

University of Sussex Data Protection Complaints Process

If you consider that we have mishandled your personal information or not complied with data protection legislation, you can complain to us. Examples of data protection-related complaints include concerns about the way we have handled a data subject request from you, how we've collected or stored your personal data, or concerns about security measures used to safeguard your personal data.

How to Make a Request

Data protection complaints should be sent to the University's Data Protection Officer via one of the methods outlined below –

By **email**, via: dpo@sussex.ac.uk.

By **post**, using the following address:

Data Protection Officer
Room 300, Sussex House
University of Sussex
Falmer, Brighton
BN1 9RH

By **telephone**, by contacting 01273 678472.

When contacting us, please provide us with:

- Contact details – which we will use to seek clarification (if required) and to which we will send an acknowledgement of the complaint and the subsequent response
- The details of your complaint and any relevant supporting documentation for consideration
- If relevant, what specific resolution you are seeking

What to Remember When Submitting Your Request

When contacting us, please remember:

- We will need to be sure of **your identity** in order to handle your complaint, so if you are not a student or staff member contacting us from your University of Sussex email address, it is helpful to include a copy of a formal photographic identification document (e.g. passport, driving license) at the outset, with your complaint, to avoid any unnecessary delays.

***N.B.** If you are complaining about the handling of a data subject request and your identification has already been verified, we will not need to check this again unless you are contacting us from a different email address or via a different contact method.*

- This process should only be used for **data protection-related complaints**; the University has other processes for dealing with other matters – for instance:
 - [Reporting a personal data breach](#)
 - [Student Discipline](#)
 - [Student complaints](#)
 - [Staff grievances](#)
 - [Raising Concerns / Public Interest Disclosure](#)

- [Request for a review of a response to a Freedom of Information request](#)
- If you are complaining about the way a data subject request has been handled, it is useful to include the relevant reference number(s) so that we can easily locate the relevant request file(s).
- If you are complaining on behalf of another individual, please note that we will require their explicit consent to liaise with you on their behalf regarding the complaint itself – even if this had already been provided in relation to a previous data subject request. That might mean providing a letter of authority or a power of attorney.
- Use of AI tools can be helpful, but can also introduce errors or create overly complex requests, so if using AI to help draft a complaint, please make sure that the final wording has been checked, that the tone is appropriate, the complaint is clear and focused, and that it reflects your actual concerns. This will help to eliminate the need for us to seek clarification when dealing with your complaint.

Process and Timescales

Your data protection complaint will be investigated by the University's Data Protection Officer.

We will always acknowledge your complaint within 30 days¹ and provide a reference number – and, **where possible**, we will also provide our outcome / response within 30 days. There will be instances, however, where this is not possible – e.g. in the case of particularly complex complaints. In such cases, we will keep you reasonably informed about the progress of the investigation.

Whilst there is no time limit for submission of a complaint, there may be limits to what we can do to investigate and take action regarding the matter, the longer you wait to submit your complaint (for example, due to staff turnover, availability of information over time, etc.).

Please ensure that correspondence is respectful and appropriate; where there is evidence of abusive, threatening, or harassing behaviour (particularly when this forms part of a pattern of behaviour), we reserve the right to stop engaging with the complaint.

Separate processes are managed by different teams at the University, so where the data protection complaint overlaps with another type of complaint, report, or investigation, we may be able to resolve the data protection complaint more quickly (or conversely, it may take us longer to investigate and respond to the data protection complaint) and you may receive separate replies to different elements of the matter in question.

If you are not happy with the University's response to your complaint, you can complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).

Last updated 18 June 2026

¹ As outlined in the [guidance](#) issued by the Information Commissioner's Office, the 30 days start the day after the complaint is received by the University (regardless of whether this day happens to be a weekend or public holiday). Where the last day to acknowledge the complaint falls on a weekend or public holiday, we have until the next working day to provide an acknowledgement.