



Student Complaints Policy for Partner Institutions

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1. Introduction

The University is committed to high standards of service and the quality of teaching and learning. However, it is accepted that students/apprentices may have complaints relating to their course or the services and facilities provided by the University or a partner institution.

There may also be times when an issue may arise with other students/apprentices or members of staff. The University and its partners must such complaints seriously and deal with them without re-crimination and in a confidential manner.

The University in collaboration with partner institutions is committed to continuously improving standards and constructively handling any complaints, taking any reasonable action to ensure that similar situations do not occur in the future.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the University's expectations of its partners in relation to the management and resolution of student complaints. It provides a clear framework to ensure that partners handle complaints in a manner that is fair, transparent, and consistent with the University's standards and regulatory obligations.
- 2.2 By setting out these requirements, the policy aims to ensure a high-quality and equitable experience for all students, consistent with the University's obligations under the Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework. In particular this reflects the expectations of Condition C2, which requires providers to cooperate with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) complaints scheme and to ensure that students are made aware of their right to access it.
- 2.3 The policy also establishes clear expectations for partners regarding the prompt, fair, and transparent handling of student concerns, through adherence to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Good Practice Framework.
- 2.4 In addition, it sets out the mechanisms through which the University will monitor compliance to ensure partners continue to meet the standards required by the OfS and the University's own regulatory responsibilities. Routine monitoring, consistent with OfS practice, supports effective partnership working and assures that student interests remain protected

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to:
 - All partner institutions involved in delivering programmes leading to University of Wolverhampton awards
 - All levels of higher education provision, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and apprenticeship programmes
 - All modes of delivery, such as full-time, part-time, distance learning, transnational education (TNE), blended learning, and work-based learning.
- 3.2 This policy does not cover the following, for which separate procedures exist:

- Appeals against the decision of an Award Assessment Board
- Allegations of harassment or bullying
- Appeals against the decision of a University Disciplinary Hearing
- Appeals against the decision of a University Fitness to Practice Hearing
- Complaints about the Students' Union
- Complaints about Admission to Study

4. Complaints Policy

4.1 A complaint under this policy is defined as the expression of concern or dissatisfaction with a service provided by a partner institution or by the University, the provision of a course or related academic service.

4.2 The partner institution complaints procedure is the appropriate route for students who wish to raise a complaint about their experience which does not relate to the quality and standards of an academic award: Examples include:

- Accommodation
- Provision of local services
- Catering, access to buildings and other facilities.
- Staff and student conduct
- Welfare support

4.3 As the awarding body the University complaints procedure is the appropriate route for students who wish to raise concerns directly relating to:

- assessment structure and content,
- the quality of teaching and learning opportunities being delivered by the delivery partner.

5. University of Wolverhampton Responsibilities

The University will:

- 5.1 Publish a student complaint policy and procedure which adheres to the OIA Good Practice Framework and Guidance¹.
- 5.2 Triage any incoming complaints from partner students and redirect them to the partner complaint policy and procedure, where appropriate. This will be the case for the majority of complaints with the exception of highly complex or serious complaints.
- 5.3 Support the partner with the handling of highly complex or serious complaints where it has been agreed that the partner procedures should be used.
- 5.4 Provide the partner with feedback on any complaints considered through the University complaints policy.

¹ [Good Practice Framework - OIAHE](#)

- 5.5 Conduct the stage two/review stage of the partner complaint procedure where the partner is not a member of the OIA Scheme, issuing Completion of Procedures letters where appropriate.
- 5.6 Monitor partner complaint data and initiate quality assurance activities where risks are identified.

6. Partner Responsibilities

All partners will:

- 6.1 Publish a local complaint policy and procedure which adheres to the OIA Good Practice Framework and Guidance².
- 6.2 Provide students with information about the University complaints procedure, including guidance on which complaints should be dealt with locally.
- 6.3 Process all complaints in accordance with the OIA Good Practice Framework.
- 6.4 Consult with the University Complaints and Student Casework team regarding complex or serious issues of complaint to agree whether the matter should be addressed through the local or the University complaint procedure.
- 6.5 Maintain a central record of all formal complaints received and their outcomes at each stage of the procedure.
- 6.6 Secure all documentation relating to a complaint investigation in a central location in accordance with the University Document Retention Policy and the University Data Protection Policy.
- 6.7 Provide the University with access to complaint data and investigation documentation through a central point of contact.
- 6.8 Report annually on the number and nature of complaints and their outcomes, including any lessons learned and/or improvements made.
- 6.9 Alert the University to any significant emerging issues that are likely to lead to complaints.
- 6.10 Partners who are not members of the OIA Scheme must include in their complaint procedure a second/review stage that is conducted by the University Complaints and Student Casework team. This ensures that, if necessary, a Completion of Procedures letter can be issued, giving students access to the OIA complaint scheme.

7. What To Do If You Need Support

Further advice and support are available from the [Complaints and Student Casework team](#).

8. Minimum Resource Requirements

Partners must maintain minimum operational capacity including:

- A minimum of one role which includes responsibility for maintaining a

² [Good Practice Framework - OIAHE](#)

central record of all complaints.

- GDPR-compliant data storage
- Sufficient complaint investigators to comply with the published procedure.
- Capability to meet published processing deadlines for complaint investigations.

9. Key Performance Indicators

- Accessible partner complaint procedure that adheres to the OIA Good Practice Framework
- Response to request for access to complaint files within 7 days
- A central record of all complaints
- Submission of complaint data annually.

10. Audit and Risk Management

10.1 The University will review the annual reporting by the partner of the nature and number of complaints outcomes across all stages, including the outcome of any complaints submitted to the OIA. These will be reviewed in the context of equivalent University reports.

10.2 Audits will be conducted where risks are identified through annual reporting or where individual complaints give rise to wider concerns.

11. Contact

For any queries, guidance and support relating to this policy please contact Complaints and Student Casework. Email: ConductandAppeals@wlv.ac.uk