

COMPLAINTS REGISTER 2014

Date of complaint	To whom addressed	Department concerned	Description	Action taken
6 January	Liz Culmer	Catering	A member of staff was surprised that there were no catering services available today, particularly in light of Kent Hospitality having retained its Gold IIP status. He would have expected catering to be available when the University is actually open.	Liz advised that the details of the catering outlet opening hours for the Christmas vacation period had been published on the catering website on 2 December. AW also replied and apologised for the lack of service. He explained that, given the long shut-down period for Christmas and the New Year, Kent Hospitality took the opportunity to give the kitchens and equipment a deep clean and overall before the students' return.
6 February	Liz Culmer	Catering	A member of staff, also one of the mystery diners, fell ill with suspected food poisoning following two meals he had eaten on campus.	TB thanked the member of staff for notifying us and wished him a swift recovery. This was the only such incident that had been reported which may indicate that other factors were responsible. Rigorous food safety controls are in place to ensure that the food is produced safely. Complaints of this nature are taken very seriously and TB had forwarded the information to David Jordan, the University's food safety advisor who may wish to complete his own investigation.
14 February	Corporate Communications (initial complaint)	Accommodation	A student tweeted to complain that she is paying 5.6K for accommodation that doesn't even have running hot water at UoK	The student was advised to report the problem to her accommodation reception. DG advised that, although students in Keynes H and I blocks were warned about temporary disruptions, the complainant's accommodation in Keynes S block was not affected. DG forwarded the information to the Estates Helpdesk who asked for a member of the Mechanical Team to attend the residence as soon as possible.
19 February	Contact form on Catering website	Catering	A diner complained that the meal he was served at Mungo's Bistro was undercooked. When he reported his dissatisfaction he was told he had been asking for too many replacements lately. He eats at Mungo's regularly and felt that this was an example of awful customer service and that customer satisfaction was a low priority.	At the time of the incident, the complainant was offered the option of a refund which he did not take up. As he is a regular diner at Mungo's GW asked for a pair of meal for two vouchers to be offered to the diner as a goodwill gesture. Subsequently GW spoke with the customer who apologised for his overreaction and accepted the vouchers. He will ask for GW by name if he has any issues in future.

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26 February	Hospitality contact form	Catering	Why is Bag-it in Rutherford effectively shut on the humanities/social science UCAS days? I just don't see any good reason (no explanation is given). It just served to disadvantage those of us who work or study here. The limited choice was dismal and not appetising compared with the normal make-to-order offering.	MF thanked the complainant for the email and apologised that he was unhappy with the arrangements in Rutherford. Bag-it was unable to offer the full service because there were over 400 plus extra customers for the UCAS programme/next year's students. Rutherford was picked to host the event and it was impossible to provide the normal make-to-order service. However, the range that was offered included the same fillings as used in the Bag-it range. The server is also open for hot meals.
21 April	Hospitality contact form	Reception (Rutherford)	An external visitor complained about the way he had been spoken to by the same Receptionist on two separate occasions during his stay at Kent.	MH said that the member of staff had been spoken to and was upset that her attitude was interpreted in such a negative way. If was certainly not her intention to belittle the resident and she apologised if this was the impression she gave. MH offered the complainant one night's complimentary bed and breakfast for his next visit.
3 September	Hospitality contact form	Catering (Dolche Vita)	A visitor who was staying in Becket Court complained about the disappointing breakfast at Dolche Vita. The restaurant was very busy due to a group of 170 Belgian visitors who were eating there at the same time and the service to the diners was extremely slow and chaotic. She decided to have breakfast elsewhere, and on the following day too.	AW replied to say that he was disappointed that the complainant had suffered a poor experience at Dolche Vita. He admitted that there were problems which had affected the customers and he apologised for these. It had been a particularly busy weekend and many of the large group had special needs. He acknowledged how important breakfast is for our customers and that he would work hard to get it right in the future.
15 October	Accommodation	Catering (Dolche Vita)	A student wrote to ask to be moved to alternative accommodation and this was dealt with by the Accommodation office. In the same message, the student complained that the portions served in Dolche Vita are too small and the food does not follow his diet.	AW explained that the provision of meals is deemed to be fair in terms of cost and dietary content. The daily breakfast provides a full English option, combined with fresh fruit, cereal and bread products. The quantity served a supper is proportionate and fair, and is combined with the option to have a dessert and fresh fruit afterwards. He could not, therefore, wholly agree with the criticism that the food served is not enough. The student was asked to make his special dietary requirements known so that the chefs could cater to reflect his particular needs.

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27 October	Keynes Master	Finance	Dolche Vita allows students not to be charged VAT on purchases on production of their Kent ID. The student who sent the complaint advised that the Gulbenkian charged VAT on £20 of food purchased by the student even though the ID card was shown. What is the law that Dolche Vita observe but the rest of the campus does not?	LC replied to the student and sent an excerpt from the University's VAT guidance note. In catering outlets run by Hospitality meals provided to students are exempted from VAT when forming part of the normal daily food intake for subsistence purposes. However, the Gulbenkian café is treated more as an optional luxury. In addition, LC explained that the Gulbenkian was refurbished in 2005 and in order to claim the VAT back on construction costs, the University agreed with HMRC that it would tax all supplies for the next 10 years.
3 November	Hospitality contact form	Catering (Create)	A student complained about the way a cashier spoke to another student. It was not the first time the student has seen this happening in Create and had started to avoid buying food and drink there.	TB apologised for the student's experience and for previous similar ones. He agreed that it was completely unacceptable. He would deal with the issue and hope to effect changes to prevent this poor standard of service from being repeated. The issue would be passed on to the relevant manager to deal with it. TB would welcome feedback if the negative experience continued.
30 November	Rutherford Dining Hall	Catering (Rutherford)	A student had discovered a maggot in his food and immediately reported to the staff who offered him a refund. He did not get an apology from the chef although a member of serving staff was very helpful and concerned. There were no complaints forms available. Shortly after the incident, the student started vomiting and was unwell for 2 days, had no appetite and lost weight. Photos of the alleged parasite were sent with the complaint.	TB apologised for the unpleasant experience suffered and hoped the student had made a full recovery. He asked if the student had sought medical attention and advised that suspected food related illnesses should be pursued by the Environmental Health Office. TB had investigated the matter and had notified the University's Food Safety Advisor. TB was confident that the insect was a "broccoli worm" not a maggot. These are harmless and are difficult to detect despite thorough washing of the vegetable and cooking at very high temperatures. TB had asked the manager in Rutherford to discuss the issue with his team. By way of a further apology, TB invited the student and three friends to a complimentary dinner in any of the Hospitality restaurants.