

Kent Hospitality Complaints Procedure

Your opinion counts

If you have any feedback about our services - whether it is good or bad - we would like to hear from you.

Why are we interested in your opinion?

We want to ensure that our services always meet the needs of our customers.

- If you have an idea or suggestion that could help us improve our services, why not tell us?
- If you are pleased with a service we provide, or the way a member of staff has dealt with you, we would like to know. If you wish, you can nominate a member of our staff for a customer service award - see <http://www.kent.ac.uk/hospitality/HR/cust-service-award.html>.
- If we can improve the level of service offered, please let us know. Wherever possible we want to investigate and put things right quickly and if there is a problem we want to stop it happening again. We may not always be able to change things in the way that you would like but we will at least be able to give you an explanation.

We will be professional and courteous in dealing with complaints and will respond promptly.

First step

Please talk to a member of our staff, who will try to resolve your complaint promptly.

Second step

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, please email your complaint to hospentq@kent.ac.uk. It will then be forwarded to the relevant department or manager, who will investigate and then respond to you directly.

Your complaint should contain a clear statement of your concerns, including any supporting documentation and how you feel your complaint might be resolved.

Third step

If you wish to appeal further, you should contact the Head of Accommodation and Customer Services, Kent Hospitality, University of Kent, Tanglewood, Canterbury, CT2 7LX. If your complaint is specifically about the Head of Accommodation and Customer Services, you should contact the Director of Commercial Services at Tanglewood.

Timescales

We aim to provide a response to your complaint within 14 days of receipt. However in complex cases this may take longer. We will keep you notified of progress and inform you of the reasons for any delay. If you write to the Director of Commercial Services, you will receive a response to your complaint within 14 days of receipt. A complaint will not normally be considered more than three months after the substantive event(s) complained about.

Who can complain

Those who are directly using our services:

- current students;
- residents and ex-residents;
- parents/guardians of students, providing they have written permission from the student (this must be supplied at the time of raising the complaint);
- conference and external visitors to the University;
- neighbours of University of Kent students living off-campus in rented accommodation.

What happens next

The university accommodation service would wish to have the opportunity of putting matters right wherever possible. Sometimes it is appropriate to provide alternative accommodation. Monetary compensation is only paid in exceptional circumstances. Students need to be realistic about compensation: in most cases any compensation will be a modest amount. Only in cases where a student can demonstrate real financial loss, proven negligence or major inconvenience arising out of a breach by the university is compensation likely to be at a higher level.

In dealing with a complaint the following action can be taken:

Uphold the complaint and take action accordingly.

Dismiss the complaint:

- where it is judged there is no action that Kent Hospitality can take to resolve the matter;
- where there is deemed to be no case to answer;
- where the complaint is trivial, malicious or vexatious.

When the complaints procedure cannot be used

- for matters where the courts have already become involved;
- for matters where police action is pending or a criminal charge has been laid.

Complaints from students

Below is a link to the document 'Complaints Procedures for Students' which the University of Kent provides for students. This mainly covers academic complaints but also complaints students may have with professional services, such as those provided by Kent Hospitality.

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/Regulations%20Booklet/2018%20Academic%20Year%20Student%20Complaints%20Procedure%20and%20flow%20chart%20v4%20clean.pdf>

Once the University's internal complaints procedure has been exhausted and a student has been issued with a 'Completion of Procedures Letter' in certain cases a student may take their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). This is an independent body responsible for reviewing complaints about Higher Education Institutions in England and Wales. It is a free service for students.

The University is a member of The Universities UK Code of Practice for Student Accommodation.

<http://www.thesac.org.uk/>

