1. **Complaints Procedure**

De Montfort Students’ Union (“DSU”) recognises the importance of effective complaints management and we welcome feedback from all our members in order that we can work on service improvement.

* 1. The complaints procedure is a stepped process. It starts wherever possible with an informal stage. If this is unsuccessful in achieving resolution, a formal complaint can then be made in writing. The complaints procedure includes a final stage involving a senior member of University staff for those complaints that cannot be resolved within DSU.
  2. All formal complaints will be recorded in the DSU Complaints Register.

1. **Responsibilities**
   1. DSU has a responsibility to try to resolve all complaints to the satisfaction of all parties.
   2. Complainants have a responsibility to :
      1. ensure that they use the stepped process outlined in the procedure;
      2. contact DSU in a timely fashion to raise concerns; it is advisable to raise issues as soon as they occur so that they can be resolved before it is too late.  DSU expects that all complaints will be submitted within 30 days of the issue occurring.  Complaints may be dismissed if they are received after 30 days if there is no valid reason for not raising the matter in a timely manner.
      3. be clear, accurate and truthful in their explanation;
      4. provide their full name and contact details;
      5. provide details of any evidence they may wish to submit for consideration along with details of any witnesses that may need to be interviewed as part of any investigation;
      6. indicate what might be a satisfactory resolution for them; and
      7. respect the legal, regulatory, financial and other constraints placed on DSU.
2. **Complaints Process**
   1. Reasonable efforts should be made in the first instance to resolve complaints informally. This is designed to address straightforward concerns swiftly and locally without the need for escalation to the formal complaint stage.
   2. Where a party to any informal complaint resolution carried out pursuant to clause 3.1 above, is not satisfied with the outcome, they may complain in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”).
   3. The CEO may refer the complainant back to the informal stage of this process if they have not tried to resolve the matter this way.
   4. Once a written complaint has been received, the CEO will appoint a senior manager to act on their behalf. This manager shall act as a point of contact for the complainant and try to ensure a satisfactory resolution for all parties.
   5. The senior manager shall:
      1. acknowledge receipt of each complaint within 5 clear days;
      2. undertake a considered and thorough investigation in to all concerns raised;
      3. ensure auditable records are maintained; and
      4. inform the CEO of the result of the investigation.
   6. The CEO shall advise the complainant, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation and any proposed resolution on behalf of DSU.
   7. If the complaint has not been resolved the complainant may escalate the matter to the Head of the Academic Support Office at the University, who will act in accordance with the University Complaints Procedure, a copy of which shall be made available on request.
   8. The complainant may withdraw their complaint at any time. Written complaints must be withdrawn in writing to the CEO or the senior staff member appointed to investigate the complaint. This is to prevent complaints with no formal resolution remaining on file.
3. **Staff Complaints**
   1. Any complaints from students regarding staff members should be raised in the first instance with the individual concerned. If the nature of the complaint makes this difficult, it should be raised with the staff member’s line manager. The general procedure outlined above should then be followed.
   2. In the event of a complaint regarding the Chief Executive Officer, the complainant should write to the Chair of the Trustee Board outlining their concerns.
   3. Dependent on the nature of the complaint, the CEO may refer the matter to the Staff Disciplinary Procedure. Due to the confidential nature of any such proceedings the complainant is not be entitled to know the details of any subsequent action taken or the final outcome of any such proceedings.
4. **Elected Officer Complaints**
   1. Any complaints from students regarding Executive Officers should be raised in the first instance with the Executive Officer concerned. If the nature of the complaint makes this difficult it should be raised with the CEO in writing who will liaise with the Supervising Trustee if deemed appropriate to do so.
   2. The Supervising Trustee may choose to use the Disciplinary Procedure for Executive Officers to resolve complaints against Executive Officers.
5. **Complaints referred by the University**
   1. Complaints received and referred by the University from third parties from outside the University will be dealt with according to the process outlined above. Where a complaint has originally been made to the University informally, DSU will seek to deal with it informally unless the University requests otherwise.
   2. Complaints received by the University in writing and which are then referred to DSU will be responded to in accordance with the principles for written complaints.
   3. If the University wishes to respond to a complainant directly and seeks information from the Students’ Union to contribute to the response, the information requested will be provided in a timely and accurate manner.
6. **Complaints originating from the University**
   1. DSU reserves the right to distinguish between those complaints that are made by University staff in their formal capacity and complaints made by University staff in a personal capacity.
   2. Complaints made by University staff in their formal capacity will include for example, issues arising from the University in its role as regulator or parent institution. These will be dealt with in accordance to the procedure outlined above.
   3. Complaints made in a personal capacity by staff will include, for example, complaints that reflect the personal stance of the staff member rather than a University position or policy.
   4. University staff making complaints in a personal capacity will be treated with respect and courtesy at all times. However, their complaint will be dealt with in the same manner as a complaint from the general public.
7. **Complaints from the General Public**
   1. Complaints from the general public will be dealt with according to the proceduresoutlined above. From time to time DSU may be subject to malicious complaintsor organised campaigns. In these instances, the Executive Officers and CEO will liaise withthe University to manage its response and ensure that its response has regard forthe reputation of both organisations.