

## **AUB Online Student Complaint Procedure**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Student Complaint Procedure is the name given to the process under which you are able to complain about a course of study or a service offered by AUB Online.
- 1.2 AUB Online is a recognised affiliate college of Arts University Bournemouth, operated by CEG Digital Limited and run in partnership with the university to deliver a selection of its online programmes. As a result of this partnership, students will follow a different complaints processes depending on the nature of their complaint.

### **2. Policy to Follow**

- 2.1 If your complaint relates to the standard of a service received by an AUB Online Student Adviser, Course Adviser, Fees team member or the fee payment process you should follow the Complaints Policy detailed in this document.
- 2.2 If your complaint refers to the service provided by a third-party Fees provider (i.e., WorldPay/Flywire etc.), you should contact the third-party provider directly.
- 2.3 If your complaint relates to anything else, you should follow the AUB Student Complaints Procedure available at <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>.

### **3. Definition of a complaint**

- 3.1 Under this procedure a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about AUB Online's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of AUB Online. Examples of this might be where AUB Online has not followed its own policies and procedures, or where the service outlined in one of its published documents has not been delivered.
- 3.2 You should raise any complaint within 6 months of the cause of your complaint, or within 3 months of leaving AUB Online. AUB Online will not accept complaints which fall outside these timescales unless you can provide evidence that you were materially prevented from submitting a complaint more promptly.

### **4. Early Resolution**

- 4.1 The most effective way of raising and addressing any matter which is causing you concern is to discuss it directly with the person involved on an informal basis. AUB Online expects the majority of complaints to be resolved in this way.
- 4.2 If you do not feel able to attend mediation or believe that early resolution is not possible or appropriate, you should make a formal complaint.

### **5. Formal complaint**

- 5.1 You should contact the Director of University Partnerships, Nick Radley at [nick.radley@cambridgeonlinelearning.com](mailto:nick.radley@cambridgeonlinelearning.com), summarising your complaint and any

resolution you are seeking. You should make clear any attempts at Early Resolution which have been made, and the outcome. Additional details and supporting evidence should be provided.

- 5.2 The Director of University Partnerships can offer you advice about the complaints process and will undertake an initial evaluation to check that your complaint is appropriate for formal investigation under the AUB Online Student Complaint Procedure. The Director of University Partnerships may refer your complaint to a different procedure or may request that you take steps to resolve your complaint informally if you have not already done so. They will also check that your complaint has been raised within the timescales specified in 3.2 above.
- 5.3 The Director of University Partnerships will contact you within 5 working days to acknowledge receipt of your complaint. They will conduct an investigation into your complaint and will prepare a report outlining the findings. They will let you know how long the investigation is likely to take and will set a date by which you can expect to receive their report. This will usually be within 1 calendar month of receiving the details of your complaint. They may request a meeting with you to clarify and agree the issues to be investigated.
- 5.4 The Director of University Partnerships will provide you with a report detailing the outcome of their investigation (note that information relating to other staff or students may be masked for reasons of confidentiality). A copy will also be sent to Arts University Bournemouth.
- 5.5 You have up to 10 working days after receiving the report to let the Director of University Partnerships know if you wish the matter to progress to the Review stage of the Arts University Bournemouth Student Complaint Procedure.
- 5.6 You may request that your formal complaint is reviewed on the following grounds:
  - To request a review of the procedures that were followed at the Formal stage;
  - To request a consideration of whether the outcome stated in the report was reasonable, given all the circumstances;
  - That you have new material evidence which you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process
- 5.7 If you wish to progress your complaint to the Review stage you should state clearly the grounds for your request, in writing. If you do not notify the Director of University Partnerships of your wish to progress to the Review stage within 10 working days of receiving their report, they will assume that you do not wish to pursue your complaint and will issue a letter confirming that your complaint has been concluded.

## **6. Review Stage**

- 6.1 The Director of University Partnerships will refer your complaint to Arts University Bournemouth's Senior Investigating Officer who will arrange for your complaint to be reviewed by a member of the Vice Chancellor Executive team, or a nominee who is a member of the Vice Chancellor's Group who has not previously been involved with your complaint. The Senior Investigating Officer will provide the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) with copies of your original complaint and supporting documentation, including a copy of the investigation report.

- 6.2 The Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) will review your complaint and the grounds under which you have requested a review, and will make one of the following decisions following consideration of the complaint:
- a) That the complaint is not upheld. This decision will be made where the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) finds that you have not established sufficient grounds to substantiate the complaint or complaints alleged.
  - b) That the complaint is upheld. In this instance, the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) will recommend the action that should now be taken by the University, or its representatives, to redress the complaint. In making this judgement, the Vice Chancellor Executive team member (or nominee) will have due consideration for your own preferred resolution and may if appropriate overturn the outcome of the Formal stage.
  - c) That there are outstanding issues for investigation. In this instance, the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) will refer the outstanding issues to the Senior Investigating Officer. The Senior Investigating Officer will provide the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) with a report detailing the outcome of their additional investigations within 5 working days. You will also receive a copy of this report. The Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) will then make a judgement to uphold, or not uphold, your complaint.
- 6.3 The Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) will inform you of the outcome of their review in writing within 10 working days of the complaint being referred to them or, if there were outstanding issues for investigation, within 10 days of receiving the Senior Investigating Officer's additional report.
- 6.4 In all cases the decision of the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee) is the final stage of AUB's Students Complaint Procedure.

## **7. Completion of Procedures**

- 7.1 The Senior Investigating Officer will send a Completion of Procedures letter to you within 10 working days of the written notification from the Vice Chancellor Executive Team member (or nominee). This letter is the formal notification that all AUB Online and AUB procedures have been completed.
- 6.2 If you are not satisfied with the outcome and wish to pursue the matter further, you have the right to refer your complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). You must do this within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter. Details of the OIA will be enclosed with the Completion of Procedures letter or may be obtained from the Senior Investigating Officer. Information is also available from the OIA's website: [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)
- 6.3 Copies of all documents will be held confidentially by the Senior Investigating Officer and will be used for statistical monitoring purposes. An annual summary of all formal complaints is reported to AUB's Academic Board.