COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

1. The University of Kent recognises that a large number of its students live off-campus in the local community, together with students from other universities and further education colleges. The majority of students residing off-campus are well behaved and live peacefully with their neighbours. However, from time to time a small minority may behave in an unacceptable manner in their residences or local community.

2. The University of Kent takes all complaints about excessive noise or unacceptable behaviour very seriously and wishes to maintain good relations with the local community. Our regulations on student discipline in relation to non-academic matters makes it clear that the following are considered to be a non-academic offence:

   a. Unacceptable behaviour
   b. Noise on and off campus
   c. Reputational damage
   d. Repeated breaches of these regulations

3. The University will ensure all complaints from the local community are dealt with in a professional and consistent manner, whilst recognising there are limitations in dealing with problems of this nature. The Local Council Environmental Health Team and Kent Police may provide additional advice and support with noise complaints and unacceptable behaviour, as they have the power to serve noise abatement notices or prosecute individuals in extreme cases.

4. All University-related student complaints, from both permanent and student residents, are managed by the Community Liaison Officer, who has responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the complaints process. Complaints from members of the public in relation to Kent Union will be dealt with directly by the Union, who have procedures in place for dealing with external and internal complaints.

Further details can be obtained from the Kent Union website at http://www.kentunion.co.uk/contact/

Complaints to Kent Union should be addressed to:

Head of Governance and Leadership Support
Kent Union
Mandela Building
COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

University of Kent
Canterbury
Kent
CT2 7NP

Telephone: 01227 824250
E-mail: kentunion@kent.ac.uk

REGISTERING THE COMPLAINT

5. All University-related student complaints should, where possible, be resolved informally. If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, or the complainant wishes to make a formal complaint from the outset, then the complainant should be advised to submit the complaint via one of the following routes:

a. Submitting the complaint in writing using the e-mail address communityliaison@kent.ac.uk

b. Submitting the complaint in writing using the online community feedback form, which can be found on the University website at http://www.kent.ac.uk/studentservices/community/contact-us.html

c. Writing a formal letter of complaint to the Community Liaison Officer at:

    Student Services
    University of Kent
    Keynes College
    Canterbury
    Kent
    CT2 7NP

The Community Liaison Officer can be contacted by telephone on 01227 816156.

Complainants are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible, for example the name of the student(s), address of the student(s) residence and the contact details of the landlord or managing agent. It is acknowledged that this may not always be possible.

6. In some instances complaints may be submitted to other University departments and offices. All such complaints, together with all associated paperwork and any electronic attachments, must be forwarded to the Community Liaison Officer in
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Student Services, Keynes College, using the Community Liaison e-mail address detailed in paragraph 5.

7. Any complaints received by the University that relate directly to Kent Union activity must be acknowledged by the recipient and forwarded to Kent Union for action (see paragraph 4).

INVESTIGATING THE COMPLAINT

8. On receiving a University-related complaint, the Community Liaison Officer in Student Services will try to establish whether the people allegedly involved are University of Kent students. Where they are found to be students from another institution the Community Liaison Officer will contact that institution and provide details of the complaint. Where they are identified as University of Kent student(s) it will be at the discretion of the Community Liaison Officer whether the case should be referred to the relevant College Master. The decision will be dependent on the number of complaints for the address and the seriousness of the reported incidents.

9. The Community Liaison Officer will provide further information to the complainant indicating whether a standard letter has been issued or the case referred to the College Master for investigation.

10. On completion of the investigation the College Master will provide a brief report and any action taken to the Community Liaison Officer. The Community Liaison Officer will contact the complainant to confirm the investigation is complete. The complainant will not be provided with details of the investigation and any sanctions applied. In instances where residences are shared with students from other universities/colleges the Community Liaison Officer will forward the complaint to the relevant university/college.

11. Where the College Master considers that the complaint is not justified they will notify the Community Liaison Officer of their decision. The Community Liaison Officer will inform the complainant of the decision, and advise the case is to be closed unless further evidence is provided.

12. If the complaint is found to be justified, then the College Master will take appropriate action against the student(s). Student(s) may also be notified that the Local Authority and, in certain cases, the police may take further action if their behaviour continues. The police may be contacted if, during the course of an investigation, it is found a crime may have been committed.
COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

13. Should the unacceptable behaviour continue the relevant College Master may refer the student(s) to the Senior Master for further disciplinary action.

14. The Director of Student Services will be kept informed and notified of the outcome of the most serious complaints. The overall trends for each academic year will be reported to the Director of Student Services and the Managing Student Conduct Group.

QUERIES, MONITORING AND REVIEW

15. All queries regarding this procedure should be directed to the Community Liaison Officer.

16. All University-related complaints will be recorded by the Community Liaison Officer and monitored in order to gather statistical information in relation to their number, nature and location. Any emerging trends will be discussed with relevant university staff. This procedure will be subject to annual review to ensure it is fit for purpose and serves the University’s needs.

17. If the Community Liaison Officer is the subject of a complaint then the complainant should submit the complaint to the Student Conduct and Complaints Office using the email address sccoffice@kent.ac.uk.

DATA PROTECTION

18. The University of Kent is governed by the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and is prevented from releasing personal information about a student to any third party outside of the University, unless the disclosure of information is covered by the provisions of the Act.

19. All requests for personal information about a student should be referred to the University’s Data Protection Officer using the email address dataprotection@kent.ac.uk.

Student Services
May 2017