

Student Complaints

Procedure

Version: 16.00
Status: Final
Date: 26/06/2023

Student Complaints Procedure

Table of Contents

1. Summary	3
2. Principles	4
3. Definitions	5
4. Stages of Procedure.....	5
4.1 Stage 1: informal direct complaint at source	5
4.2 Stage 2: formal complaint to the Complaints Officer	6
4.3 Stage 3: review.....	7
5. Further options outside of UCEM.....	7
5.1 Higher Education Students (including apprentices, except those on Eastleigh College Apprenticeship Programmes)	7
5.2 Eastleigh College Apprenticeship Programmes	8
6. Student Complaints about UCEM Staff Conduct.....	8
7. Learning from complaints.....	9
8. Frequently Asked Questions	9
8.1 What is the timescale for making a complaint?	9
8.2 Can I get help to make my complaint?	10
8.3 Can someone make a complaint on my behalf?	10
8.4 Can a group of students make a complaint together?	10
8.5 Can I make an anonymous complaint?	11
8.6 What if I don't want to complain because it might affect my assessment?	11
8.7 Will the person I complain about find out?	11
8.8 How do I make a complaint about another student?	11
8.9 How will the complaint be resolved?	11
8.10 What support can I expect during the complaints process?	12
8.11 Who will respond to my complaint?	12
8.12 How will personal information be dealt with?	12
9. Guidelines for Members of Staff.....	12
Appendix A: Overview of UCEM Complaints Procedure.....	14

Student Complaints Procedure

1. Summary

The University College of Estate Management (UCEM) is committed to providing a high-quality learning experience through its programme provision and range of services. However, no service is perfect: mistakes can happen; things could be arranged better. Students are encouraged to let us know if things could be improved. There are lots of ways to let us know what needs to be improved, from speaking to your Student Representatives, responding to surveys on your modules or responding to the annual Student Experience Survey.

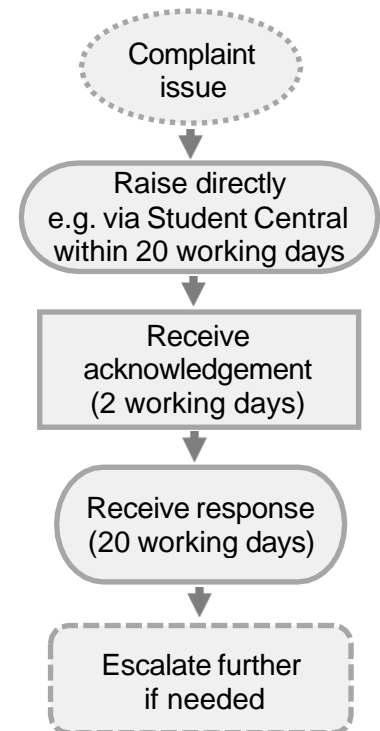
Sometimes, you may feel that the issue you have experienced warrants making a complaint. UCEM welcomes constructive complaints and encourages a positive environment where complaints can be dealt with effectively.

Definition: A “complaint” is defined as “*an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about UCEM’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of, UCEM*”.

Please note complaints are different from appeals. See the [Student Appeals Procedure \(opens new window\)](#) for more information.

How do I raise a complaint?

- You should first raise your complaint directly with the department at the source of the complaint, as soon as possible and normally within 20 working days of the issue arising. For example, if you have a complaint about a module, contact your module or programme leader directly, or if you have a complaint about admissions, contact the admissions team directly. If you are unsure who to raise your complaint to, you can raise an enquiry in Student Central.
- You will receive an acknowledgement within 2 working days.
- The relevant department at the source of the complaint will respond to your complaint (classed as a Stage 1 complaint) within 20 working days.
- The aim is to resolve the problem directly and informally at the earliest opportunity. It is anticipated that the majority of complaints will be resolved in this manner. However, if you are not satisfied with the department’s response, there are further options for escalation (see section four).



Worried about making a complaint?

We know that sometimes students worry about raising complaints, but we work to ensure that no student is disadvantaged because they raised a complaint. We believe in an open, fair, and accessible complaints procedure and we try to resolve your complaint promptly, fairly, and courteously. If we are not aware that there is a problem, we cannot put it right. Alerting us to problems can also help other students and future students to get a better service. By raising a complaint where you feel there is real justification, you are helping yourself, helping other students and helping UCEM. You can see examples of [How UCEM responds to Student Complaints](#) on the UCEM website.

See [section 8 for more frequently asked questions](#) about the complaints procedure.

Student Complaints Procedure

2. Principles

- 2.1 The [UK Quality Code for Higher Education \(opens new window\)](#) requires that UCEM have fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students. In practice, UCEM ensures its Student Complaints Procedure follows the [principles of a good complaints process as set out by the Office for the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education \(opens new window\)](#) i.e. Accessible, Clear, Fair, Independent, Confidential, Inclusive, Flexible, Proportionate, Timely and Improving the Student Experience.
- 2.2 The Student Complaints Procedure applies to all individuals who are applying to study or are studying on UCEM programmes. Former students may complain according to the timelines set out in this Procedure.
- 2.3 UCEM aims to handle complaints in a manner which:
- is clear and accessible, ensuring, as far as possible, that the parties involved are on an equal footing procedurally and able to participate fully in the proceedings, including assisting or otherwise facilitating the student in presentation of their case;
 - is proportionate and encourages early, informal resolution nearest to the source of the complaint;
 - is efficient, avoiding delay as far as is compatible with fairness and the proper consideration of the matter;
 - is fair and treats complaints courteously and with appropriate seriousness, sympathy, and confidentiality;
 - safeguards the interests and wellbeing of all those associated with a complaint; and
 - where relevant, ensures that UCEM practice improves as a result.
- 2.4 The procedures outlined below have been established with the aim, where possible, of resolving complaints informally and through negotiation between those individuals who are immediately concerned with the issue. UCEM recognises, however, that some complaints cannot be resolved by informal means alone and may require formal intervention. The formal procedure is therefore available to students in the event that informal pursuit of a complaint proves unsatisfactory.
- 2.5 UCEM is confident that the overwhelming majority of students will use this procedure in a positive spirit. However, it is possible that a very small minority may misuse the procedure. In exceptional circumstances, therefore, UCEM reserves the right to investigate complaints, and then to decline to consider any that are merely vexatious or abusive (including complaints made against staff due a protected characteristic held by the staff member). UCEM will provide a brief response outlining the reasons for deciding not to investigate further but will not enter into lengthy correspondence about such cases. Making repeated and/or unfounded false, malicious and/or vexatious complaints may be considered misconduct and result in the application of the [Disciplinary Procedure \(opens new window\)](#).
- 2.6 While using this procedure, UCEM expects that students and staff act reasonably and fairly towards each other. Unacceptable behaviour, as outlined in the UCEM [Code of Practice Chapter on Student Academic and Behavioural Conduct](#) (opens new window), will not be tolerated. UCEM reserves the right to pause investigation into a complaint if the student does not act reasonably and fairly with those involved in the complaint investigation.

Student Complaints Procedure

- 2.7 The complaints procedure is a stand-alone process. Any student raising a complaint should continue to engage with their studies, including any resubmissions on the premise that the original decision stands until their complaint outcome is provided. Engagement with the complaints procedure will not be recognized or considered as mitigating circumstances in accordance with UCEM's [Mitigating Circumstances Procedure](#) (opens in new window)

3. Definitions

- 3.1. A 'complaint' is defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about UCEM's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of, UCEM*'.
- 3.2. An 'appeal' is '*a request for a review of a decision taken by an individual or academic body charged with making decisions about students' progression, assessment, and awards*'. Examples include appealing against results, mitigating circumstances decisions, disciplinary or academic misconduct decisions. Appeals are dealt with through the [Student Appeals Procedure \(opens new window\)](#). A formal complaint cannot be raised whilst a matter is in the process of being considered as an appeal.

4. Stages of Procedure

If you wish to make a complaint, the steps that should be taken are detailed below. If your complaint is about staff conduct, see instead [section 6](#) for the procedure.

Before making a complaint, it is recommended that you seek advice and guidance from a trusted source, such as the Lead Student Representative, Student Support, your Apprenticeship Outcomes Officer, or your tutor. The Complaints Officer will be pleased to provide impartial advice regarding the Student Complaints Procedure.

If a complaint is deemed by UCEM to be of a particularly serious nature, UCEM reserves the right to move the complaint to formal investigation at the most appropriate stage of the procedures from the beginning.

Please note that there is a separate process for complaints for employers of apprenticeship students please see UCEM's [Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices](#) (opens new window).

4.1 Stage 1: informal direct complaint at source

- 4.1.1. The aim of Stage 1 is to resolve the problem directly and informally at the earliest opportunity. It is anticipated that the majority of complaints will be resolved this way.
- 4.1.2. You should first raise your complaint directly with the department at the source of the complaint, as soon as possible and normally within 20 working days of the issue arising. For example, if you have a complaint about a module, contact your module or programme leader directly; if you have a complaint about admissions, contact the admissions team directly; or if you have a complaint about your apprenticeship, you can contact your Apprenticeship Outcomes Officer directly. If you are unsure who to raise your complaint to, you can raise an enquiry in Student Central.
- 4.1.3. Where possible, you should raise your complaint immediately, and within 20 working days of the cause for complaint. Raising your complaint promptly means that a better investigation into your complaint can take place and usually means there will be more options available to UCEM to put the issue right.
- 4.1.4. You will receive an initial acknowledgement of your complaint within two working days.

Student Complaints Procedure

- 4.1.5. Your complaint will be investigated by a member of staff from the department at the source of the complaint and they will provide you a full response to your complaint within 20 working days. They may provide this response verbally, or via a discussion forum or other media. If the response is provided verbally, a summary of the response will follow in writing.
- 4.1.6. We try to resolve all complaints when you first raise them but, if you are not satisfied with the action taken at this level, you may choose to proceed to Stage 2 of the procedure within 20 working days of receiving the outcome of Stage 1. See section 4.2 for details on how to raise a Stage 2 complaint.
- 4.1.7. If you feel unable to approach the relevant department or Student Central to raise a Stage 1 complaint, please contact the Complaints Officer on complaints@ucem.ac.uk and advise them of this.
- 4.1.8. The staff member responding to your Stage 1 complaint must also send a summary of the outcome to the Complaints Officer on complaints@ucem.ac.uk. The Complaints Officer will record this and, if appropriate, share it internally within UCEM to improve the student experience. This allows complaints to be recorded so trends can be identified and acted on to improve UCEM's service.

4.2 Stage 2: formal complaint to the Complaints Officer

- 4.2.1. You can raise a Stage 2 complaint if you are not satisfied with the action taken at Stage 1. You can raise a Stage 2 complaint by completing the [Student Complaint Form](#) (downloads document) and submitting it, along with any relevant evidence, to the Complaints Officer via email on complaints@ucem.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can send the completed form and evidence to the following address:

Address: The Complaints Officer, University College of Estate Management, Horizons, 60 Queen's Road, Reading, RG1 4BS
- 4.2.2. Relevant evidence could include medical evidence, communication on the VLE or copies of relevant correspondence. All evidence received will be confidential, and only those who need to review the evidence as part of the complaints process will have access to the information.
- 4.2.3. You will receive an initial acknowledgement of your complaint within two working days.
- 4.2.4. For former students, UCEM reserves the right not to investigate a complaint at Stage 2 if it is initially raised significantly outside of expected timescales.
- 4.2.5. After a brief investigation by the complaints officer into the issues raised, the complainant will be contacted again to be advised of the timescale of the inquiry into the complaint
- 4.2.6. The Complaints Officer will allocate your complaint to an 'Investigating Officer' who has not been previously involved with the complaint. The 'Investigating Officer' will be a senior member of UCEM staff.
- 4.2.7. To investigate the complaint, the Investigating Officer will review all papers submitted and meet with relevant members of staff. The Investigating Officer may also speak with you if they need to clarify any facts of the complaint.
- 4.2.8. You will receive a written response within 20 working days of the date of receipt of your Stage 2 complaint.

Student Complaints Procedure

- 4.2.9. If you are not satisfied with the action taken at this level, you may choose to proceed to Stage 3 of the procedure within 20 working days of receiving the outcome of Stage 2. See section 4.3 for details on how to raise a Stage 3 complaint.
- 4.2.10. The Complaints Officer will record the outcome of your complaint and, if appropriate, share internally within UCEM to improve the student experience.

4.3 Stage 3: review

- 4.3.1. You can raise a Stage 3 complaint if you are not satisfied with the action taken at Stage 2. You can raise a Stage 3 complaint by responding to the Stage 2 response within 20 working days of receipt and requesting a Stage 3 review.
- 4.3.2. The Stage 3 review is completed by an external independent reviewer, normally an Independent Trustee from the Board of Trustees, who sits outside of UCEM's management structure.
- 4.3.3. The purpose of the review is to ensure that appropriate procedures have been followed correctly by UCEM, and the outcome is reasonable, as well as to consider any new evidence submitted. The reviewer will not re-investigate the complaint unless new evidence has been presented.
- 4.3.4. UCEM's Executive will consider the report from the Stage 3 Reviewer when providing UCEM's response to your Stage 3 complaint. The Complaints Officer will issue the Stage 3 response within 20 working days of receipt of your request for a Stage 3 review. You will also receive a Completion of Procedures letter within 28 days, which details UCEM's final response to the complaint and confirms that you have reached the end of the UCEM complaints procedure.
- 4.3.5. This is the end of UCEM's internal complaint procedures. If you are not satisfied with the action taken at this level, there are some further options available which are outlined in section 5.

5. Further options outside of UCEM

5.1 Higher Education Students (including apprentices, except those on Eastleigh College Apprenticeship Programmes)

- 5.1.1 If you have completed the three stages of UCEM's Student Complaints Procedure and are still not satisfied, you can choose to raise your complaint, free of charge, to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) within 12 months of being issued with a Completion of Procedures letter from UCEM.
- 5.1.2 The OIA is an independent body set up to review student complaints about higher education providers. For further information about the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education and how to submit a complaint please visit the [OIA website \(opens new window\)](#). Please note there are some complaints that the OIA cannot look at and these are outlined on their website.

Student Complaints Procedure

5.2 Eastleigh College Apprenticeship Programmes

- 5.2.1. If you are an apprentice enrolled via Eastleigh College, i.e., where Eastleigh College is the Lead Provider, prior to the OIA, you should submit your complaint in writing to:

Deputy Chief Executive (Teaching & Learning),
Eastleigh College,
Chestnut Avenue,
Eastleigh,
SO50 5FS.

Please see the [Complaints Procedure on the Eastleigh College website \(opens new window\)](#) for more details.

6. Student Complaints about UCEM Staff Conduct

- 6.1. If your complaint is about a member of staff's conduct you must submit a formal complaint by submitting a completed [Student Complaint Form \(opens new window\)](#) to complaints@ucem.ac.uk as soon as possible and normally within 20 working days.
- 6.2. You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt within 2 working days.
- 6.3. For former students, UCEM reserves the right not to investigate a complaint about staff conduct if it is initially raised significantly outside of expected timescales.
- 6.4. Your complaint will initially be reviewed by the Director of HR who will determine who is the best person to investigate your complaint. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Director of HR to lead the investigation, either informally or formally in accordance with the UCEM Staff Disciplinary Procedure.
- 6.5. To investigate your complaint, the Investigating Officer will review all papers submitted and meet with relevant members of staff. The Investigating Officer may also speak with you if they need to clarify any facts of the complaint.
- 6.6. We will try to provide you a written response to your formal complaint within 20 working days of receipt of your complaint as required by Stage 2 of the procedure (see section 4.2). However, sometimes the nature of employment-related investigations means they can be complex and lengthy, and UCEM is required to adhere to employment legislation and statutory guidance throughout the process. In these cases, UCEM will aim to provide you a response as soon as reasonably possible and will keep you updated on progress.
- 6.7. Due to the confidential nature of employment investigations, UCEM may not be able to disclose the findings of the investigation, nor confirm what action has, may, or may not be taken as a result of the outcome of the investigation. This includes whether UCEM will deal with the complaint on an informal or formal basis with the member of staff. However, UCEM will still provide a formal written response outlining UCEM's position in as much detail as is possible to give.
- 6.8. If it is stated that any part of the complaint response is provided on a confidential basis, you have an obligation to keep this information confidential.
- 6.9. The Complaints Officer will record the outcome of your complaint and, if appropriate, share internally within UCEM to improve the student experience.

Student Complaints Procedure

- 6.10. If you are not satisfied with the action taken in response to your formal complaint, you should respond to complaints@ucem.ac.uk to explain why within 20 working days of receipt
- 6.11. The Stage 3 review is completed by an external independent reviewer, normally an Independent Trustee from the Board of Trustees, who sits outside of UCEM's management Structure (Stage 3). The purpose of the review is to ensure that appropriate procedures have been followed correctly by UCEM, and the outcome is reasonable, as well as to consider any new evidence submitted. The reviewer will not re-investigate the complaint unless new evidence has been presented.
- 6.12. We will try to provide you a written response within 20 working days but again this may not be possible if constrained by employment-related investigations. In these cases, UCEM will aim to provide you a response as soon as reasonably possible and will keep you updated on progress.
- 6.13. This review is the end of UCEM's internal complaint procedures. If you are not satisfied with the action taken from this review, there are some further options available which are outlined in section 5.

7. Learning from complaints

- 7.1. UCEM want to ensure that we learn from complaints to improve the student experience. To help us to do this, details of all complaints, including outcome, are recorded. This record will be analysed for trends that we can learn from. Anonymised details of complaints are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the UCEM Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees and an annual report is given to UCEM's deliberative committees.

8. Frequently Asked Questions

8.1 What is the timescale for making a complaint?

- 8.1.1. You should normally initially raise your complaint within 20 working days of the cause for complaint. See section 4.1 for information about how to submit your complaint.
- 8.1.2. If you are not satisfied with the action taken at Stage 1, you may choose to proceed to Stage 2 of the procedure within 20 working days of receiving the outcome of Stage 1.
- 8.1.3. If you are not satisfied with the action taken at Stage 2, you may choose to proceed to Stage 3 of the procedure within 20 working days of receiving the outcome of Stage 2.
- 8.1.4. If you are not satisfied with the action taken at Stage 3, there are some further options available which are outlined in section 5.
- 8.1.5. UCEM will respond to all Stage 1 complaints even if made after the deadline. However, you should be aware that if a complaint is made outside the deadlines stated, this may hinder our ability to fully investigate the complaint or provide appropriate outcomes. UCEM will only consider Stage 2 or 3 complaints made after the deadlines in exceptional circumstances where there is medical evidence, such as mental health issues, which has prevented submission. Such requests will be considered in consultation with the Disability and Wellbeing Adviser, to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010

Student Complaints Procedure

- 8.1.6. For former students, UCEM reserves the right not to investigate a complaint at Stage 2 if it is initially raised significantly outside of expected timescales.

8.2 Can I get help to make my complaint?

- 8.2.1. The Complaints Officer is happy to provide impartial advice on the complaints procedure, how to present your complaint and to help you if you struggle to formulate ideas in writing. You can contact the Complaints Officer on complaints@ucem.ac.uk.
- 8.2.2. You can also seek support from the Lead Student Representative throughout the complaints process.
- 8.2.3. UCEM has a dedicated Disability and Welfare Team that can provide information, advice, and guidance to support disabled students to fully engage with UCEM processes. If students are experiencing any barriers to engaging in a process or are finding their mental health is being impacted, they can contact wellbeing@ucem.ac.uk for support.

8.3 Can someone make a complaint on my behalf?

- 8.2.3. You should normally submit your own complaint because you are the expert in your own experiences.
- 8.2.4. However, if you have a disability or other impairment which makes you unable to make your complaint effectively, please contact the Complaints Officer on complaints@ucem.ac.uk for details on how to appoint a representative.
- 8.3.1. If you are an apprentice:
- While your employer cannot raise a complaint “on your behalf”, we do have a separate Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices where your employer can raise a complaint with us. However, if your employer raises the complaint, we will deal directly with them and we will not provide you a copy of our response.
 - You can choose to make an individual student complaint using this procedure even if your employer also chooses to use separate Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices to make a complaint.
 - If an issue is raised by both you and your apprentice employer, the issue will be investigated using both this procedure and the Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices. Separate responses will be provided to each party, taking into account the different perspectives, the level of information that can be shared, and the different resolutions appropriate for apprentices and employers.

8.4 Can a group of students make a complaint together?

- 8.4.1. If a group of students are dissatisfied and wish to make a complaint, a group complaint may be submitted, following the usual complaints process. However, a representative should be nominated from the group who will be the contact person with UCEM. It will be the responsibility of the representative to liaise with the other students who are part of the group complaint. Each student forming part of the group complaint needs to confirm (e.g., via a signature, or email) that they consent to the representative acting on their behalf.

Student Complaints Procedure

8.5 Can I make an anonymous complaint?

- 8.5.1. Only in exceptional circumstances can an anonymous complaint be made, and there must be exceptional reasons why the complaint has to be anonymous. These should be discussed with the Complaints Officer in the first instance.

8.6 What if I don't want to complain because it might affect my assessment?

- 8.6.1. UCEM has made a commitment that no student will be penalised for complaining, and guidance has been given to academic staff to this effect. Members of staff involved in handling the various stages of a particular complaint are obliged to ensure that such a complaint does not influence the assessment of your academic work, or the way in which you are treated.

8.7 Will the person I complain about find out?

- 8.7.1. Individuals who are the subject of a complaint are entitled to know who is complaining and the nature of the complaint. If you are at all concerned about this, you should get advice from the Complaints Officer. If, in exceptional circumstances and for justifiable documented reasons, you wish to remain anonymous (see 8.5), this may be considered, for example, in the initial stages of harassment procedures. However, the Complaints Officer will normally wish to undertake confidential discussions in person with you.

8.8 How do I make a complaint about another student?

- 8.8.1. If you need to make a complaint about another student, you can contact the Complaints Officer in the first instance on complaints@ucem.ac.uk. The Complaints Officer will then provide advice on which of UCEM's student behaviour procedures is most appropriate to use, for example, the Anti-bullying and Harassment Procedure, the Disciplinary Procedure, the Academic Misconduct Procedure.

8.9 How will the complaint be resolved?

- 8.9.1. When making any sort of complaint, it is always worth thinking about how the complaint can be resolved and what UCEM can do to address the problem. This can help you when writing the complaint and makes it clear to the person addressing the complaint what outcome is desired.
- 8.9.2. Having considered your complaint, UCEM will find that your complaint is either:
- justified;
 - partly justified; or
 - not justified.
- 8.9.3. UCEM will ensure, as far as we reasonably can, that where a complaint is found to be justified or partly justified, appropriate corrective action is taken.

Student Complaints Procedure

8.10 What support can I expect during the complaints process?

- 8.10.1. The Complaints Officer is there to provide advice and guidance throughout the complaints process. The Complaints Officer can help determine whether your case is best dealt with as a complaint, or a complaint about staff conduct or using another one of UCEM's other procedures. The Complaints Officer will also guide you through the various stages of the complaints process.
- 8.10.2. You can also seek support from the Lead Student Representative throughout the complaints process.
- 8.10.3. If you are an apprenticeship student, your Apprenticeship Officer can also provide advice and guidance.
- 8.10.4. If students are experiencing any barriers to engaging in a process or are finding their mental health is being impacted, they can contact wellbeing@ucem.ac.uk for support.

8.11 Who will respond to my complaint?

- 8.11.1. Who responds to your complaint will depend on which stage of the complaints process you are at. At Stage 1 (the informal stage), an appropriate person within the department at the source of the complaint will respond. At Stage 2, the Investigating Officer who investigates and responds to your complaint will be a senior member of UCEM staff. At Stage 3, the reviewer will be an external independent reviewer, normally an Independent Trustee from the Board of Trustees, and the complaint outcome will be approved by UCEM's Executive.

8.12 How will personal information be dealt with?

- 8.12.1. UCEM will treat students' personal information gathered on complaints confidentially, in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Sensitive personal information gathered through the complaint will only be disclosed to those who need to investigate the complaint and provide a response. Relevant case information will be disclosed within UCEM only to support providing a good student experience.
- 8.12.2. Identifiable student information on complaints will be retained for 3 years from the date of completion of the complaints process. Completion may occur at stage 1, 2, or 3, depending on whether you have decided to progress your complaint or not.
- 8.12.3. In order to preserve the confidentiality of others, you are asked not to include unnecessary personal information about third parties such as family members when submitting a complaint. Under the GDPR, UCEM is required to notify third parties if it is processing their information, so please think carefully before submitting personal information about yourselves or others. You may wish to seek advice from UCEM's Data Protection Officer or Complaints Officer.

9. Guidelines for Members of Staff

General

- 9.1. All members of staff must encourage a positive environment where contact with, and feedback from, students is welcomed, and constructive complaints can be dealt with effectively.

Student Complaints Procedure

- 9.2. All members of staff must have a good working knowledge of the Complaints Procedure and its underlying principles. UCEM will notify staff of where this procedure can be accessed and will advise of any updates.
- 9.3. All members of staff must have due regard to treating students' personal information gathered on complaints confidentially, in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Sensitive personal information gathered through the complaint should be appropriately stored and only disclosed to those who need to investigate the complaint and provide a response. Relevant case information can be disclosed within UCEM only to support providing a good student experience.

For those responding to complaints

- 9.4. Complaints should be dealt with as near to the source as possible, in a timely manner and progressed to the next stage of the complaints procedures as appropriate.
- 9.5. Staff are encouraged to speak with students directly to clarify their understanding of the complaint.
- 9.6. Members of staff involved in handling the various stages of complaints are obliged to ensure that student complaining is not disadvantaged either in the manner of treatment or in discrimination in academic assessment as a result of raising the complaint.
- 9.7. All complaints must be reported to the Complaints Officer via complaints@ucem.ac.uk so they can be recorded, trends can be identified and acted on to improve UCEM's service.

The Complaints Officer

- 9.8. Clear written records of the various stages of the complaints procedure must be confidentially maintained, in accordance with data protection guidance, and with a note of decisions and actions taken (with dates) and a record of outcomes.
- 9.9. The Complaints Officer must ensure that any members of staff involved in a student complaint are kept informed of the outcome of each stage of the process and of how the matter has been resolved, including the Apprenticeship Team for all complaints involving apprenticeship students (via the Director of Apprenticeships).

Appendix A: Overview of UCEM Complaints Procedure

