



ULSU Advice Centre Conflict of Interest Policy

Introduction

The University of Lincoln Students' Union (ULSU) Advice Centre is an independent and impartial service for members of the ULSU group. To maintain impartiality, the ULSU Advice Centre operates a conflict of interest policy.

A conflict of interest would comprise the accuracy and impartiality of the advice given. It is recognised that a conflict of interest can occur from many factors, including personal and other service users.

If an Advisor identifies a possible conflict of interest that would impact their ability to take a case, they should transfer the case to another Advisor promptly and note this in the case notes. The Advisor should not look after the case file after it has been transferred.

It is the ULSU Centre Advice policy that the same Advisor cannot advise both parties in a dispute. Both parties should have separate cases with different Advisors. If there are no Advisors available that can deal with the matter in an impartial way, only the existing client can be advised on a dispute with another student. The second party will then be signposted to an external agency for advice on this issue should they visit the Centre. They are still entitled to support from the Students' Union and can be advised by the ULSU Advice Centre on other matters and must be informed of this.

In cases where the ULSU Advice Centre's abilities are compromised and cannot remain impartial, the student should be referred to another Advisory service.

Requests for advice from Staff and External Agencies

It is recognised that requests for advice are sometimes made by University and ULSU Group staff, elected student officers and reps, and external agencies.

Where the nature of the enquiry could potentially involve a student and a member of staff seeking advice from ULSU Advice Centre, the ULSU Advice Centre will signpost the member of staff to another agency. The staff member will be informed that a conflict of interest exists.

The ULSU Advice Centre also recognises that advice is sometimes sought by external agencies which have contact with students, for example landlords. In these instances, the caller shall be informed that the ULSU Advice Centre exists to provide advice to students, and is unable to assist with the enquiry.

ULSU Staff Members

ULSU Staff Members outside of the Advice Centre must not have involvement with casework as this would create a conflict of interest.

If, in discussion with the student, the ULSU Advice Centre feels it is appropriate to involve a ULSU Staff Member, then this action can be taken, in accordance with the ULSU Advice Centre Confidentiality Policy.

Last Reviewed: August 2020

Next Review Date: August 2021