

## **OXFORD SU: Student Advice Complaints Policy and Procedure**

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### **1: Statement of Purpose**

Student Advice is a free, independent, and confidential information and advice service available to all matriculated Oxford University students.

Student Advice is committed to providing the best possible service and continually seeks to improve and develop its service provision.

### **2: Objective**

This document outlines the process the Student Advice will follow in the event that it receives a formal complaint about Service Advice from any service user, another member of the University or a third party.

### **3: Policy and Procedures**

Complaints will be handled sensitively and with discretion, and will comply with the Student Advice Equality, Diversity and Non-Discrimination Policy.

There is a two-stage process.

#### ***Stage 1***

3:1 Complaints must be received in writing or via email addressed to the People & Compliance Manager ([complaints@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk)). The People & Compliance Manager will then identify an Investigating Officer.

3:2 If the complainant is unable to put their complaint in writing then they may request a meeting. This meeting will be limited to the Investigating Officer, where they will support complaint to be put into writing and obtaining the approval and signature of the complainant. The complainant will be given a copy and will have 5 working days to review the material and submit any changes to the record.

3:3 The Investigating Officer will make a full investigation of the complaint during which they may interview any of the parties affected by the complaint. The Investigating Officer must ensure that where interviews occur they are minuted by

an independent person who has agreed to abide by Student Advice Confidentiality Policy.

3:4 Complainants must be aware that the Investigating Officer must inform anyone who is the subject of the complaint of the proceedings. This will include the nature of the complaint against them and the identity of the complainant.

3:5 The Investigating Officer will complete their investigation and produce a report of findings within ten working days of receiving the complaint. The report will summarize the nature of the complaint, what investigations have been carried out and the proposed resolution.

3:6 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, the matter must be referred to Stage 2.

## **Stage 2**

3:8 The Investigating Officer must immediately refer the Oxford SU Complaints Trustee. The Investigating Officer will inform the complainant and the subject of the complaint of the referral immediately.

3:9 The Complaints Trustee will review the complaint in line with the Oxford SU Complaints Procedure. A Complaints Committee panel will be formed. The Panel will request the Investigating Officers report and written submission from the complainant, which must include an explanation of why they are unhappy with the outcome of stage 1 and give an indication of what their preferred outcome would be. The Panel may request further submissions from the complainant or other parties involved in the complaint if they require additional information.

3:10 The Panel will review submission(s) and reach a decision on the complaint.

3:11 The Panel may recommend appropriate redress. The Panel may also recommend that the Manager take certain actions to prevent a similar complaint arising in the future. The Panel may not recommend financial compensation.

3:12 The Panel's decision will be recorded in writing and the complainant will be notified of the decision and the reasons no later than 15 working days after the complaint is referred to the Panel.

3.13 The Panel will make the complainant aware of the appeals process, as per the Oxford SU Complaints Procedure.

## **4: Recording and Monitoring Complaints**

4:1 Complaints will be recorded and kept on file for 3 years. Data retained must comply with the Student Advice Data Protection Policy and its security will be the responsibility of the Manager of Student Advice.

4:2 The Manager of Student Advice must monitor complaints and suggest policy changes where appropriate.

### **5: Breaches of this Policy**

5:1 Breaches of this policy by staff will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

### **6: Responsibility, Review and Report**

6:1 Operational responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Manager of Student Advice.

6:2. The Manager of Student Advice must include a report on complaints received in the annual Student Advice Report presented to the Trustee Board.

6:3 This policy will be reviewed annually or when required through operational need in order to comply with legislative and best practise guidelines. Review will be the responsibility of the Manager of Student Advice.

6:4 Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Complaints Procedure is accessible to all staff and service users rests with the Chief Executive of Oxford SU.

### **This Policy has been approved and authorized by**

Name: K Cole

Position: President and Chair of Trustees

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Date for Review: February 2019

#### **Related Policies**

SA Code of Practice

SA Confidentiality Policy

SA Data Protection Policy

SA Exclusion Policy

SA Equality, Diversity and Non-Discrimination Policy

SA Service Standards