

# Union Advice - Impact Report 2016/17

## What We Do

We provide free, independent, impartial and confidential academic advice on academic appeals, academic misconduct, complaints, extenuating circumstances (ECs), fitness to practise, student conduct and disciplinary issues.

We help to empower students to find a way forward when they have trouble with their studies or university experience.

## How We Make a Difference

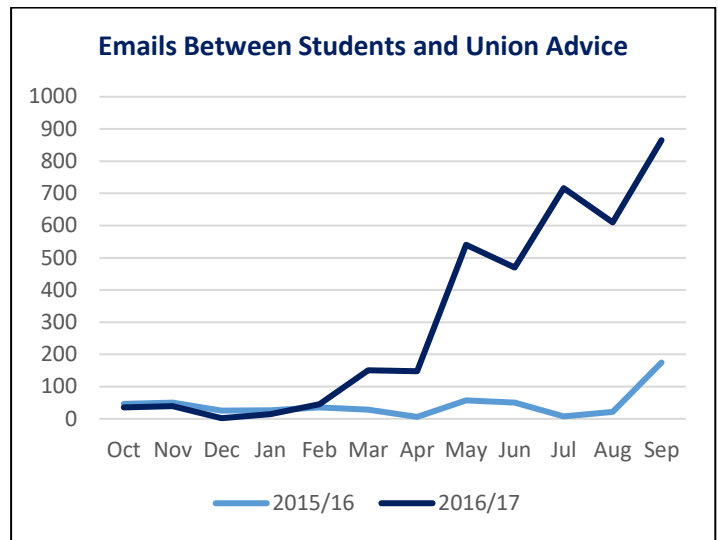
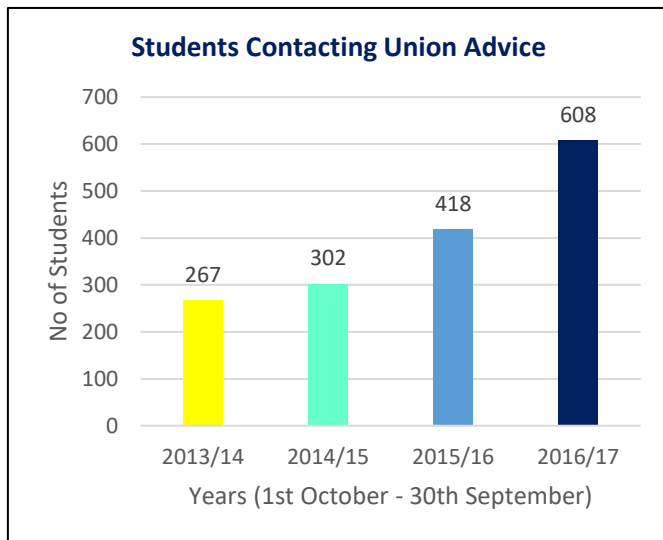
- Respond to students within less than 3 working days
- Explain the University's regulations and procedures
- Answer questions on academic issues
- Identify the options available in each situation outlining the strengths and weaknesses in a student's case
- Advise students on how to complete forms and write statements
- Provide feedback on their forms and evidence
- Accompany students to meetings and panel hearings to ensure they are treated fairly

## The Difference We Made in Numbers

### Key statistics from 2016/17 (1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017)

- **614 new enquiries/cases** were handled (**45.5% increase** from 422 recorded in 2015/16)
- **608 students** received advice from those new enquiries/cases (**45.5% increase** from 418 recorded in 2015/16)
- **3636 emails** were exchanged **between students and Union Advice** (Almost **7 times more** than the 531 recorded in 2015/16)
- **210 face-to-face appointments** took place (208 recorded in 2015/16)
- **47 telephone advice** calls provided (**Over 4 times more** than 11 recorded in 2015/16)
- **11 hearings** had an Advice Caseworker **accompanying a student** (Almost **3 times more** than the 4 recorded in 2015/16)
- **61%** of enquiries/cases were for **academic appeals**, **16% extenuating circumstances**, **9% academic misconduct**, **5% complaints** and rest were from other issues including disciplinary

## Spotlight on the Increase in Demand and Service Provision



## Outcomes We Helped to Achieve

We contributed to students obtaining outcomes related to student retention and progression such as:

- *Assisted students with academic appeals and EC forms resulting in students gaining additional assessment opportunities and not being withdrawn*
- *Helped students respond to allegations of misconduct and avoid the most severe penalties being applied such as expulsion*
- *Helped students respond to fitness to practice concerns and avoid being withdrawn*
- *Helped students resolve complaints about the University, improving their experience*
- *Directed students requiring specialist support to University services such as Learning Success and the Student Counselling and Mental Health Service.*

## Customer Satisfaction

### Helped reassure students who felt less worried after contacting our service

*Our survey respondents felt very worried before contacting us with an average score of 9 out of 10 (0 not worried and 10 extremely worried). This reduced to 5 after contact with us.*

### Improved students understanding of the University's regulations and procedures

*Over 50% of respondents strongly agreed and a further 24% agreed we improved their understanding of the regulations and procedures. This brings a combined total of 74% of respondents having an improved understanding after contact with Union Advice.*

### Delivered good customer service

*Our customer satisfaction rating amongst survey respondents was 7.5 out of 10 (with 0 very dissatisfied and 10 very satisfied).*

## In Their Own Words - Comments From Students About Our Service

*"...helped me understand the appeals process well enough to be able to execute a successful appeal on my own. The EC form attached to it was also accepted. This made a huge difference to my marks. Many thanks!"*

*"Hello, I contacted the Union quite late and.....made time to quickly see me before his meeting which led to me realising I didn't have enough evidence and being able to get it in time. He also responded quickly via email and was helpful..."*

*"...very polite and explained all my choices clearly"*

*"Thank you so much Union Advice, you are my saviour in my appeal process."*

*"...very knowledgeable and provided relevant, tailored advice on my situation which was greatly appreciated, he took his time to explain things which was required as I felt highly stressed about my situation. I am very grateful for his assistance"*

*"The appointment ran over time but the adviser did not rush the process he gave me all the time I needed and sent me the feedback within hours to evaluate made himself available if I had any concern on leave. They were wonderful I would definitely use them again."*

*"Excellent service. I felt very supported"*

*"...Academic Caseworker was brilliant and supported all along with quick references. People such as Adrian make all the difference, we wish him and the Union all the best."*

*"...dealt with my query regarding my EC application. He was extremely helpful and gave good advice on the steps I should take to support my application. His responses were very fast. I was offered an appointment but was unable to come to uni, so we used email and phone for communication purposes. Very satisfied with the help I received from Union Advice"*

*"...extremely helpful with my case. He even attended the academic misconduct meeting with me. Cheers mate!"*

*"Very clear and informative on ways to approach issue. Also attentive to email."*

*"Was seen advised promptly and their advice assisted me in preparing and submitting my EC form. Am so glad I used Student Union service"*

*"It was great that I received a response within a reasonable time even during busy periods."*

*"It helped hugely and led to a positive outcome. Really a very good service already."*