



## **COMPLAINT AND APPEALS POLICY**

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<b>INTRODUCTION DATE</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>10 NOVEMBER 2014</b>
<b>REVIEWED BY</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>QUALITY MANAGER</b>
<b>NEXT REVIEW</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>NOVEMBER 2025</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>QA-04</b>

## Purpose

UK Versity is committed to delivering an excellent learner experience. This policy provides learners and stakeholders with a clear, fair, and accessible procedure for resolving complaints and appeals, in line with the requirements of awarding organisations including ATHE, OTHM, NCFE, Pearson, and Ascentis. It ensures alignment with regulatory expectations under Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

## Scope

This policy applies to all learners, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders wishing to:

- Lodge a complaint about a service, decision, or experience at UK Versity
- Appeal an assessment decision, outcome, or procedural error

## Definitions

- **Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction about the quality or delivery of a service.
- **Appeal:** A request for a review of an academic or administrative decision.

## Principles

- Timely and clear communication
- Fair, evidence-based investigation
- Confidentiality and compliance with data protection laws
- No discrimination against complainants or appellants

## Stages of Complaint and Appeal

### *Stage 1: Informal Resolution*

- The learner is encouraged to raise concerns with the relevant staff member or tutor within 7 working days.
- The issue may be resolved at this stage without formal escalation.

### *Stage 2: Formal Complaint/Appeal*

- Submit a written complaint or appeal with relevant evidence to the Student Welfare Officer (SWO).
- The SWO acknowledges receipt within 2 working days and investigates the issue within 7 working days.
- A written response, including the rationale and outcome, is shared within 5 working days of completing the investigation.

### *Stage 3: Internal Appeal Panel*

If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome:

- The case is escalated to the Appeals Panel chaired by the Academic Board Chair.
- The panel includes:
  - Principal (Chair)
  - Independent academic nominee
  - Learner representative
  - Programme Leader
  - External advisor (as required)
- The learner is informed of the hearing date with at least 7 working days' notice.
- All parties receive documentation 5 working days before the hearing.
- The panel's decision is communicated within 5 working days.

### *Stage 4: External Appeal Panel*

If dissatisfied with the Stage 3 outcome: **Independent Appeal**

If the issue remains unresolved:

- Learners can appeal to the relevant awarding organisation (e.g., ATHE, OTHM, Pearson, NCFE, or Ascentis) within 3 months.
- Contact details are available from the SWO or on the awarding body's website.
- The awarding organisation's decision is final.
- The learner is informed of the hearing date with at least 7 working days' notice.
- All parties receive documentation 5 working days before the hearing.
- The panel's decision is communicated within 5 working days.

### **Rights and Representation**

- Learners may be accompanied by a representative at the hearing.
- Lecturers or staff named in the appeal may present their case.
- The hearing process is determined by the panel chair to ensure impartiality.

### **Panel Powers and Outcomes**

- Recommend reassessment or resubmission
- Overturn a decision based on evidence
- Request additional teaching support or academic review
- Refer to awarding bodies where appropriate (e.g., ATHE's complaints policy)

### **Confidentiality and Record Keeping**

- All complaints and appeals are treated as confidential.

- Records are retained securely for 4 years.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- Complaints and appeals are reviewed annually by the Quality Team.
- Findings inform improvements in teaching, assessment, and learner support.

### **Contact Information**

Student Welfare Officer

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### **Policy reviewed annually**