

Making a complaint

A Union self-help guide

**Your Union of Students'
independent advice service**

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Talk to
US



What is a complaint?

During your time at university, if you're not happy with a service you've received, University facilities, behaviour of a staff, or any other aspect of your learning, you can make a complaint. The University will try to do everything they can to put things right by investigating your complaint and helping to find an outcome.



How do I make a complaint?

There are three stages to the complaint procedure: informal, formal and review stage.

Informal stage

First, try and talk to someone directly, they may be able to deal with your complaint there and then.

Before you submit a complaint, make sure you:

- have a read and understood the complaints procedure
- have spoken directly to a member of staff
- included relevant evidence and the complaint is recent (*within three months of the event(s) happening*)
- thought about what outcome you would like as a result of your complaint
- asked for advice on how to make a complaint

You should normally receive a response to your complaint within ten working days.

Formal stage

Your complaint will then be sent to the Dean or Head of Department for investigation. Usually you'll be asked to meet with the investigator.

You'll have a written response within 20 working days, unless advised otherwise.

Review stage

If you're not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may write to Student Complaints and Conduct to ask for a review. This should be done within ten working days of receiving the formal response. You may be asked to provide further information before proceeding with the complaint review.

Where do I submit a complaint?

You can submit your complaint online: derby.ac.uk/about/organisation/academic-regulations/complaints

Or you can email an electronic copy to studentcomplaints@derby.ac.uk.

What if my complaint cannot be resolved?

If the University cannot resolve your complaint, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) provides an independent scheme for student complaints. The University will provide you with a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' which you'll need to forward to the OIA.

Applications must be made within 12 months.

More information can be found on their website: oiahe.org.uk

How can the Union of Students help me?

There are several ways our advice team can support you through the complaints procedure:

- explain the full process to you and guide you through the stages
- help you put together a complaint
- provide you with ongoing advice at each stage of your complaint
- accompany you to any meetings to provide support and representation
- help to collate appropriate evidence to support your case