

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING COMPLAINTS POLICY

What is a complaint?

The University Development Office defines a complaint as “an expression of discontent by a person or persons receiving a service from the charity that cannot be immediately resolved at point of delivery, and about which the complainant desires a follow-up action is taken and a response provided”.

Fundraising complaints are further defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction at any aspect of the Open University Development Office fundraising activities including administrative practices or procedures”.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will not be accepted by the University Development Office as complaints can only be investigated properly when full background information can be gathered. We will not be able to respond to any complaint or feedback submitted anonymously.

Time limits

All complaints will be dealt with in a timely fashion from receipt as shown below in working days:

- Day 1-2: the complaint on receipt will be logged and assessed by the relevant Lead Development Office staff and either a holding response / acknowledgement, or full resolution, response to the Complainant will be supplied by the most appropriate channel (telephone, email or mail).
- Days 3 - 4: if the complaint does not require long-term investigation then the full resolution response should be supplied to the Complainant by the end of Day 3. If further investigation is required, then a holding / acknowledgement response should be supplied to the Complainant with a timeline for their complaint’s resolution.
- Day 5 - 20: Investigation of the complaint with a resolution response supplied to the Complainant

This timeline includes complaints to senior management i.e. a final decision re their escalated complaint should be communicated to the Complainant within a maximum of 20 working days/1 calendar month. A complaint’s resolution should be communicated to the Complainant as soon as possible.

The response will tell the Complainant who is dealing with their complaint and timelines for resolution, if a full resolution is not given in the communication.

Confidentiality

The complaint and details of complainant will be dealt with in confidence and the detail will only be shared with the staff who need to know in order to investigate and respond to the issues raised.

Complaints process

All complaints upon receipt will be logged within the Development Office including the following information:

- The Complainant who made the complaint and their contact details
- What is the nature of the complaint concerns
- The date of the complaint’s receipt by the Open University Development Office (registered from e.g. email’s receipt, letter’s post-stamped received)
- Target date for full response within 20 working days maximum
- What stage the complaint has reached (e.g. open, escalated, closed or cancelled) including dates
- Who is tasked with dealing with the complaint and who ‘closed’ the Complaint.

Data protection

Details are held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be treated confidentially.

Personal information processed in respect of complaints will be retained for seven years as required by the OU Alumni retention schedule.

For more information on the OU's Data Protection Policy, visit www.open.ac.uk or contact 01908 653 994.

Our charity status

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England & Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.