

1. INTRODUCTION

Accommodation & Campus Services are responsible for all student accommodation allocations, both within our own portfolio and also where we have entered into a partnership agreement with external providers. We are also responsible for conferences, cleaning, catering and portering for all University sites and residential mentoring support for all resident students.

The ACS Vision is “To be recognised and chosen for delivering excellence”

We are committed to dealing with customers in a fair and equitable manner and strive to surpass expectations of excellence. We often receive compliments from customers either verbally or by letter/email and these should be acknowledged and recorded appropriately.

We do realise that there may be occasions when customers feel the need to make a complaint and the procedures to be followed are outlined in the remaining sections of this document.

The procedures contained within this document relate specifically to Residential Services within ACS.

Residential Services comprise Accommodation Services, Customer Services, Portering and Cleaning Services within student accommodation and The Edge, Residential Mentors and contracts and maintenance management for all properties on the student village and various surrounding buildings.

2. COMPLIMENTS

- 2.1** Written compliments should be acknowledged in writing and a copy of the letter forwarded to the General Manager Residential Services. A copy of the response is retained, together with the original client letter, by the Customer Services Manager.
- 2.2** If verbal compliments are received, these are documented and retained within the Compliments and Complaints Log and details forwarded to the appropriate staff and always to the General Manager, Residential Services.
- 2.3** Anyone passing compliments regarding any member of staff is advised of the Customer Service Awards which are held annually and they are requested to complete a nomination form, which can be found on the University of Sheffield’s web pages. This form is then forwarded to the Training and Development Manager for inclusion in the submission considerations and also copied to the General Manager, Residential Services and the relevant General Manager if the staff member nominated is within their team.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

3.1 *Definition of a Complaint*

A complaint is “an expression of dissatisfaction at a service delivered, or not delivered, either directly by Residential Services or by a third party supplier or contractor, for which Residential Services are responsible”

3.2 STAGES WITHIN THE POLICY

Local Resolution

3.2.1 Complaints raised in the first instance with any member of ACS staff should be dealt with wherever possible at local level. If this is not possible the complainant may meet with the Customer Services Manager or the complaint will be forwarded to the Customer Services Manager who will co-ordinate the response to the complainant. Alternatively, customers may speak with a member of the Customer Services Team in the first instance who will attempt to respond to the complaint.

3.2.2. If a complaint cannot be resolved at local level, full details of the complaint including the complainant's full name, address, telephone number/e-mail and where applicable student registration number will be forwarded to Customer Services as soon as possible by the person dealing with the complainant at local level.

3.2.3 All complaints are recorded immediately in the customer service log which details the customer's information e.g. name, address, telephone number/e-mail, details any previous complaints it may refer to (with previous reference number) along with details of the complaint, each complaint will be allocated a reference number. Should the complaint have relevance on student welfare or require information regarding room changes, details of the complaint will also be recorded on the notes screen on the student's record on CIS.

3.2.4 Customer Services will aim to respond to the complainant by an acknowledgement letter/e-mail/phone call within twenty four hours from receipt of the complaint. If it is possible to give a response within this timeframe this will be done, alternatively they will be advised that following investigations, the Customer Services Manager will respond at the latest by ten working days following receipt of the complaint.

3.2.5 Referral to the Customer Services Manager

Where a member of the Customer Services Team cannot resolve the complaint without further detailed investigation, or where it is not appropriate for them to do so, the ownership of the complaint will be referred to the service area who will investigate and provide relevant information, to enable The Customer Service Manager to respond appropriately to the complainant. The Customer Service Manager will continue to update the Customer Service Log, and the section with ownership will be responsible for continuing to provide details to The Customer Service Manager concerning the progress/outcome of the complaint until a satisfactory result has been agreed. If the complaint concerns a student, notes will be made on their records on CIS. For non-student complaints, The Customer Services Manager should be informed so detailed notes can be added to the complaints log and the information given by relevant parties assimilated and a response given to the complainant.

Complaints regarding maintenance issues should be made in writing to the Customer Services Manager who will investigate and respond to the complainant initially within 24 hours. If detailed investigations are required and a final response is not possible within the agreed time frame the customer should be provided with a progress update, within 10 working days by the Customer Services Manager.

If the sections dealing with the complaint have not provided the relevant information to the Customer Services Manager within eight working days, they will be contacted and the information requested urgently to respond to the client within the ten day period.

The Customer Services Manager will respond in writing to the complainant outlining the details ascertained via investigation with appropriate sections.

3.2.6 Referral to the General Manager

If a customer is not satisfied with the response, the complaint may be referred to the relevant General Manager, Residential Services by the Customer Services Manager, giving full details of the complaint, actions taken and all supporting paperwork. The General Manager will then take ownership of the complaint, keeping the Customer Services Manager advised of progress and actions to allow for the Complaints Log to be updated.

If a customer is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint may be referred to the Accommodation and Campus Services Complaints Panel.

3.2.7 Referral to the Complaints Panel

If the complaint reaches the Complaints Panel stage the customer should be informed they have a right to attend a meeting with the Panel and if they so wish, are entitled to bring a friend or colleague with them.

The Panel will comprise The Director of Accommodation and Campus Services, the Director of Student Services or a nominated representative, and the Students Union Welfare Officer.

Following the meeting and when a decision has been reached, the Complaints Panel should then formally write to the customer with their decision within seven working days of the meeting. The Customer Services Manager should be kept informed of progress.

3.2.8 Referral to The University of Sheffield

Should the complaint not be resolved satisfactorily for the complainant at the Complaints Panel level, the complaint should be referred onto the University of Sheffield's Complaints Policy, for which the link to the relevant webpage can be found. The Customer Services Manager should be kept informed of progress.

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid/procedures/complaints.html>

3.2.9 Final Appeal Stage

Only after the University of Sheffield say that the internal process is exhausted, and the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, they should be advised they can report the complaint to the Independent Adjudicator and should be provided with the relevant contact details.

4. MONITORING

The Customer Services Manager shall produce a monthly report for review by the General Manager Residential Services detailing complaints received by section, non-conformance with timescales, and analysis of trends.

The General Manager Residential Services will investigate any issues and work with other Senior Managers to initiate corrective measures.

The Customer Services Manager will be responsible for disseminating information regarding the complaints and compliments policy to customers.

5. DEALING WITH THE PRESS

There will be occasions when we receive requests for information from either internal or external bodies (Forge Press, local/national newspapers). These requests must be forwarded to the University's Media Team, and the ACS Marketing & Communications department.

6. NOISE MANAGEMENT

If any complaints are received from local residents regarding excessive noise, these must be responded to immediately by the Customer Services Manager. Any reports received via the Control Room will initially be reported via the IRIS system (Incident Reporting Information System) and then forwarded to the Customer Services Manager for response on the following working day. **NB** The Noise Management Plan prepared by Commercial Services relates only to licensed premises.

6. CONTACT DETAILS

All complaints and compliments should be sent to:

Customer Services
Accommodation and Campus Services
The University of Sheffield
The Edge
34 Endcliffe Crescent
Sheffield
S10 3ED
Tel: 0114 2228800

Email: acs-customerservices@sheffield.ac.uk