



Hull University Students' Union (HUSU) Raising a Concern or Complaint Policy

Policy statement:

HUSU recognises its responsibility to deal fairly, constructively and consistently with expressions of concern or dissatisfaction. It is the policy of HUSU to have an open and equitable procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints raised by students, University of Hull staff and the public.

Interpretations

- a) As a Students' Union, we operate within a Democratic structure using Bye-laws and standing orders of the Union Council to deal with matters relating to student representatives either in full-time (President) or part-time Officer Roles.
- b) Concerns or complaints regarding incidents in HUSU elections and referenda processes should be received within 24 hours of the incident in question and by the last day of voting and submitted in line with rules, which are published on the website.
- c) Current Students of the University of Hull also have the right to make a complaint if they claim to have been unfairly disadvantaged as a result of opting out of HUSU membership.
- d) Incidents taking place on the licensed premises and witnessed by staff and/or CCTV will be led on by the Designated Premises Supervisor and will fall under the remit of the Disciplinary policy.
- e) If an complaint refers to an incident/s alleged to have happened in HUSU premises, at a HUSU official function or activity off campus run by HUSU, a student group, or individual, it is likely to fall under the remit of the disciplinary policy.
- f) Student groups shall, for this policy, be used as an all-encompassing term for all sports clubs and societies that operate from HUSU, which also includes standing committees.
- g) A 'clear day' does not include a Saturday, Sunday, Bank Holiday or University Holiday.
- h) This includes any actions by a member or members which could be deemed in breach of the HUSU Code of Conduct.

We promise to:

- Deal with all complaints with consistency and in a reliable, fair and objective manner.
- Handle all complaints pro-actively.
- Ensure that resolutions and outcomes will contribute to a process of continuous improvement for the organisation.



Our policy principles are:

- Whenever possible, the person to whom the concern or complaint is raised should first endeavour to resolve the situation informally and in discussion with the complainant. This can include the support of additional team members from HUSU.
- Formal Complaints received via email or via our preferred option of the website “contact us” section which will be passed on to the most appropriate line manager for resolution.
- Formal complaints must be made in writing using email HUU-complaints@hull.ac.uk or preferably the digital form on the website. If there is a genuine reason that the complainant cannot make a formal written complaint, then it should be made orally and the person acknowledging it should, for the sake of clarity, summarise the complaint in writing to the complainant and then check it is an accurate record of their conversation.
- Formal Complaints received via the website are received by our HR and Admin team at HUSU. The complaint is initially reviewed at this stage before being sent to the Line-Manager (appointed investigation lead) responsible for the area from which the complaint originates. The complaint is never sent to an individual who may be the subject of or named in a complaint.
- The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within seven working days of HUSU receiving the complaint by the appointed investigation lead.
- Complainants should be kept updated regularly on the progress of their complaint by the investigation lead.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of concern or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the behaviour or service of HUSU and its activities.

The procedure for resolving concerns or complaints seeks to:

- Resolve concerns or complaints as early as possible.
- Identify and act on opportunities for change and improvement.


Complaints Procedure

1. General

Complaints will be considered on a case by case basis normally within six months of a concern or dissatisfaction. (All CCTV at HUSU is only available for 30 days in line with our CCTV Code of Practice contained in our HUSU Venues Operating Policy).

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint having gone through the first and second stages below, there is a right for one appeal only.

HUSU does not accept complaints that are:

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- (1) Raised on behalf of others without the express consent i.e. permission is given specifically either verbally or in writing by the individual concerned.
 - (2) Broadly or substantively the same as a previous complaint raised by the same individual.
 - (3) Complaints found to be malicious.

2. Informal Concerns/Complaints (stage 1)

Many complaints can be resolved via informal discussion about the matter at the earliest opportunity. Complainants are encouraged to explore this route in the first instance. Therefore concerns should, be brought to the attention of a staff member, or a member of the President team responsible for the area in question. Informal concerns/complaints can be received verbally or in writing. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at stage 1, they may progress to stage 2 by submitting a formal complaint.

If a complainant feels that their dissatisfaction should be dealt with through our stage 2, formal complaint process, this can be done without going through the stage 1 process first.


3. Formal Complaints (stage 2)

A formal complaint process will only be followed when a complaint is submitted in writing using the “Hull University Union Formal Complaints Form” which can be found on the www.hulluniunion.com website.

Formal complaints will be considered valid if the complainant:

- Provides details of their name, address and telephone number.
- Gives clear grounds for complaint by providing details of the event of occurrence giving rise to the complaint.
- Complaints will be considered on a case by case basis normally within six months of a concern or dissatisfaction. ((All CCTV at HUSU is only available for 30 days in line with our CCTV Code of Practice contained in our HUSU Venues Operating Policy).

Upon receipt of a formal complaint HUSU will appoint a suitable complaint investigation lead who will write to the complainant and be the main point of contact throughout the formal complaint process. The investigation lead will ensure they review the complaint information in full and if not expressed ensure they are clear on the desired outcome the complainant wants from this process. The Investigation lead will also gather any additional relevant information pertinent to the complaint, following any lines of enquiry that come from the original complaint. The complainant and others involved may be asked to provide verbal or written evidence for clarification and additional information. If the complaint is against a student group, their chair/President or relevant nominee will normally represent them in the investigating stage.



If the complaint is in relation to a paid member of staff including full-time Presidents this will be referred to HR and dealt with through HR policy and procedure.

For all formal complaints (with the exception of HR related complaints) a panel will be established facilitated by the investigation lead, this panel will normally consist of not less than three individuals, including at least one President, panel members will be employees of HUSU but will be independent of the complaint. The panel will consider all of the evidence gathered by the appointed investigation lead in the complaint including the expressed outcome desired by the complainant. The panel may dismiss or uphold the complaint wholly or partially with an appropriate outcome, resolution applied. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision made at stage 2 they may appeal (stage 3).

Conflict of interest: A complaint might be received which, involves both the University and Students' Union, who will each follow their own processes and procedures to investigate their element of the complaint. If a panel is required under the procedures of this policy the President, panel member will not be eligible to sit on any panel held by the University dealing with the same matter under their policy.

4. Appeal panel (Stage 3)

The appeals panel is the final stage of HUSU procedures and may accept or reject the appeal in full or in part and as a consequence may remove, reduce or increase any outcomes, or resolutions from stage two.

Appeals will be heard if they are submitted in writing to the investigation lead of the original complaint within five clear days of the appeal panel outcome.

The appeals panel will be made up of individuals who have not been involved in any of the previous stages of the complaint process. The panel follows the same procedure as stage two.

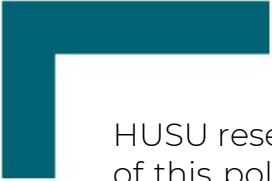
5. Right of complaint to the University (Students only) (stage 4)

If the complainant is a current student of the University of Hull and in the event of the complainant (Student) not being satisfied having gone through the appeals panel at HUSU, they may request that the issue is referred to the University in accordance with the regulations for the investigation and determination of student complaints. Recourse to the university is limited to challenging the application of the procedure through which the complaint was investigated by the student's union.

6. Reporting

An anonymised summary record of formal complaints received by HUSU and their outcomes will be received by the HUSU Board of Trustees at every Trustee Board meeting. The Board will utilise this information to identify opportunities for improvement.

All records relating to the Complaints Policy shall be processed and stored in accordance with HUSU's Data Protection Policy.



HUSU reserves the right to review, revise, amend or replace the content of this policy without prior notice to reflect the changing needs of the organisation and to comply with new legislation