



## University of Leicester: Industrial Action Complaints Procedure

---

### 1. Purpose and Scope

This procedure sets out how the University of Leicester will respond to student complaints relating to the impact of industrial action. It is a streamlined variant of the formal University complaints process governed by **Senate Regulation 12**, which outlines expectations for informal resolution, requirements for formal complaints, and general principles of fairness, equality, and proportionality in complaint handling.

Due to the potential for high volumes of complaints during periods of industrial action, and our wish to provide timely outcomes for students, this procedure reduces the standard three-stage model to two stages: Informal Stage and Formal Stage. A Completion of Procedures (CoP) letter will be issued at the conclusion of the Formal Stage.

This procedure applies exclusively to complaints about the University's response to the industrial action. It does not address academic appeals, admissions complaints, fitness-to-practise cases, or discipline, which follow separate processes under other Senate Regulations.

---

### 2. Alignment with Senate Regulation 12

This streamlined process adheres to the principles articulated in Senate Regulation 12, including:

- Encouraging early informal resolution.
  - Ensuring fairness, timely handling, and clear communication.
  - Allowing formal consideration of complaints when informal steps have not resolved the matter.
  - Providing a route for escalation to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIAHE).
- 

### 3. Informal Stage

Students are expected to raise concerns informally before submitting a formal complaint, consistent with the principles set out in Senate Regulation 12, for problems to be effectively resolved at the earliest opportunity.

If a formal complaint is submitted without evidence of engagement on an informal basis, the student may be required to engage with the informal stage before a formal complaint is accepted.

#### 3.1 Academic Impact / Learning Outcomes

Where a complaint relates to actions taken by the student's school to ensure intended learning outcomes were met, the student must first raise the matter with their School or Department.



Examples include:

- Queries about how missed content was delivered in alternative formats
- Questions about rescheduled teaching or equivalent provision
- Requests for clarification on academic adjustments
- Identifying how Intended Learning Outcomes were met

The School should provide information, reassurance, or corrective action where appropriate.

### 3.2 Wellbeing, Mental Health, and Other Personal Impact

Concerns relating to wellbeing, mental health, caring responsibilities, disability-related impact, out-of-pocket expenses such as public transport costs or other personal circumstances arising from industrial action should be raised directly with the Student Conduct and Complaints Team (SCCT).

Students must supply evidence demonstrating the nature and extent of the impact.

SCCT will:

- Evaluate the impact,
- Consider proportional remedies,
- Make an offer of compensation where appropriate.

### 3.3 Outcome of Informal Stage

Students will receive a written summary of the informal outcome.

If the student remains dissatisfied, they may proceed to the **Formal Stage**.

---

## 4. Formal Stage

Where informal steps do not resolve the complaint, students may submit a formal complaint using the designated **Industrial Action Complaint Form**, available on the University's Industrial Action Complaints webpage.

Formal complaints in respect of industrial action will not be accepted until the University has had an opportunity to evaluate the impact of the industrial action and provide compensation offers to eligible students. Those wishing to submit formal complaints, or those who submit them before the complaints process opens, may be asked to wait or will have their complaint paused.

A formal complaint must be brought within four calendar months of the date on which the University issued compensation offers to eligible students following the conclusion of periods of industrial action.

Complaints received later than four months following this date will be deemed out of time and a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued. Where a submission is received more than four



months after the date of the matter occurring, the Complainant must provide an explanation, supported by evidence, for the late submission of the form. The Student Conduct and Complaints Team shall determine whether there is good cause for the late submission to be considered, or whether the complaint should be declared to be out of time.

#### **4.1 Requirements for Submission**

Students must:

- Explain clearly what steps were taken to resolve the matter informally;
- Provide supporting evidence demonstrating grounds for complaint;
- Identify the specific impact of industrial action on their academic progress or personal circumstances.
- Provide evidence of out-of-pocket expenses such as bus tickets.

Students must complain on their own behalf. The University will not discuss or correspond about such matters with third parties, including family members, other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and then only with the student's written permission and the agreement of the Academic Registrar.

#### **4.2 Acceptable Grounds for Complaint**

The University will consider formal complaints only where one or more of the following apply:

1. Cancelled teaching was not rescheduled and learning outcomes were not delivered by alternative means.
2. There was a significant reduction in contact time with tutors or supervisors.
3. Marking or feedback was significantly delayed beyond published timelines, resulting in academic detriment (e.g., delayed progression or classification).
4. Contingency plans failed to provide equivalent learning opportunities, resulting in disadvantage.

Missed teaching hours alone are not sufficient grounds for complaint; evidence will be required to demonstrate that this resulted in a failure to deliver intended learning outcomes by other means.

#### **4.3 Assessment of Formal Complaints**

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Student Conduct and Complaints Team will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days.

Formal complaints will be reviewed and investigated by a member of the Student Conduct and Complaints Team, and a final decision will be made by the Head of Student Conduct, Complaints and Resolution, or their nominee. Reviewers and decision makers should not have had previous dealings with the case at the informal stage, to avoid bias.



The University aims to respond within 28 calendar days of receipt of a complete submission. In complex cases or at times of high demand, it may take longer to respond to complaints, and in these cases the team will update the complainant with expected timescales.

#### **4.4 Possible Outcomes**

Outcomes may include:

- The complaint is upheld in full or in part;
- The complaint is not upheld.

Where the complaint is upheld or partially upheld, remedies such as financial compensation, academic adjustments, an explanation of actions taken, or an apology, may be made.

#### **4.5 Completion of Procedures (CoP) Letter**

At conclusion of the Formal Stage, the University will issue a Completion of Procedures letter, confirming that all internal processes have been completed. This will outline the student's right to request an independent review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE).

The University of Leicester subscribes to the OIA's independent review scheme.

---

### **5. Vexatious or Out-of-Scope Complaints**

In line with Senate Regulation 12.6, the University may decline to continue consideration of complaints that are frivolous or vexatious. Examples include repetitive non-meritorious complaints, unrealistic demands, or complaints pursued in an unreasonable manner.

---

### **6. Equality, Diversity, and Accessibility**

This procedure is operated in accordance with the University's equality and diversity obligations. Reasonable adjustments will be provided to students who require them, consistent with Senate Regulation 12.7. Students requiring reasonable adjustments to assist them in navigating the complaints process should contact the Student Conduct and Complaints Team for advice and assistance.

---

### **7. Record-Keeping and Data Protection**



All complaints will be recorded and retained in line with University data protection policies. Aggregate data may be used to improve service delivery and assess institutional response to industrial action.

---