complaints

Complaints will be addressed through a three-stage process:

Stage 1 - Early (informal) Resolution

Stage 2 - Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 3 - Appeal and Review

LSBS aims to resolve all Stage 1 and 2 complaints within 30 calendar days from the initial complaint by the student.

No student will be disadvantaged if they raise a complaint. Students may complain individually or collectively, where appropriate, but anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Where a complaint made by a student is believed to be frivolous, fictitious, or malicious, LSBS reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the student.

All complaints will be dealt with objectively and constructively and the student will be informed of the outcome. Where a complaint is upheld, LSBS will respond appropriately, taking any necessary corrective action. This may include an explanation of actions planned or taken and written or oral apologies.

All complaints will be dealt with in confidence with the provision that any person about whom a complaint is made shall be supplied with a copy of the complaint. A student may be asked to attend an interview with the member of staff investigating their complaint.

A record of complaints received from students and the means of resolution will be kept by the Registrar and reported to the Academic Board as part of the School's monitoring and quality assurance processes.

A student may seek advice from the Student Support Team when making a complaint and may be accompanied by another student or a representative as an observer only, in any meeting that takes place in connection with a complaint they have lodged. Under no circumstances may the student be represented by an external organisation or third party.

¹ <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/96361/oia-good-practice-framework.pdf>

2 MAPPING OF POLICY AGAINST THE QAA UK QUALITY CODE

This policy and procedure have been written with regard to the QAA Quality Code Chapter B9: Academic appeals and student complaints.² This requires higher education providers to meet the following expectation:

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.

Accordingly, LSBS has adopted, and mapped this procedure against the OIA's Good Practice Framework. Thus, LSBS will attempt to resolve all complaints at Stage 2 and 3 within 90 calendar days of the formal Stage 2 or 3 complaint being made by the student; where this is not possible, the reasons for this delay will be explained to the student in good time.

3 SCOPE OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

3.1 This procedure deals complaints arising from:

- The provision of academic services described in the LSBS publications including teaching, course content and learning support
- incorrect or misleading information about services provided by LSBS
- the provision of other LSBS services described in literature published by LSBS.

3.2 The student complaints procedure **does not** cover:

- any matters relating to examination and assessment procedures or academic appeals which is otherwise dealt with through the Appeals Procedure for Candidates.
- student conduct and disciplinary issues
- the admissions procedures prior to enrolment as a student of LSBS. Any complaints about admission prior to enrolment should be directed to the admissions team, UCAS, or any other governing body.
- complaints about the behaviour of other students which is otherwise dealt with through the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, outlined below.
- unacceptable behaviour of LSBS staff members which is otherwise dealt with through the Staff Disciplinary Procedure, outlined below.

² http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b9_-academic-appeals-and-student-complaints.pdf?sfvrsn=c002f781_8

3.3 Complaints about students or staff members

If a student wishes to make a complaint about the behaviour of another student or about unacceptable behaviour of the School staff, this should be first addressed to the Assistant Registrar. They will consult as appropriate and determine the correct student or staff procedure or policy to be followed: their decision will be final. The student may seek guidance from the Student Support Team and in serious cases the Principal.

If a complaint has been linked to a particular request (such as a change of class) the request will not be processed until the complaint has been investigated and closed.

4 STAGE 1: EARLY (INFORMAL) RESOLUTION

If a student requires advice or wishes to discuss the matter before making a formal complaint they should consult their personal tutor, a student representative or the Student Support Team.

The complaint may be made orally, in writing, or by email normally within ten working days of the incident or action from which the complaint arises, or in any event as soon as possible.

Most complaints will be resolved informally by an appropriate member of staff.

The member of staff to whom the complaint is made will conduct an initial investigation or refer the complaint to a more senior member of staff. A response will be made to the student either orally or in writing, normally within 10 working days.

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of this informal procedure, then they should follow the procedures described in the formal complaint's procedure below.

5 STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A complaint under this procedure should be made to the Registrar, in writing using the Student Complaint Form available from Student Support Officer normally within 20 working days of the incident or action from which the complaint arises, or the outcome of the informal resolution.

The following details must be provided:

- a full statement of the complaint
- brief details of the steps already taken to resolve the complaint
- reasons for the student's dissatisfaction with the attempts to resolve the complaint
- what the student would like to be done
- a copy (not original documents) of any documentary evidence the student wishes to submit
- the student's name and their student ID number
- full contact details for the student, including their preferred method of contact
- whether the student wishes to be accompanied at any meeting and if so by whom.

The complaint should be addressed to the Complaint Officer or by email to complaints@LSBS.ac

The Complaint Officer will determine whether all the necessary information has been provided and may contact the student requesting additional details and evidence. In all cases, receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged by letter or email, depending on how it was submitted.

The complaint will then be forwarded to the appropriate department(s) who will investigate the complaint using the information provided by the student in their written statement of the complaint. A response will be sent to the student in writing within twenty working days of the full complaint being received. The response sent to the student will be copied to all relevant parties.

Where it has not been legitimately possible to resolve the complaint within 20 working days, those investigating the complaint will write to the student and inform them of:

- The name(s) of those investigating the complaint
- The reason(s) for the delay
- The date by which the student will be notified of the outcome
- The letter sent to the student must be copied to the Principal and all relevant parties.

Where the complaint is directly against the Complaint Officer then the complaint, as outlined above, should be made directly to the Principal.

STAGE 3: APPEAL AND REVIEW STAGE

If a student is reasonably dissatisfied with the decision made as a result of the complaint or believes that their complaint has not been handled fairly, objectively or in accordance with the procedures described above, they should appeal in accordance with the procedures set out in the Appeals Policy and Procedures.

Dissatisfaction with the outcome of a complaint will not in itself constitute grounds for appeal unless further evidence is available.

6 OTHER PROCEDURES

Should the student raise a complaint that is not covered by this procedure, as outlined in section 3.2, or should the investigation of any complaints reveal information which appears to show that staff or students have acted in breach of LSBS regulations, the matter will be investigated through:

- the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure
- the Staff Disciplinary Procedure (Employee Handbook)
- the Assessments Regulations and Procedures

This includes, but is not limited to, assault or threatening behaviour, victimisation, sexual harassment or abuse, racist, sexist, homophobic or anti-disabled activity or behaviour; actions

likely to cause injury or threaten safety; and unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.

6.1 Hearings

If a complaint results in a hearing under another procedure or policy, the complainant may be asked to give evidence at a hearing. In instances where the complainant is not willing to give evidence, LSBS may be unable to proceed with the case.

Where the complaint results in a hearing under another procedure or policy, LSBS must comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act. This means that LSBS may not be able to disclose full details of this procedure and any outcomes to the student. Legally, there is a recognised expectation that internal disciplinary matters of an individual will be private. If LSBS is unable to disclose the details of the outcome to the student, the student will be informed of the reasons for non-disclosure.

6.2 Prevent Duty

Under the Prevent duty introduced by the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, relevant higher education bodies will need to assess the risks of people being drawn into terrorism and ensure they have plans in place for mitigating these risks. LSBS is committed to providing a secure environment for all our students, staff and stakeholders.

It is imperative that our students have a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way and where our staff members encourage and facilitate this. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our students.

This college, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. The SPOC at LSBS will be the Head of Academic Services, Dr. Abdul Mughal. If Dr Mughal is unavailable, the substitute SPOC will be the Head of Centre. The SPOC will engage with external organisations where necessary. These include the Police, Local Authorities (through Channel) and/or other relevant source of advice.