DISCIPLINARY AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

This procedure shall apply to all complaints made by members of UWESU (The Students' Union at UWE) about the behaviour of other members of The Students' Union.

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 The member making the complaint shall be referred to throughout this document as "the complainant."

1.2 The member being complained about shall be referred to throughout this document as "the respondent."

1.3 The term "incident" shall, for the purpose of this document, refer to incidents where members have been suspended from use of any The Students' Union facilities.

1.4 The term "elected officer" shall, for the purpose of this document refer to any member of The Students' Union Executive.

1.5 Behaviour which may result in investigation includes but is not limited to:

1.5.1 Bringing The Students' Union into disrepute
1.5.2 Anti-social behaviour, contrary to The Students' Union's and University's policies
1.5.3 Inappropriate, threatening or abusive behaviour towards others on social media platforms, or the misuse of social media accounts in the name of a student group
1.5.4 Bullying and harassment, including any unwanted conduct, cyberbullying, or online abuse that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment (whether in person or via digital spaces)
1.5.5 Threatening behaviour towards students or staff: this may be verbal or physical
1.5.6 Inappropriate behaviour: due to intoxication or otherwise
1.5.7 Hate crimes and hate incidents, including any crimes or behaviour motivated by prejudice, hatred, or intolerance targeted at individuals based on protected characteristics (such as race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender identity)
1.5.8 Vandalism: damage to The Students' Union or University property, including graffiti
1.5.9 Theft, including intellectual property
1.5.10 Assault on students or staff
1.5.11 Use/possession/distribution of illegal or controlled substances
1.5.12 Breach of The Students' Union's constitution
1.5.13 Breaches of laws impacting on the efficient running of The Students' Union
1.5.14 Fraud
1.5.15 Bringing malicious complaints as part of this process

1.6 This procedure also applies to any student or group of students who claim to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of having exercised their right to opt out of Student Membership under the Articles.

2. CODE OVERVIEW

2.1 This code applies equally to all members of The Students' Union as defined within the Byelaws.

2.2 This code covers actions that occur:
2.2.1 On Students' Union premises
2.2.2 Whilst representing The Students' Union, or participating in The Students' Union activities
2.2.3 By a visitor (s) of a member

2.3 This code does not cover the conduct of The Students' Union staff which is dealt with under The Students' Union staff handbook.

2.4 This code is used in collaboration with The Licensing Act 2003. Any action taken at the time of the incident is, at the discretion of the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS), under Licensing Law.

3. NON-DISCLOSURE

3.1 To ensure The Students' Union protects staff and maintains a confidential relationship with and between those involved in any complaint; informal and/or formal, information relating to the complaint will not be discussed with any third party.

3.2 If the complaint is a breach of the UWE's Student Conduct Policy, this may be disclosed to the Student Casework Team where it is deemed appropriate.

4. INFORMAL ACTION

4.1 Where possible, The Students' Union will try to resolve matters informally by discussing the issue with those involved however, if for any reason they are unhappy with the outcome of the informal action, they may choose to proceed to the formal stage as detailed in section 6 of this Procedure.

5. INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

5.1 Full incident investigations will be undertaken by The Students' Union.

5.2 All finished investigations requiring further action will be forwarded onto the CEO, who will treat them as if they are a complaint and may move into the formal procedure in section 6 of this Procedure.

5.3 Where appropriate, The Students' Union at UWE and UWE Bristol may carry out joint investigations into complaints received, establishing joint recommendations in line with their respective policies and procedures.

6. FORMAL ACTION

6.1 There are some circumstances where the behaviour will constitute a disciplinary offence and, in such circumstances, The Students' Union will move to the formal stage of this Procedure.

7. REPORTING OF A COMPLAINT

7.1 Complaints should be in writing to the CEO of the Students' Union who will investigate the matter under this procedure.

7.2 Complaint forms can be located at: thestudentsunion.co.uk/union/contact-us/complaints/

7.3 Members can declare the need for support to complete the form to the CEO and this will be provided.

8. ACTING ON A COMPLAINT

8.1 The CEO shall either authorise an investigation or write to the complainant explaining why the complaint is not being pursued.

8.2 Both the respondent and complainant shall be informed, in writing, within 7 working days of the complaint being raised and given notice of a date for any disciplinary committee meeting.

8.3 Where the complaint may breach UWE Bristol Student Conduct Policy, it will be referred to the UWE Student Conduct Team for investigation prior to commencing The Students' Union at UWEs own investigation process.

Respondent(s) will remain suspended from activity while the Conduct Team complete their investigation and/or The Students' Union at UWE completes its own investigation.

9. INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT

9.1 The complaint will be investigated by an elected officer and a Students' Union manager.

9.2 Following on from the complaint investigation three courses of action may be recommended:

9.2.1 No further action is deemed necessary, and the complaint is dropped

9.2.2 The complaint to be resolved informally or formally either through a written warning or establishing a mediation process

9.2.3 The complaint is passed onto the Disciplinary Committee.

9.3 During the period of investigation the respondent(s) may be suspended from The Students' Union activities and premises.

9.4 The recommendations from the investigation are to be sent to the CEO who shall formally notify the respondent and complainant of the outcome of the investigation.

9.5 Where appropriate and investigation has been carried out by UWE Bristol. The Students Union at UWE will take UWE Bristol recommendations into consideration, and may not be required to carry out its own investigation.

9.6 Where a complaint is made by a student regarding their dealings with The Students' Union or claims of disadvantage due to opting out of membership, provisions can be made for an independent person appointed by the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) to investigate and report on the complaint.

10. THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

10.1 The Students' Union Disciplinary Committee shall comprise:

10.1.1 Two elected officers

10.1.2 A Students' Union manager or their nominee (in an advisory capacity)

10.2 No member of the Disciplinary Committee shall have either a conflict of interest or previous involvement with the offence under consideration.

10.3 Before the Disciplinary Committee meeting the respondent shall be provided with formal details of the nature of the complainant's original complaint and any additional witness statements relating to the complaint.

10.4 The author of a complaint, incident and/or supporting information shall be treated with the highest regard for confidentiality.

10.5 The respondent will be allowed to bring a fellow UWE Bristol student with them to the hearing; who shall submit their student number to the chair of the committee no later than 48 hours in advance of any meeting.

11. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE INVESTIGATION PROCESS

11.1 The meeting will proceed in the following manner:
11.1.1 Results of the investigation will be presented
11.1.2 Witnesses called as appropriate
11.1.3 The Disciplinary Committee will have the opportunity to ask questions
11.1.4 The respondent will respond to the complaint, either in person or in writing calling witnesses where appropriate
11.1.5 The Disciplinary Committee will have the opportunity to ask questions of the respondent and/or witnesses
11.1.6 Everyone apart from members of the Disciplinary Committee will leave the meeting
11.1.7 The Committee will make a decision based only on the evidence presented

11.2 Although the respondent's attendance at the Disciplinary Committee is not mandatory, the complaint will be heard in their absence and action taken, unless good reason is given for non-attendance. An alternative date may be arranged if The Students' Union deems appropriate.

11.3 Where necessary The Students' Union at UWE will make every endeavour to ensure that the complainant and/or their witnesses do not come into direct contact with the respondent and/or their witnesses during the Disciplinary Committee proceedings.

11.4 All issues raised at the Disciplinary Committee are confidential.

11.5 If there is Police and/or a National Governing Body involvement in the investigation of an incident, The Students' Union disciplinary action will be suspended until the Police or other body's action is concluded, or the outcome of any court case known.

11.6 During the course of a police investigation the respondent(s) will be barred from The Students' Union premises and activities until the conclusion of the Police action; this is not an assumption of guilt.

11.7 It is the responsibility of the respondent to formally inform The Students' Union that the Police action is concluded, providing appropriate paperwork for the purpose of The Students' Union Disciplinary file.

12. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE SANCTIONS

12.1 The Disciplinary Committee may take the following actions as a result of the hearing:
12.1.1 No action
12.1.2 Request for a written apology
12.1.3 Fine to the value of damage done and/or meet losses and/or costs
12.1.4 A final written warning
12.1.5 Suspension from The Students' Union and its activities in accordance with guidelines

12.1.6 Inform the University and any relevant authorities

12.2 All decisions of the Disciplinary Committee will be communicated in writing to the respondent and complainant within 7 working days of the hearing.

12.3 The Students' Union can bring procedures against a complainant, if a complaint is deemed to be malicious.

13. APPEAL PROCESS

13.1 Appeals against the decision may be made within 7 working days if additional, previously unconsidered information is made available which may have a significant impact on the original complainant by the Disciplinary Committee.

13.2 The appeal must be in writing to the CEO, stating the reasons for the request.

14. THE APPEALS COMMITTEE

14.1 The Students' Union at UWE Appeals Committee shall comprise:
14.1.1 Two elected officers,
14.1.2 Students' Union manager or their nominee (in an advisory capacity.)

14.2 No member of the Appeal Committee shall have either a conflict of interest or previous involvement with the offence under consideration, or with the conduct of the disciplinary committee.

14.3 Appeals will be heard as soon as practicable after the appeal has been submitted.

14.4 The appeal hearings will follow the procedures laid out in section 11 of this Procedure.

14.5 The Appeals Committee has the authority to change or confirm the sanctions issued by the Disciplinary Committee.

14.6 The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and binding.

15. DISCIPLINARY RECORDS AND ACCRUED SANCTIONS

15.1 Records of all investigations will be maintained for a duration of 3 years.

15.2 The Students' Union reserves the right to accrue disciplinary penalties issued under section 12 Disciplinary Committee Sanctions, as appropriate.

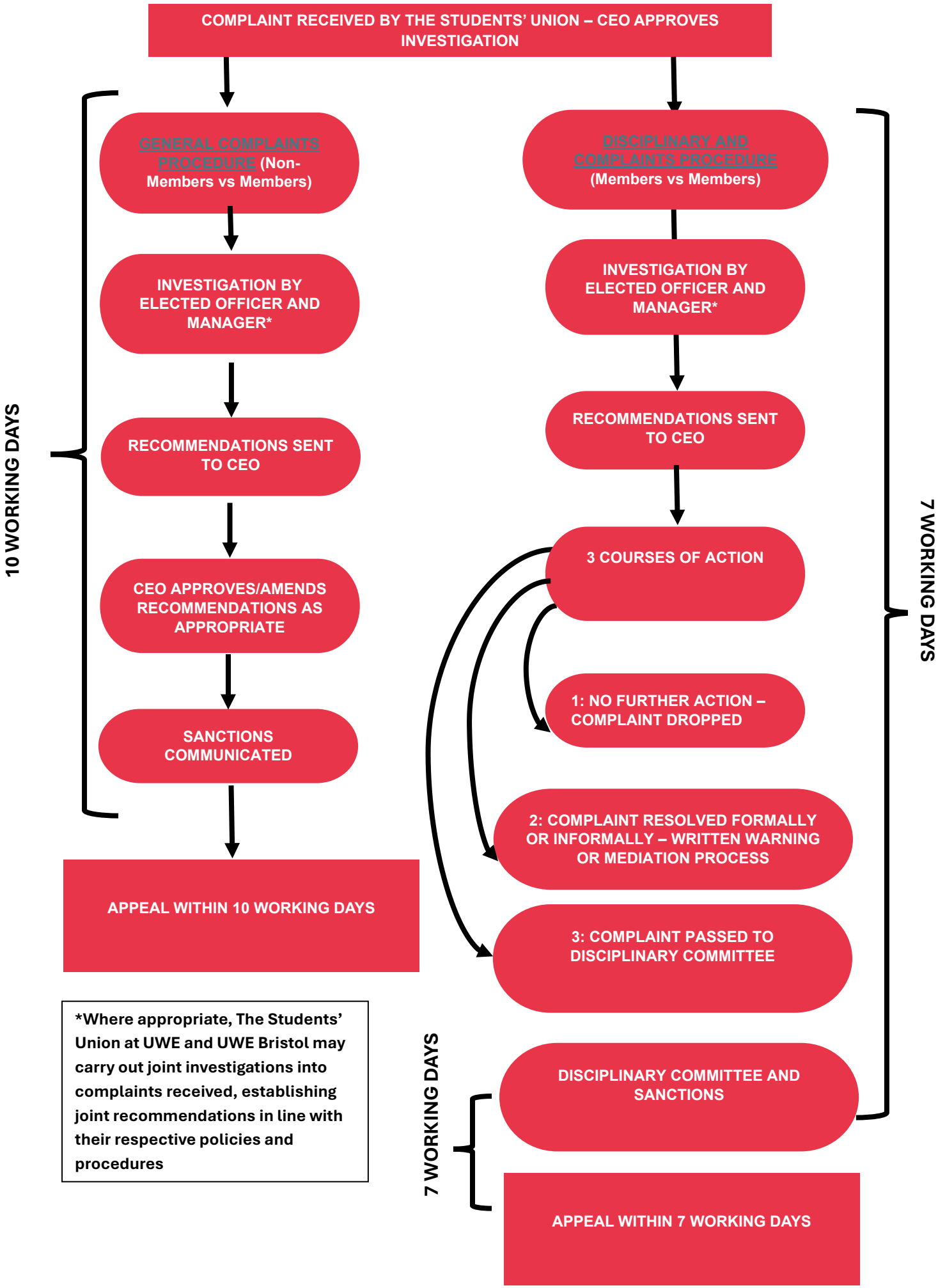
15.3 The Students' Union reserves the right, where appropriate, to reopen an investigation or disciplinary issue at any stage.

16. **POLICY REVIEW AND GOVERNANCE**

16.1 Review Frequency: this procedure will be reviewed every 3 years.

Approved by: The Students’ Union Board of Trustees

Date: October 2026


COMPLAINT RECEIVED BY THE STUDENTS' UNION – CEO APPROVES INVESTIGATION
GENERAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (Non-Members vs Members)
INVESTIGATION BY ELECTED OFFICER AND MANAGER*
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CEO
CEO APPROVES/AMENDS RECOMMENDATIONS AS APPROPRIATE
SANCTIONS COMMUNICATED
APPEAL WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS
10 WORKING DAYS
DISCIPLINARY AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (Members vs Members)
INVESTIGATION BY ELECTED OFFICER AND MANAGER*
RECOMMENDATIONS SENT TO CEO
3 COURSES OF ACTION
1: NO FURTHER ACTION – COMPLAINT DROPPED
2: COMPLAINT RESOLVED FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY – WRITTEN WARNING OR MEDIATION PROCESS
3: COMPLAINT PASSED TO DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE
DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE AND SANCTIONS
APPEAL WITHIN 7 WORKING DAYS
7 WORKING DAYS
7 WORKING DAYS
*Where appropriate, The Students' Union at UWE and UWE Bristol may carry out joint investigations into complaints received, establishing joint recommendations in line with their respective policies and procedures