

Timeframes

Students are requested to raise any concerns as soon as possible so that the University can take action as soon as possible, usually within 28 days. However, sometimes the behaviour of an individual may have an emotional impact on the student, which prevents them from initially reporting the matter. This means that the University is often able to extend the timeframe, particularly where the student is still a current student and interacting with the staff member. If in doubt, ask for information at: OSCCA@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Flowchart of processes for student complaints about staff behaviour

Unsure whether to make a formal complaint?

Ask [OSCCA](#), the team can provide information by email or meeting about:

- The stages of the complaint process
- Confidentiality – who will know about your complaint
- The protection that is put in place for you during and after a complaint process
- University, College & Department/Faculty support
- The type of outcome you would receive
- Timeframes for initiating procedures
- Timeframes for investigation

A student has a concern about the behaviour of a member of University staff

Anonymous feedback

How to initiate

If a student does not feel comfortable enough to make a named complaint, the student can email OSCCA@admin.cam.ac.uk to set up a meeting to tell a member of the OSCCA team about their concerns.

What happens next?

OSCCA will share the anonymised information with HR or a relevant senior staff member. An informal conversation will take place with the staff member, without sharing any identifying details about the student.

Receiving the outcome

Due to the anonymous nature of the feedback, the student will not receive any outcome through this mechanism.

Local resolution

How to initiate

A student can approach the staff member themselves, or a more senior member of staff within the Department, Faculty or Service (for example, the Director of Undergraduate or Postgraduate Education) to raise their concern, either in person or by email.

What happens next?

The staff member may request further information from the student. The detail of the concern will be shared with the relevant staff member, if the student has initially contacted a more senior staff member.

Receiving the outcome

The student should receive an outcome within 21 days confirming any action that has been taken.

Next steps

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they can submit a formal complaint form within 28 days.

Formal complaint

How to initiate

If a student's concerns are serious or if local resolution did not resolve the concern, students can make a formal complaint using the [Student Complaint Procedure](#) by completing the [Formal Complaint Form](#).

What happens next?

Within 7 days of submitting the form, the student will receive a letter confirming:

- The next steps of the process
- How future interaction with the staff member will be prevented/limited
- When the staff member will be informed
- The likely timeframe for investigation
- The support available for the student

The Student Complaint Procedure may be amended to enable HR to carry out the investigation.

Investigation meeting

The student may be requested to attend an investigation meeting with the investigator. The meeting is to ensure the full detail of the complaint is captured. The investigator will be independent and outside the department/faculty/service of the staff member. The student can bring a supporter to this meeting.

Case updates

The student will normally receive a case update every few weeks – investigations can take a few months if they are complex.

Receiving the outcome

Once the investigation has completed, the student will receive an outcome (whether the complaint is upheld or dismissed) and any remedy or action that is required of the staff member that has a direct impact on the student.

Review Stage

If the student is dissatisfied with the complaint outcome, the student has 14 days to request a review of the decision. The review will look at the University's handling of the complaint and will not re-investigate the staff member.

Complaint to the OIA

If the student is dissatisfied with the review outcome, the student has 12 months to raise a complaint with the external ombudsman for HE students, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).