



office of the independent adjudicator

LTC14D094 / LTC14A002

'for students in higher education'

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Good practice framework for handling complaints and academic appeals

How to respond

Please save this interactive form to your computer. Complete it and then email it to:

consultation@oiahe.org.uk

by **5 July 2014**

The specific consultation questions are shown on individual pages overleaf.

Name:	Jon Sharp	
I am replying on behalf of:		
My university (please give the name of the university):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	University of East Anglia
My students' union (please give the name of the university):	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Myself:	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other organisation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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Q1 What additional resources and information should support implementation of the framework?

It would be useful to have a series of facilitated workshops in the first two years of the new guide being live looking specifically at how it is being enacted and to share practice.
It would be useful to have thematic guidance related to specific areas of complexity in the proposed online resource

Q 2 Are the definitions of complaints and academic appeals accurate and useful?

It would be useful to have further clarity around the definition of 'academic judgment'
The term 'exclusions' may be too broad and it might be better to make reference to exclusions of those items or grounds that might otherwise be regarded as being within the scope.

Q 3 Do the suggested time limits balance the need for effective internal review with the importance of resolving cases as quickly as possible?

It would be useful for the time limits to be consistently multiples of 5 working days to ensure simplicity and ease of understanding for students

Q 4 Are the suggestions on recording the informal stage proportionate?

Yes

Q 5 Is it appropriate to introduce the sifting process at the formal stage?

Our first formal stage considers any and all submissions on the grounds that a sifting process would need to allow students' to challenge the sifting outcome thereby potentially creating an additional delay or adding in a quasi appeal stage.

Q 6 Does the draft framework give the right emphasis to hearings in the complaints and academic appeals processes?

The right emphasis is given, but it would be useful to include some exemplars or suggestions as to when a student's attendance might be appropriate.

Q7 Does the draft framework adequately reflect the importance of including legal representation only in exceptional circumstances?

Yes

Q 8 Is the progression between stages clear?

Yes

Q 9 What more would you do to clarify and explain this draft framework?

- The reference to 'Case Officers' with no prior involvement may be problematic for institutions who provide professional services for appeals and complaints through the same offices that support all other administrative aspects of learning and teaching support. Is the aim of the paper an advocacy of separate/ discrete appeal & complaint units?

- It would be useful to emphasize that appeal hearings should be conducted as evidence gathering panels and not as quasi-judicial adversarial hearings in which the student and School of study make a case and counter-case.

- Paragraph 90 refers to the provision of translation services. Given the language requirements for study at degree level and the requirement in terms of overseas students to ensure a level of proficiency in order to be UKBA compliant, the suggestion that a student might require a translation service is highly problematic. A student whose language skills were insufficient to engage with an appeals or complaints process would also be insufficient to engage with the regulations governing their programme of study and its content.

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