

Student Complaints || Student Guidelines

What is a student complaint?

UCD is committed to supporting students in expressing dissatisfaction and seeking resolution to any problems encountered while studying here. The University defines a complaint as **an expression of significant or sustained dissatisfaction where a student seeks a specific action to address the issue, including an apology.**

To ensure that problems can be addressed quickly you should raise your concerns directly with the relevant person or area of the University. It may be possible for issues to be addressed simply and quickly without the need for a formal complaint. However, if you are unhappy with the response to your complaint you may wish to consider making a formal complaint under the University's [Student Complaint Policy](#).

What can I make a complaint about?

Formal student complaints can be made about the quality or standard of University services. This includes:

- Quality or standard of any service provided, or failure to provide a service.
- Quality of facilities or learning resources.
- Failure by the University to follow its administrative processes.
- Unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a staff member.
- An alleged action or inaction by the University or a member of its staff.

There is a separate process for complaints of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct. See [UCD Dignity and Respect](#).

Support and key contacts

The University is committed fostering a culture that encourages and supports students to come forward with concerns and complaints if they are experiencing issues. It is recognised that undertaking and being subject to a student complaint process can be a difficult experience for both students and staff members. Supports available to students seeking to raise concerns and submit complaints are highlighted below. Supports available to staff who are the subject of a complaint are highlighted in the Staff Guidelines.

- If you encounter a problem in the University, it is important that you feel free to raise a concern or submit a complaint without fear of disadvantage or recrimination.
- [Student Advisers](#) can offer support, information and advice to students who wish to raise a concern or make a formal complaint. Support is also available from [Students' Union Sabbatical Officers](#) and [UCD Chaplaincy](#).
- Advice on the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure is available from:
Dr Aoife Duignan, Student Complaints Officer
Email: student.complaints@ucd.ie // Tel: +353 (0)1 716 7135// [Student Complaints online information](#)

Raising concerns

- Raise issues experienced as quickly as possible.
- Approach the person directly involved in the situation that you are unhappy with. You can raise issues in person, over the telephone or via email.
- Try to remain factual in explaining your concern. Use polite and respectful language.
- All students and staff engaged in the pursuit and resolution of student concerns and complaints must do so in a manner that upholds the dignity and respect of all members of the University community.

The University is committed to supporting students in raising concerns but expects that students will not engage in frivolous or vexatious complaints or submit false information.

Before submitting a complaint: Stage 1 (Head of School/Unit)

Before submitting a formal complaint ensure that you have:

- Read and understood the Student Complaints Policy.
- Sought advice and support from your Student Adviser or another student support person, if required.
- Raised your concerns with the relevant person/area and waited for their response.
- Used clear, concise and respectful language in the Stage 1 complaint form.
- Outlined actions required to resolve the matter. These should be reasonable and proportionate to nature of your complaint.
- Attached all relevant documents that support your complaint. Evidence submitted should be as concise as possible and relevant to the complaint.

Before submitting a complaint: Stage 2 (University Investigation)

Before submitting a complaint at Stage two of the process, ensure that you have:

- Completed a Stage 2 complaint form and attached relevant supporting documentation, including the Stage 1 complaint submitted and the formal response received from the Head of School/Unit.
- Clearly stated the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the response to your Stage 1 complaint from the Head of School/Unit.
- Outlined what you would like to happen to resolve the matter. Ensure that you seek reasonable and proportionate remedies.
- Sought advice and support from your Student Adviser or another student support person, if required.

Student Complaint Process

 Informal Resolution	 Stage 1, Local Resolution	 Stage 2, University Investigation	 Completion of complaint process
<p>Raise your concern with the person quickly (within 20 working days). Seek advice on raising concerns from your Student Adviser.</p> <p>Await the response. If you are dissatisfied with the response move onto the next stage of the process.</p>	<p>Submit completed Stage 1 Student Complaint form to the Head of School/Unit where the issue arose (within 15 working days).</p> <p>A response will be sent to you (within 15 working days). If you remain dissatisfied you may wish to move on to the next stage of the process.</p>	<p>Submit a complaint at Stage 2, seeking an investigation, within 15 working days of receipt of the outcome at Stage 1 (from the relevant Head of School/Unit).</p> <p>Investigating Officer (member of staff) will be appointed.</p> <p>A Student Complaint investigation will be conducted and completed within 30 working days.</p>	<p>The Investigating Officer's report will be submitted to the Academic Council Committee on Student Appeals and Complaints for final decision.</p> <p>The outcome of the complaint will be sent to you.</p> <p>If you are unhappy with the handling of your complaint you can contact the Office of the Ombudsman.</p>