



Helpful Features of a Student Statement - A GUIDE

How can this guide help me?

By highlighting what (in our experience) is helpful to include when drafting a student statement. You may find it useful when preparing for a meeting under the Appeals, Complaints, Fitness to Practice or Academic Integrity regulations.

Why is a statement a good idea?

There is no current requirement for a student statement within the University Regulations. However, The University Regulations normally allow an initial meeting which enables you to:

- Present grounds for appeal/complaint/clarify issues which have arisen during your studies
- Provide a brief background to your grounds/issues
- Make the case for your preferred outcome (not in your Academic Integrity statement)
- Clarify if you have breached the Academic Integrity regulations

Writing your statement will assist you in identifying your key points, structure a convincing case and communicate both to the decision maker.

Advice Alert!

After writing your statement read it as if you were the decision maker hearing it for the first time. Would you be convinced?

What wider support can I expect from an adviser?

- Clarity on the regulations and guidance on how they should work in practice
- Feedback on any statement which you have drafted for meetings with the relevant department - feedback may include which parts you may like to adapt or change
- Appropriate support at the meeting itself

What can I not expect?

- That your adviser will tell you what to say
- A prediction of the outcome
- That the service will collude with you in statements or assertions which are deliberately misleading or untrue



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What should my draft statement include?

- **Clarity:** Your statement should set out the grounds of your appeal/your response to the issues which have been raised/a brief description of the pertinent points.
- **Show you know:** Know the procedures relevant to your hearing - briefly show that you have read and understood them.

Advice Alert!

Being clear may mean keeping your student statement concise. What are the 3 or 4 key points you wish to communicate in your meeting? A focused statement need not normally be more than a side or so of A4.

- **A structure:** In order to get across your key points / answer the issues raised your information needs to be organised in a way that is easily understood by those listening to your statement.

Suggested Structure for your Statement:

Introduction: Thanking the person or panel for providing the opportunity to present the grounds for your appeal/clarify the circumstances around the issue which has been brought to your attention. You may also wish to quote relevant extracts from the University Regulations e.g. which of the 3 grounds of appeal you are relating to your experience.

Key point: Your introduction is important as the person listening to your statement is likely to remember the points made at the start and at the end of your statement.

Main body: This should relate what you have experienced to what you have set out in your introduction. For example, a chronology of events, how the issue impacted on you and your ability to meet course requirements, or reasonable steps or actions which you took at the time which you deem pertinent.

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The main body may also include subheadings. Examples of subheadings include: 'lessons I have learnt', 'what I would do differently next time' and/or 'relevant support I will have in place for the future'.

Conclusion: This is your chance to summarise your 3-5 key points. Moreover, it is your chance to put any reasonable and relevant questions to which you are seeking a response. Most importantly, this is your chance to set out your desired outcome/s from the meeting.

Exception: In an Academic Integrity statement, specifying your desired outcome would be inappropriate.



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Read your desired outcome as if you were the decision maker. Ask yourself: does it flow from the information in the main body and are the outcomes realistic and reasonable?

What kind of language is helpful?

If something is a statement of fact (such as compelling evidence of mitigation) present it as such through language that is clear and assertive. Avoid language which is subjective or emotive.

Advice Alert!

Excessive expressions of guilt or pleading do not come across as well as concise acceptance of responsibility for mistakes or a calm account of what you might have done differently.

What kind of sentence structure?

Aim for simple, short and clear sentences.

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It is appropriate to talk about your feelings/emotional state if your wellbeing is one of the issues which is relevant to your hearing.

Summary

This guide cannot guarantee you will get the outcomes you are seeking but will help you think about how to make the most of the initial stages the university regulations offer.

Further Guidance

For further guidance on writing a statement and for feedback on drafts, contact the Advice Centre.

- 02380 592 085
- advice@susu.org

You can also visit us in Building 40, Highfield campus. Our opening hours are Monday–Friday 09.00–17.00.

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Date: July 2017.