

Data Protection Complaints Procedure

1. Introduction

City St George's, University of London ("the University"), is committed to ensuring that it complies with data protection laws and it takes this obligation seriously. If you feel that the University has not handled your data in accordance with the law or have questions or concerns regarding our response to your individual rights request, you have the right to make a complaint.

2. What constitutes a complaint

You can submit a complaint under this procedure if you have a data protection concern such as:

- how the University is processing your personal data
- our response and management of your [individual rights request](#)
- concerns or questions about material provided in response to a Subject Access Request
- any other matter related to your rights as a data subject under data protection legislation.

In some instances, we can refuse to accept a complaint. For example:

- concerns about a request made under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations (which are not handled under this procedure)
- requests for access to the University's systems or platforms
- concerns about other people's personal data (unless you have authority to act on their behalf)

- we are unable to verify your identity
- The events complained about occurred too long ago to make it practicable or desirable to investigate
- when a complaint is considered manifestly unfounded or excessive. For example, where the matter has already been concluded by the Data Protection Officer or nominee
- when a complaint is threatening, abusive or vexatious
- any other concerns that are not related to your rights as a data subject under data protection legislation.

If we refuse to process your complaint, we will inform you of our decision and explain our reason within 30 days.

Data Breaches

If you wish to report a data breach, please report on the [Data Breach Report Form](#) or contact Dataprotection@citystgeorges.ac.uk.

If you are a current City, St George's student or employee, please refer to the guidance on Student and Staff Hubs:

[Data Breaches | Student Hub | City St George's, University of London](#)

[Data Breaches | City St George's, University of London](#)

3. How to make a complaint

If you wish to submit a complaint you can do this by:

contacting Dataprotection@citystgeorges.ac.uk within 3 months of your last interaction with us or, in relation to complaints about an individual rights request, by contacting us within 3 months of receiving a final response.

Please provide as much detail as possible to assist the investigation, including:

- any reference numbers associated with the matter or request; and
- how you would like the matter resolved

Complaining on behalf of others

You can submit a complaint on behalf of others. However, in addition to the above, you will also need to:

- provide a signed letter of authority from the data subject dated within the past 3 months
- provide a copy of the data subject's identification – a valid passport or a UK driving licence or a scan of their City St George's identification card, if they are a current student or employee.

4. How we manage your complaint

The University has a two-stage process for managing complaints.

- **Stage 1 –Informal**
- **Stage 2 - Formal**

Our aim is to resolve complaints on an informal basis before progressing to the formal complaints' procedure.

When we receive your complaint, we will check the validity of your complaint and, if necessary, request further information from you.

We may also need to request identification, a valid passport or a UK driving licence, to ensure the security of your data. If identification is provided, this will be deleted once we are satisfied with your identity.

If your complaint is valid, we will acknowledge it within 30 days. We will advise you of the date we aim to respond to you by, which will be dependent on the nature and the complexity of the complaint.

The complaint process is run at the discretion of the University, and complaints may be resolved informally if appropriate. We will decide whether to investigate based on the circumstances of your complaint. Where there is dispute over the facts of a case, we will determine what is more likely than not to have occurred based on the available evidence.

We appreciate complaints can be stressful, and we will treat you with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times. We expect that you will treat our staff with the same courtesy, respect and fairness. Our staff will always work as best we can in good faith, and we also request you to be patient and to cooperate with our process. If we feel your behaviour becomes unreasonable or unacceptable, we may take steps to restrict communication between you and our office.

We encourage you to explain your concerns in your own words, as this helps us understand and address your specific situation most effectively. While AI can be a useful tool, please be cautious with the use of AI when writing your complaints. AI may quote legislation in a way that may be inaccurate or irrelevant to your complaint, or make your complaint unnecessarily complex.

Stage 1 – Informal

Once a complaint is accepted it will be processed as a stage 1 complaint first. The individual or school/department or service area that handled your initial enquiry or responded to your individual rights request will be contacted to try to resolve your complaint informally.

If you remain dissatisfied following the stage 1 outcome, you can complain to the Data Protection Officer within 30 days of receiving your response. You may also complain if you do not receive a response within the specified period outlined in your acknowledgement letter.

Stage 2 – Formal

If a stage 2 complaint is received, you will receive an acknowledgment advising that the complaint has been referred to the Data Protection Officer.

The Data Protection Officer or nominee will aim to respond to formal complaints within 30 days, but if the matter is complex it may take additional time to investigate

5. What to do if you are unhappy with the outcome

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint, you have the right to raise your concerns with the [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#). You also have the right to seek judicial remedy [judicial remedy](#).