

Complaints Procedure for Student Concerns Regarding Education Agents

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1. Introduction

This procedure outlines how Leeds Trinity University (LTU) will handle complaints from prospective students regarding the conduct or service of education agents representing the University.

2. Scope

Applies to all prospective and enrolled students who have applied to LTU through an education agent and who wish to raise concerns or complaints regarding the service received.

3. Principles

- LTU is committed to maintaining high standards in its recruitment partnerships.
- All complaints will be treated seriously, fairly, and in accordance with the British Council's Agent Quality Framework and Ethical Code for Agents.
- LTU will ensure that student concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately, with the aim of resolving issues informally where possible.

4. Procedural Steps

4.1 Step 1: Informal Resolution

- Applicants will be encouraged to raise their concern directly with their education agent in the first instance.
- Many concerns can be addressed quickly without the need for formal escalation.
- Agents should provide a response to any request for informal resolution within 10 working days.
- A formal complaint will not be disregarded if a student has not sought informal resolution as this option may not be appropriate in all circumstances, particularly in the case of more serious complaints.

4.2 Step 2: Formal Complaint to LTU

- A formal complaint should be lodged with the Director of Global Engagement within the time limits specified below:
 - Within 6 weeks of the student becoming aware of the issue; or
 - Within 10 working days of receiving an unsatisfactory response to their informal resolution request;

Whichever is the shorter.

- Complaints can be submitted via the dedicated MS Form:
<https://forms.office.com/e/wvPfhji76Z>

- The complaint should include:
 - Applicant's full name and application reference number
 - Name of the agent and agency
 - A detailed account of the issue, including dates and any communications
- Supporting evidence (emails, screenshots, correspondence) should be supplied within 5 working days of the complaint being submitted.

4.3 Step 3: Initial Review

- The Director of Global Engagement (or nominee) will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days.
- A preliminary review will be conducted within 10 working days to determine whether:
 - the issue is resolvable through clarification or advice; or
 - a substantive investigation is required

4.4 Step 4: Investigation (if required)

- If a substantive investigation is needed, the Director may:
 - Liaise with the agent and other relevant university teams
 - Interview the complainant if necessary
 - Review documentation and communications
- The Director will evaluate their findings with reference to the 'Expected behaviours' contained within the British Council's Ethical Code of Practice for Education Agents and the agency's contract with LTU.
- A written outcome (Completion of Procedures letter) will be provided within 15 working days, or a status update if more time is needed.

5. Outcomes

Possible outcomes for the applicant:

- Complaint not upheld
- An apology or clarification from the agent
- Support to continue or amend the application
- Escalation to an alternative agent or direct university support
- (For enrolled students) Additional relief a student may be eligible for under other LTU policies

Possible consequences for the agent:

- Formal warning issued
- Temporary suspension of recruitment privileges
- Termination of the agency agreement in severe cases

6. Onward Appeals

The Completion of Procedures letter must include information on onward appeal to the relevant external regulator (e.g. OIAHE or FOS), including any time limits.

7. Record-Keeping

- All complaints and outcomes will be documented securely and used for monitoring agent performance for a period of 5 years.
- Complaints may inform future agent training, reviews, or renewals.

8. External Reference

This procedure aligns with the British Council's Ethical Code of Practice for Education Agents and supports high standards in international student recruitment.