



## UCFB\* Complaints Policy

|                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Owner:</b>                | Head of Academic Quality |
| <b>Author:</b>               | Head of Academic Quality |
| <b>Version Number:</b>       | 6.0                      |
| <b>Approved Date:</b>        | 10 June 2026             |
| <b>Approved By:</b>          | Academic Board           |
| <b>Date of Commencement:</b> | 1 September 2026         |
| <b>Date of Last Review:</b>  | 11 June 2025             |
| <b>Date for Next Review:</b> | September 2027           |

\*UCFB is a trading name of University Campus of Football Business Limited

## 1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 UCFB is committed to providing a high-quality experience for each student. It recognises, however, that on occasion a student may be dissatisfied with or concerned about an aspect of their experience and may wish to pursue this further. UCFB encourages students to inform it where there is any cause for concern or where there may be an opportunity to make improvements. This Complaints Policy enables students to make complaints.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all UCFB students and prospective students (i.e., those at the application stage) on undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses awarded by the University of East London (UEL), including recent alumni, as well as other stakeholders and interested parties.
- 1.3 A complaint about the admissions process or service should be made in writing **within 10 working days** of receipt of the admissions decision. Please see the [UCFB Admissions Policy](#) for further information.
- 1.4 A student who has recently interrupted, withdrawn, or graduated from studies is entitled to submit a complaint, providing it is received **within one month** of their last recorded date of attendance. This Policy is not intended to address specific academic decisions or alleged instances of student misconduct.
  - 1.4.1 This Policy is different from an academic appeal which covers decisions regarding progress, assessment, awards, and related processes. Students who disagree with academic decisions must raise an Academic Appeal under the [UCFB Academic Appeals Policy](#).
  - 1.4.2 Where a student may report or may be responding to allegations of student misconduct, this will be handled under the appropriate disciplinary policy.
- 1.5 Students will not be disadvantaged because of the making of a complaint in good faith under this Policy.

## 2 Definition

- 2.1 UCFB has adopted the following definition of a student complaint from [The Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Appeals \(December 2022\)](#), produced by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education: “An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about something a provider has done or not done, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the provider.”
- 2.2 A complaint may be about: concerns about the delivery of a course, teaching or administration provided directly by UCFB; poor quality of learning resources or facilities provided directly by UCFB; poor quality services provided directly by UCFB; and/or a service provided by other organisations or contractors on behalf of UCFB.
- 2.3 This Complaints Policy does not cover the following (separate procedures exist for these):
  - Appeals relating to non-ratified assessment marks or grades and/or decisions made by an Assessment Board regarding assessment, progression or award.
  - Complaints relating to a case of Academic Misconduct;
  - Complaints relating to the Students Union;
  - Complaints relating to provision of services wholly within the remit of the University of East London or to the action or lack of action of staff employed by the awarding partner, except where these relate to academic matters which fall within the remit of UCFB (in these cases, see the [University of East London Complaints Procedure](#));
  - Complaints made by students relating to allegations of bullying or harassment; and/or

- For private matters in which UCFB cannot intervene save where such matters relate to a breach of the [UCFB Student Policies](#), in which case they should be reported to the relevant Dean of School or Professional Service for appropriate action as disciplinary issues.

### 3 UCFB Approach

- 3.1 Raising a complaint gives UCFB permission to investigate facts and to discuss the matter with appropriate people, ensuring this is handled with sensitivity at every stage of the process.
- 3.2 UCFB encourages students to raise areas of concern or potential opportunities for improvement, however the Resolutions Team reserves the right to advise students whether instances may best be directed to more appropriate resolution mechanisms, including the University of East London directly.
- 3.3 If other procedures are in use at the same time a complaint is submitted, the investigation will continue unless there are good reasons for one of the procedures to be put on hold pending the outcome of the matter.
- 3.4 Evidence submitted as part of one procedure will be deemed to be available to be used in other procedures as appropriate. UCFB has the right to consider a complaint under another procedure if it is deemed to be more appropriate to do so. Reasons for this will be noted and communicated to the student at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.5 UCFB will be as transparent as possible in responding to a complaint. Requests for access to certain documents will be considered within the boundaries of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the [UCFB Confidentiality – Student Wellbeing Guidance Statement](#).
- 3.6 Every effort to work within published timescales will be undertaken, however, where the complaint has elements which relate to various aspects of services provided, each area may have to undertake a separate investigation, which may lead to delays in the investigation being completed. UCFB will take all reasonable steps to try to ensure that this does not happen, however the Resolutions Team will issue regular updates to the complainant as to the progress of the case.
- 3.7 UCFB aim to formally respond to the complainant within the stipulated timescales, however, this may take longer during busier periods, and/or depending on staff availability.
- 3.8 New evidence, which is relevant to the original complaint, may be submitted as it becomes available however, it should be noted that this may increase the length of time taken to deal with the case.
- 3.9 Malicious or frivolous complaints will be rejected at the earliest stage, and written reasons will be given. Students found to have submitted such a complaint may be subject to disciplinary action. If it is deemed necessary to terminate consideration of the complaint, the student will receive written confirmation of this decision. The student may appeal against the decision **within one calendar month**, dependent upon the validating partner under which the student is registered.
- 3.10 If legal action is pending, UCFB reserves the right to suspend internal investigations until the legal action is resolved.

### 4 Complaints Process

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.1.1 The complaints process is divided into two parts;

- Stage 1 - Local Resolution: the focus of Stage 1 is to facilitate early resolution prior to the point at which a formal complaint is submitted; and
  - Stage 2 - Formal Resolution: is applied where:
    - A student declines to engage with any form of informal resolution;
    - A student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal stage; and/or
    - Where Local Resolution is not possible due to the character, seriousness, or complexity of the complaint.
- 4.1.2 Staff and students are expected to take every opportunity to resolve complaints before escalating matters to the next stage of the process. Staff are encouraged to take immediate action, wherever possible.
- 4.1.3 Each stage of the process should be exhausted before moving on to the next Stage. However, matters of a very serious or sensitive nature may be escalated to Stage 2, where appropriate. A student wishing to escalate a complaint to Stage 2 should complete and submit the appropriate online form.
- 4.2 Stage 1: Local Resolution
- 4.2.1 Complaints should normally be raised **within one calendar month** of the event which has given rise to the complaint. Any complaints submitted outside of the prescribed time limits are difficult to investigate, given the passage of time. In exceptional circumstances, complaints may be received outside of this time at the discretion of UCFB, dependent on the nature and seriousness of the issues raised, and whether it is reasonably possible to investigate the events.
- 4.2.2 Where a complaint cannot be accepted because it has been received outside of the stated time limits and is not considered exceptional, the student will be issued with a letter to explain that this was received out of time and could therefore not be accepted. This is called a Completion of Procedures (CoP) letter.
- 4.2.3 Stage 1 complaints will be dealt with initially at the level at which the event leading to the complaint occurred. This could be either a Module or Course Leader, or a staff member within the relevant department, for example. Wherever possible the student will be directed to address the complaint to the member of staff most directly involved in the event leading to the complaint, in order to give that person the opportunity to address the concerns.
- 4.2.4 In order to raise a complaint, the student should complete a [Stage 1 Complaints Form](#) detailing the key points of the complaint; what actions have been attempted to resolve the matter already; and details as to how the student would like to see the complaint resolved.
- 4.2.5 The member of staff receiving the complaint will make every effort to resolve the complaint simply and quickly. If necessary, they may invite the student to a meeting to discuss the matter. Staff are encouraged to facilitate such an early resolution wherever possible.
- 4.2.6 Resolution at the level at which the event leading the complaint occurred may be achieved by provision of an on-the-spot explanation of why the issue occurred and/or an apology. Where relevant, a student should be provided with detail of action that will be taken to prevent an incident recurring.

- 4.2.7 At the end of the local stage, the member of staff receiving the complaint will provide the student with a written response to their complaint copying in the Resolutions Team, which will either: detail the proposed resolution; or, if no resolution has been proposed, explain why.
- 4.2.8 Any decision taken at any stage of dealing with a complaint should be reasonable and should be based upon the evidence available to the member of staff making the decision.
- 4.2.9 Informal complaints will be dealt with in a timely fashion. Where possible, immediate action should be taken to resolve but the informal stage should be completed within one calendar month, in any event. The member of staff may need to extend the timescales for response if, for example, it becomes difficult to schedule meetings with the relevant individuals or if matters are complex and require additional time to fully investigate. In these circumstances the member of staff will inform the student of any delays.
- 4.2.10 Members of staff dealing with complaints under Stage 1 should log all complaints received and retain appropriate records of the investigation and outcome.
- 4.3 Stage 2: Formal Complaint
- 4.3.1 If the student does not find the response to the Stage 1 – Local Resolution to be satisfactory, they may commence Stage 2 of the process by completing the online Stage 2 Formal Complaints Form **within one calendar month of receipt of the Stage 1 outcome**. For individuals external to UCFB wishing to log a complaint then the [UCFB Stage 2 Formal Complaints Form \(External\)](#) should be completed.
- 4.3.2 The Stage 2 Formal Complaint should include:
- The grounds for complaint (including specific details where facilities, learning resources or services may not have been to the student's satisfaction) and the form of resolution or redress sought;
  - Details as to what steps have been taken at Stage 1 – Local Resolution to try to resolve the matter;
  - Why the resolution/action taken by the Academic
- 4.3.3 Centre/Department following notification of the complaint has been inadequate; If resolution at Stage 1 has not been sought, the reasons for seeking to progress the complaint at Stage 2 directly. Upon receipt of the completed Stage 2 Complaint form, the Resolutions Team will:
- Acknowledge receipt of the form **within seven working days**.
  - Undertake an evaluation of the complaint to ensure the following:
    - Whether the complaint has been submitted under the correct procedure;
    - That the Form has been correctly and adequately completed;
    - That the complaint has been submitted in time; and
    - The resolution sought is achievable, reasonable, and proportionate.
- 4.3.4 Having considered the above, the Resolutions Team will determine whether the complaint can be accepted. The Resolutions Team may request that the student provides additional or further information before determining whether a Complaint Form can be accepted.
- 4.3.5 Once a Complaint Form has been accepted, the Resolutions Team will allocate a member of staff, who has not previously been involved in the matter (the 'Investigating Officer'). The principle is to avoid actual or potential conflicts of interest. For academic matters this will normally be a

- Dean of the relevant Academic Centre and for other issues, the Head of the department. However, and depending on the circumstances this may be a Dean or Head of Department from another Academic Centre or service.
- 4.3.6 The allocated member of staff (or Investigating Officer) may meet with the student to discuss the complaint and any potential resolution. Following any initial meeting, investigation of the complaint may involve one or more of the following:
- Further correspondence between the parties; and/or
  - Conciliation meeting(s) between the student concerned (who may be accompanied by a friend or Student Union Advisor) and the Academic Centre/Department; and/or
  - Referral to a Complaints Hearing Panel.
- 4.3.7 The Resolutions Team will support members of staff in determining the most appropriate course of action.
- 4.3.8 The Investigating Officer will contact the student **within 5 working days of appointment** to arrange an initial meeting to discuss the complaint and any potential resolution.
- 4.3.9 In certain circumstances, and where it would facilitate the investigation, the Investigating Officer may, at their discretion, convene a meeting with other relevant parties, including any employee or student involved in the case. The Investigating Officer may also request that an appropriate officer attend the meeting to take notes and produce a formal record of the discussion.
- 4.3.10 The Investigating Officer will undertake a thorough investigation into the matters raised in the complaint. They will aim to compile a report setting out their findings and recommendations within 20 working days of appointment. This will be provided to the Resolutions Team. The report should detail:
- Whether the complaint is upheld (fully or partially), or is not upheld, with detailed reasons given to support the decision;
  - A response to each individual point raised by the complainant;
  - The steps taken to investigate the complaint, including any meetings held (either in person or by telephone) as well as all evidence considered as part of the investigation; and
  - Any redress and/or remedial action which is being offered and recommendations for improvement in practice or regulations (where appropriate).
- 4.3.11 In limited circumstances where the Investigating Officer is unable to come to a conclusion on the outcome, the matter may be referred to a Complaints Hearing Panel.
- 4.3.12 The Resolutions Team will issue the Investigating Officer Report and outcome letter to the complainant **within five working days of receipt of the report**. The outcome letter will include recommendations for resolution, which may include one or more of the following (this list is not an exhaustive list):
- That there is no case to answer and the matter should not be pursued; or that it should be pursued under another procedure;
  - That the complaint appears to have substance and an offer of resolution should be issued;
  - That the matter is a disciplinary one, in which case, the matter should be referred under the relevant disciplinary procedure and the complaints procedure is discontinued (in such cases, the complaint will be updated, but the complainant may not learn the

- outcome of the disciplinary procedure, due to data protection legislation); or
  - That the complaint is frivolous, malicious, or vexatious in which case, the complaint will not be pursued, and a disciplinary allegation may be made against the student.
- 4.3.13 The outcome letter will also include information regarding the next stage of the complaints process. The student will be requested to confirm if they accept the proposed resolution **within 10 calendar days of receipt of the outcome**.
- 4.3.14 The student may confirm in writing that they wish to accept the recommendations and the proposed resolution, and, in this case, the formal complaints procedure will be closed. Alternatively, the student may confirm in writing that they wish to decline the proposed resolution.
- 4.3.15 If the student does not respond **within 10 calendar days of receipt of the outcome**, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued, which states that the matter is closed, and that the complainant has not completed the procedures in full.
- 4.4 Complaints Hearing Panel
- 4.4.1 Should a Complaints Hearing be appropriate, it will be chaired by a Dean, external to the Academic Centre in which the student is enrolled (in the case of a complaint being about an academic matter). Where the complaint is regarding non-academic matters, a Head of Department from another department will chair the Panel.
- 4.4.2 A Panel, consisting of the Chair and two other members of academic or professional services staff drawn from the Academic Centre or service departments unrelated to the complaint.
- 4.4.3 The Resolutions Team will:
  - support the arrangements for the Panel;
  - provide a minute taker;
  - act as technical advisor to the Panel; and
  - consider and, where appropriate, arrange for UEL representation on the Panel.
- 4.4.4 The student may be accompanied by a friend or representative at this meeting and the Academic Centre or department may be represented by up to two members. If the complaint relates to the actions of an individual member of staff, rather than the Academic Centre or department, that individual has the right to attend and be represented.
- 4.4.5 The Complaints Hearing Panel shall meet, normally **within one calendar month** (excluding UCFB closures) of the referral from Stage 2 and communicate its conclusions to the student and the Academic Centre or department within one calendar month of the date of the hearing. The Resolutions Team will keep all parties informed of progress and will explain reasons for any necessary extension of the timescale for response, for example, if an adjournment in the proceedings is necessary.
- 4.5 Stage 3: Request for Review
- 4.5.1 If the response issued at the conclusion of Stage 2 is not considered by the student to be satisfactory, they may request a review in writing **within 10 calendar days from the date of the notification of the outcome** of the formal complaint.

- 4.5.2 A request for review can only be considered in the following circumstances:
- There has been a material procedural irregularity<sup>1</sup> which has demonstrably affected the outcome of the claim to the detriment of the student;
  - There is new evidence that would have significantly affected the outcome and could not reasonably have been made available when the complaint was made;
  - There is evidence that all the relevant information was not considered at Stage 2;
  - The decision is deemed perverse given the facts of the case; or
  - The complaint was upheld but the proposed remedy was inappropriate.
- 4.5.3 Should the circumstances of the complaint meet the criteria outlined in above, a request for review should be addressed to the UEL Complaints & Appeals team via [complaints@uel.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@uel.ac.uk), providing:
- Details as to why the Stage 2 outcome is not satisfactory; and
  - Any additional supporting evidence.
- 4.5.3 If the UEL Complaints & Appeals Team determines that there are valid grounds for review, the UEL University Secretary shall review the case. Following a review, the UEL University Secretary may either:
- Uphold the outcome of the Formal Complaint; or
  - Refer the case back to UCFB with recommendations for reconsideration.
- 4.5.4 UCFB should respond **within 10 working days** of receipt of reconsideration request.
- 4.5.5 UCFB should make a reconsideration decision within one calendar month of receipt of the reconsideration request from UEL.

## 5 Outcomes

- 5.1 The Resolutions Team will notify the complainant of the outcome of the final stage of the complaint in writing **within one calendar month** and a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued.
- 5.2 Should a complaint be upheld, any actions identified to resolve the complaint at any stage of this process should be implemented as soon as possible. This will be overseen by the Resolutions Team. In addition, Chair of the Complaints Hearing Panel in cases where a Panel has been convened) may make recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Centre/Head of Department and relevant members of the management team. Recommendations may also be made to UCFB governance committees in respect of quality assurance procedures or policies.

## 6 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

- 6.1 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the UCFB internal complaints process, they will be entitled to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education (within parameters set out in the rules issued by the OIA). Any request for review to the OIA must be submitted **within 12 months**

---

<sup>1</sup> A material procedural irregularity is an error made by UCFB that has affected the Complaint Hearing Panel outcome. You must clearly explain what error occurred and how it affected the outcome. A material procedural irregularity may affect one student or a group of students. It does not include disagreement with a Complaint Hearing Panel outcome.



of the Completion of Procedures letter being received by the student. The OIA will not usually review complaints which have not been considered by UCFB.

6.2 The OIA may be contacted via:

Tel: 0118 959 9813

Email: [enquiries@oiahe.org](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org)

Website: [www.oiahe.org.uk/students/](http://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/)

Postal address: Office of the Independent Adjudicator,  
Second Floor, Abbey Gate, 57-75 Kings Road, Reading, RG1 3AB

## **7 Awarding Partner**

7.1 The University of East London (UEL) has overarching responsibility for the quality and standards of the academic courses offered by UCFB.

7.2 UCFB students may complain to on matters as follows:

- Complaints associated with non-academic matters, except those which relate to one of the UEL's services, must be pursued in accordance with the UCFB complaints policy;
- Complaints associated with one of the UEL services should be pursued in accordance with the UEL Complaints Procedure. If a student wishes to complain, but is unsure of the department responsible, they may seek advice from a member of the UEL Complaints and Appeals team or the UEL Students' Union.
- Complaints on matters related to the academic course should first be pursued in accordance with the UCFB Complaints Policy. If, following completion of that process, a student considers the outcome to be unsatisfactory, they can request a Stage 3 Review of that outcome by UEL, as per Section 4.5. The student is expected to submit the request to UEL within one calendar month of receiving written confirmation from UCFB of the final outcome of the complaint.

## **8 Updates**

8.1 This Policy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as directed by the UCFB Institutional Academic Policy Review Schedule and in line with changes required by the awarding partner.

## **Appendix A: Guidance Notes to accompany the UCFB Complaints Policy**

### **Complaints to the Executive Leadership Team**

If a complaint is made to the Executive Leadership Team or any senior manager, it will be referred to the Resolutions Team, who will ensure that it enters the procedure at the appropriate point. If no substantive attempt has been made by the student to resolve the complaint locally using Stage 1 of this Complaints Policy, the student will be advised to take up the issues raised with the relevant Academic Centre/Department.

### **Complaints Against a Member of Staff**

Information submitted will remain confidential, as far as this is consistent with other parties' right to know details of any allegations that are made against them. Where a complaint names specific members of staff, those staff will be entitled to see the written complaint. Generally, complaints will be treated as being against UCFB and not against individual members of staff. Accordingly, any resolution will usually be offered by UCFB rather than by an individual. However, where a complaint indicates inappropriate individual conduct, the complaint will be immediately referred to Stage 2 of the complaints process and an Investigating Officer, where possible a Dean of Academic Centre or Head of Department to which the staff member reports in such cases, should consider whether the case falls under relevant UCFB human resources policies. In that case, the matter will be referred to Human Resources and the complaint will operate in parallel with this Complaints Policy. The relevant Dean or Head of Department will liaise with Human Resources before attempting to take any action pursuant to the disciplinary procedures. Where a complaint has been raised about a member of staff and has been upheld, the student bringing the complaint will be advised of this. However, it may not be appropriate to share specific details affecting individual staff members, particularly where disciplinary action is being taken due to data protection, employment law, etc. legislation. Students may be advised that appropriate action is being taken but not necessarily be provided with any further detail.

### **Support for Staff cited in a complaint**

If a complaint has been made about a member of staff it is UCFB's duty to ensure that its staff are treated fairly throughout the process. The member of staff will be informed if a complaint has been made about them. Any member of staff mentioned in a complaint will not be treated less favourably by UCFB than if the complaint had not been brought. The Complaints Policy refers to parallel arrangements under the Staff Disciplinary Procedures. The Complaints Policy itself cannot be used to discipline members of staff.

### **Anonymous complaints**

Complaints require investigation to enable resolution: where a complaint is made anonymously it may not be possible to undertake such an investigation. For practical reasons therefore, normally no action will be taken in the event of complaints made anonymously. However, provision of supporting evidence may help, should UCFB decide to take it forward.

### **Vexatious or malicious complaints**

A vexatious or malicious complaint is defined as a complaint which is trivial or untrue, having been put forward to abuse the process of this Complaints Policy or, for example, to attempt to defame the name or character of another person or UCFB. A student should also be aware that, if a complaint is vexatious or pursued inappropriately, disciplinary action may be taken against them and the consideration of that complaint will be terminated. If it is deemed necessary to terminate consideration of a complaint, the student will receive written confirmation of this decision. The student may appeal against the decision by

writing to the Resolutions Team within one calendar month of receipt of the formal notification to terminate consideration.

### **Complaints made by students under 18**

If a complaint is made by a student, who is under the age of 18, UCFB will notify the parent/s or guardian/s of the student in writing and keep them informed of the progress of the complaint, unless the student provides a written request that this not be done. UCFB will permit the parent/s or guardian/s of the student to act on the student's behalf during the process, provided the student has confirmed agreement in writing beforehand.

### **Accompaniment at a Complaint Hearing Panel by a Students' Union advisor for support or representation as appropriate**

The friend or Students' Union advisor shall be permitted to put forward the student's case under the direction of the Chair of the Panel, and shall be permitted to ask questions of the Academic Centre/Department representatives. In the event that the complainant is unable to attend, the hearing will be rescheduled. In the event of the illness or incapacity of the complainant, there will be a maximum of three attempts to convene, following which the hearing will proceed in the absence of the student.

### **Support for students and complaints from third parties (including representation from MP's)**

Students are encouraged to pursue complaints themselves however, in some instances, a complaint can be pursued by a third party, such as a parent or guardian. In such cases, the student must provide written confirmation, including their full name and student ID number, giving their consent for a named person to act on their behalf prior to a complaint being accepted. When providing consent, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have agreed with the third party what information UCFB can disclose. Any communication with third parties must comply with data protection legislation and the UCFB's guidance on handling personal information. In such cases, the complainant will be copied into all correspondence from UCFB. UCFB will not accept any responsibility for the actions of the third party. UCFB will accept a withdrawal of permission, if made in writing, by the student. UCFB will not commence investigation of any complaint raised by a third party prior to receipt of written consent from the student.

The exception to this shall be where a student wishes a Member of Parliament to make the complaint on their behalf under Section 8(e) of the Data Protection Act 2018. Where this section is engaged, UCFB is permitted to disclose personal data (including sensitive information) to Members of Parliament, acting on behalf of a constituent, without having to obtain the explicit consent of the individual concerned. In providing permission for UCFB to correspond with a third party (or by appointing a Member of Parliament to make the complaint on their behalf), the student shall accept that this may include disclosure to the third party of relevant information about their academic standing, conduct and behaviour, issues of health or disability or other personal circumstances, level of engagement with UCFB regulations, policies, procedures and services and any other personal information about them which UCFB deems pertinent to the issues of their complaint. Any response to a complaint made on behalf of a student by a third party shall be provided to both the third party and the student.

### **Multiple and Group Complaints**

A group of students can make a collective complaint. However, the following criteria must be met before the complaint will be accepted:

- One member of the group must be identified as the main contact who will correspond on the group's behalf, attend meetings, and receive communication from UCFB regarding the complaint;
- Each member of the group must submit their consent in writing and agree to abide by these regulations. They must include their full name and Student ID number and details as to why they were personally affected by the matter of the complaint. UCFB will work on the assumption that any discussion or agreement with the main contact will be with the consent of the rest of the group and that no-one providing written authorisation has been coerced into agreeing to the complaint or outcomes; and
- If this option is taken, the main contact must accept or reject the outcome on behalf of the whole group.

An individual student that has entered into a group complaint cannot then submit a separate, individual complaint referring to the same issue raised in the group complaint. Where a group of students submit more than one complaint relating to the same substantive issue, UCFB may choose to treat those complaints as a single, group complaint.

### **Investigation and supporting information**

It is important that the student and staff member investigating the complaint understand the purpose and scope of the investigation. If the student's expectations appear to exceed what UCFB can reasonably provide, the student should receive written notification of this as soon as possible. Students are expected to provide at the time of submission of their complaint, all relevant documentation or other evidence and details of all issues, which they wish to be taken into consideration. Where this is not possible for good reason, students are expected to indicate what documentation or evidence is to follow. The person receiving the complaint ('the Investigating Officer') shall be entitled to impose a reasonable deadline by which this further information should be provided by the student. This deadline shall not normally be more than one month after the submission of the complaint and may be less. Timescales for consideration of the complaint will be halted whilst the provision of further information is anticipated. Unless there is good reason why the student cannot then meet that deadline, the investigator may then proceed to consider the complaint once that deadline has passed, even if the further information has not been provided.

Where the investigator believes that there is additional information which the student has not provided which is pertinent to the consideration of the complaint and which cannot readily be gathered from other sources, they may request that the student submits it and set a reasonable deadline (normally no more than 14 calendar days) for its submission. The timescale for consideration of the complaint will be halted whilst the provision of that further information is anticipated. Unless there proves to be good reason why the student cannot then meet that deadline, the Investigating Officer may then proceed to consider the complaint once that deadline has passed, even if the further information has not been provided.

### **Re-Classification of complaint**

UCFB reserves the right to reclassify a complaint as an academic appeal according to the nature of the subject matter of the complaint. The outcome of an academic appeal cannot be made the subject of a complaint except where there is possible material error in arriving at the decision. The final decision regarding a matter raised under this Complaints Policy or any of the associated procedures shall normally be considered to be the final decision of UCFB: there is no right to further consideration of the same matter under a different UCFB policy.

**Reasonable conduct**

It is expected that students, their representatives, and staff members should act reasonably and fairly towards each other in good faith and respect this Complaints Policy. UCFB has a responsibility to protect its staff against unacceptable behaviour according to its regulations and policies and action will be taken for any abuse of process.

**Confidentiality**

Complaints will be handled with an appropriate level of confidentiality, with information released only to those who need it for the purposes of investigating or responding to the complaint. Where it is necessary to obtain information from a third party in relation to the investigation, the third party should only be given as much detail about the complaint as is necessary, in order to obtain the information required from them.

Where a complaint has been raised against a student or member of staff and has been upheld, the student bringing the complaint will be advised of this. However, it may not be appropriate to share specific details affecting individual students or staff members particularly where disciplinary action is being taken. It is important that the student is advised of this at the earliest opportunity in order to manage expectations. Students may be advised that appropriate action is being taken but not necessarily be provided with any further detail.

**Reporting and Monitoring**

All complaints considered under Stages 1 and 2 of this Complaints Policy should be recorded and reported annually by the Resolutions Team. This will detail the number of complaints as well as the outcomes and will highlight any potential areas for enhancement or lessons learned.

UCFB will submit an annual report to UEL on any formal complaints. These reports will be collated with information on institutional-level reviews so that an annual report of all complaints can be provided to the UEL Academic Board. The UCFB Resolutions Team will oversee the tracking of complaints and recording of key data on behalf of the UCFB Academic Board. The annual report will identify and evaluate any issues for which further action needs to be taken.