

LONDON SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Non-Academic Complaints Procedure: Students, Graduates & Applicants

Tier:	2
Group responsible:	SLT
SLT Member / Governor responsible:	Executive Director
Individual responsible for implementation:	Finance Director
Date last approved:	18 th October 2016
To be reviewed:	Every 36 months
Date of next review:	18 th October 2019

1 Preamble

- 1.1 London School of Theology is an evangelical Christian academic learning community that seeks to achieve excellence in the delivery of its services to current students, graduates and applicants, and to live according to the teaching of the Bible. Inevitably, on occasions, LST does not deliver the excellence it endeavours to provide. This document sets out the procedure to be followed when a student, graduate or applicant has a complaint concerning a non-academic matter.
- 1.2 Following the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 LST's belief is that the student, graduate or applicant should first try to resolve the matter face-to-face with those involved. Only when this process has been exhausted and not resolved to their satisfaction should they subsequently move through the successive stages of the complaints procedure.
- 1.3 This procedure should be followed stage by stage by complainants. If any stages are by-passed the complainant will be asked to return to follow this agreed procedure.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 A non-academic complaint relates to any specific concern about the provision of non-teaching support services – administration, finance, maintenance, catering, housekeeping, library, etc.
- 2.2 Reference to a student is taken to mean an individual student or group of students. It includes undergraduate, postgraduate and research students registered on London School of Theology programmes and those studying, typically by distance learning, for private benefit, with or without certification of any sort.
- 2.3 Reference to a graduate is taken to mean an individual graduate or group of graduates. It includes graduates of all levels (Certificate, Diploma, BA, MA, research degrees). Complaints from those who graduated more than twelve months prior to the complaint being made will not be considered.
- 2.4 Reference to an applicant is taken to mean an individual applicant or group of applicants. Only complaints from those applicants who have paid their application fee will be considered and complaints from applicants who applied more than twelve months prior to the complaint being made will not be considered.
- 2.5 Reference to a complainant refers to the current student, graduate or applicant making the complaint.

3 Procedure

3.1 Informal stage

Students with a complaint about any non-academic matter, after having followed the process as outlined in 1.2, should consult the relevant Student Committee representative. Student representatives meet regularly with senior staff and they may be able to resolve issues from their knowledge of the service. If this does not produce a resolution, students should bring the matter to the attention of the Head of Department concerned.

Graduates or applicants with a complaint about any non-academic matter should, after having followed the process as outlined in 1.2, bring the matter to the attention of the Head of Department concerned.

3.2 Formal stage

i) Investigation

If this does not produce satisfaction complainants should make the details of the complaint known in writing to the Finance Director (or, if the complaint is against the Finance Director, to the Executive Director). Please use a copy of the Complaints Action Form that can be found at the end of this document.

Written complaints will be investigated by the Finance Director (or if the complaint is against the Finance Director, the Executive Director) and complainants will either receive a reply in writing with the results of that investigation or be invited to a meeting to discuss their complaint further within a month of the complaint submission.

ii) Meeting

If a meeting is held to investigate the complaint further, complainants will be invited to attend to present their complaint to a Panel comprising the Finance Director (or if the complaint is against the Finance Director, the Executive Director) [or his/her nominee] and two members of LST staff. In any formal 'face to face' meeting with School staff, complainants may be accompanied by a friend.

The relevant Head of Department, and/or any other staff member/s concerned, complained against or affected, will also be invited to attend separately to present their response to the complaint.

The Panel will adjudicate on the issue and give their decision on the outcome to the complainant in person and later in writing within seven days of the hearing.

If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome no further action will be taken. A copy of the complaint form and a report of the meeting and its outcome will be retained on the complainant's file but will not jeopardise academic progress (relevant to applicants and current students only).

4. Right of Appeal

If unsatisfied with the outcome, complainants may appeal in writing to the Executive Director within 14 days of receiving notice of the outcome of the complaint. The Executive Director will review all evidence and actions taken to date, and meet with the complainant and/or establish a new panel if that is deemed necessary. The process will follow that outlined

above for the formal complaint stage. A decision will be made within one month of receiving the appeal. This decision will be final and no right of appeal will be offered.

NON-ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS ACTION FORM

NAME OF COMPLAINANT

DATE OF SUBMISSION OF FORM

NATURE AND DETAILS OF COMPLAINT

Please complete giving full details of the complaint, including any corroborative evidence and use additional A4 sheets if required. Please specify total number of sheets in the box provided at the bottom of this form.

(Continue on additional sheet(s) if required)

How do you think this situation can be best resolved?

Total Number of Sheets (including this Non-Academic Complaints Action Form):

Signature of Complainant:

Date:

NON-ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS ACTION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET-Insert Page Number

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for the continuation of the complaint text.

Signature of Complainant:

Date: