

## **External Customers' Complaints Procedure related to the Business Services Operation**

### **1. Introduction**

The Business Services Department (Conference, Bed and Breakfast and Catering) is committed to delivering a high quality service and aims to continuously improve the provision offered to its wide customer base.

External clients of the University of Chichester (trading as Chichester Enterprises Limited) may on occasion feel dissatisfied with the quality of a service provided. The University seeks to provide a framework for the resolution of these complaints which ensures complaints are:

- treated seriously and dealt with speedily and fairly;
- resolved as close as possible to their point of origin with a minimum of formality;
- progressed through two formal stages and an appeal where necessary
- dealt with in a way that respects privacy and confidentiality;
- resolved without prejudice to the complainant.

### **2. Objectives of the Complaint Policy**

2.1 To provide dissatisfied customers with a mechanism for seeking redress.

2.2 To provide feedback that is supportive of performance review and continuous service improvement.

### **3. What is a complaint?**

A complaint is whenever a customer expresses dissatisfaction with the service they have received. Most complaints received are of a minor nature and are therefore resolved informally with the person(s) directly concerned and the delegated booking coordinator or member of staff from the Conference Office.

This procedure defines a formal complaint as 'A problem not resolved by informal means or one too serious to be dealt with informally'

All stages of the formal complaints procedure will be applied, unless the investigating officer feels it is appropriate that the matter is referred to the next investigatory level.

### **4. Formal Complaints.**

#### **4.1 Stage One**

4.1.1 If the complaint has not been resolved by informal discussions or is of a serious nature the matter will be dealt with by the Conference and Business Development Manager

4.1.2 The complaint must be made in writing within 42 calendar days (six weeks) from its cause. The statement should highlight the reason for complaint and provide supporting documentation or evidence, where appropriate.

4.1.3 No complaint can be made anonymously but Clients who make complaints through this procedure may do so without fear of disadvantage or recrimination.

4.1.4 As stated in the University's Conference Terms and Conditions the Conference Office will only discuss complaints with the Client and will not enter into communication/discussion with the Client's guests.

4.1.5 The letter to the Conference and Business Development Manager will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt of the letter

4.1.6 The Conference and Business Development Manager will investigate and respond directly to customer, in writing, within 10 working days of the issue of the acknowledgement letter. If this timescale cannot be achieved a holding letter will be sent advising of progress every 10 working days until a decision has been reached

4.1.7 If the customer is dissatisfied with the decision the matter can be referred to the Director of Business Services in writing who will investigate the complaint, following the timescales below

#### **4.2 Stage Two**

4.2.1 The letter to the Director of Business Services will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.

4.2.2 The Director of Business Services will investigate and respond directly to the customer, in writing, within 10 working days of the issue of the acknowledgement letter. If this timescale cannot be achieved a holding letter will be sent advising of progress every 10 working days until a decision has been reached

4.2.3 If the customer is dissatisfied with the decision the matter will go to appeal and which is processed by the Chief Financial Officer, who will investigate the appeal following the timescales below

#### **4.3 Appeal**

4.3.1 The appeal letter to the Chief Financial Officer will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt

4.3.2 The Chief Financial Officer will investigate and respond directly to the customer, in writing, within 10 working days of the appeal acknowledgement letter. If this timescale cannot be achieved a holding letter will be sent advising of progress every 10 working days until a decision has been reached

4.3.3 The decision of the Chief Financial Officer will be final.

### **5. To make a formal Complaint**

To make a formal complaint please write to:

Conference and Business Development Manager  
Conference Office  
University Of Chichester  
Bishop Otter Campus  
College Lane  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 6PE

The above address is also applicable for the Director of Business Services and the Chief Financial Officer