

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO

# COMPLAINTS

## GET IN TOUCH

**0121 204 4848**

[advice@aston.ac.uk](mailto:advice@aston.ac.uk)

10:00am - 4:00pm

## DROP IN

10:30am - 12:30pm weekdays

No appointment needed at this time

## LOCATION

Ground floor of Students' Union building



# UNDERSTANDING COMPLAINTS



We hope that your time at Aston University is fantastic, but if you are not satisfied with your experience you have the right to make a complaint.

## WHAT IS IT?

A complaint can be made about any aspect of a Student's experience at University, including teaching and learning issues or problems with services and facilities provided by the University. Here's what you need to know about making a complaint at Aston University.

## MAKING A COMPLAINT

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your experience at Aston University, you have the right to submit a complaint under the University's Student Complaints Procedure. The University encourages students to raise any suggestions or concerns promptly to find a resolution quickly.

## HOW DO I WRITE A COMPLAINT?

When making a complaint, it's essential to start by writing a draft that includes:

- **Introductory Summary:** Clearly state the nature of your concern.
- **Timeline of events:** Provide dates, times, and the impact of the issue.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:** Offer constructive feedback on how the situation could be resolved.
- **References for Relevant Policies:** Highlight any breaches or deviations from established protocols.
- **Desired Outcomes and Justifications:** Clearly outline what you hope to achieve through the complaint process and why it's reasonable.

## DESIRED OUTCOME

Clearly outline your concerns, desired outcomes, and why you believe your desired outcome is reasonable and justified. Remember, a complaint cannot change the decision of the Exam Board; the academic appeals procedure is the correct process for appealing an Exam Board decision.

## WHAT'S THE PROCEDURE?

### INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- Initially, attempt to resolve the issue informally with an appropriate staff member. This could involve discussing the matter with your Module Tutor or Personal Tutor or the service's immediate manager/supervisor.

### STAGE 1: FORMAL COMPLAINT

- If informal resolution is unsuccessful or deemed too serious, submit a Formal Complaint form **within 20 working days of the informal outcome or problem occurrence**. The Complaints Team will acknowledge receipt within two working days and respond within 10 working days to explain how the matter will be processed. An investigator will be assigned to fully investigate the complaint, and you'll receive a written response within 20 working days.

### STAGE 2: COMPLAINT OUTCOME REVIEW

- If dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, you can submit a Complaint Outcome Review request form within 10 working days if you meet one of the specific grounds for the review:
  - a) A procedural irregularity occurred during Stage 1, which significantly impacted the outcome.
  - b) There is new material evidence unavailable for valid reasons earlier in the process, which casts doubt on the Stage 1 outcome.
  - c) The Stage 1 outcome could be considered unreasonable considering all circumstances.

The University will conduct a review, either on paper or as a Complaint Review Hearing, and communicate the outcome within 20 working days.

## UNIVERSITY'S DUTY

The University is obligated to follow its Student Complaints Procedure, ensuring transparency and fairness. Even if you don't cooperate, the University will proceed with the complaint process formally withdrawn.

## YOUR DUTY

Unless you have good reason for needing a longer period, ensure any complaints are submitted within the deadlines.

## COMPLAINTS TO THE OIA

After completing the University's internal procedures, if still dissatisfied, you can escalate the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) for an independent review.

**WE CAN HELP...**

Please visit: [astonsu.com/support](https://astonsu.com/support)

AT THE STUDENTS' UNION, WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU THROUGHOUT THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS.