

LLM Student Concerns Policy

Purpose of this Statement	To detail how LLM students may raise concerns about their training experience
Dated	17 July 2025
Contact	Steve Proudlove
Next Review Date	July 2026

This policy should be read in conjunction with the LLM Student Feedback Policy and the St Hild Student Complaints Policy. The online location of the St Hild Policy can be found at the bottom of page 2.

Purpose

In order that LLM students have the best possible experience: to enable LLM students to be clear about how, when and to whom to raise issues with, and when and to whom to escalate unresolved issues to enable them to be dealt with swiftly and constructively.

Setting the Scene

a) Definitions / Acronyms used in this policy

LLM	Licensed Lay Minister / Licensed Lay Ministry (as appropriate for sentence)
LLMTP	Licensed Lay Ministry Training Pathway/Programme
MDOG	Ministerial Development Oversight Group
DoF	Department of Formation
YTEP	Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership

b) Leeds Diocese – St Hild Partnership Agreement – from September 2024

St Hild Theological College will be responsible for teaching the academic elements of the LLMTP. St Hild is part of YTEP and the modules to be taught are all Common Awards with Durham University as the validating organisation.

Leeds Diocese will be responsible for the LLM Student selection process, the formational programme, ongoing discernment and final decisions about whether a Student is licensed.

LLM Student feedback, concerns and complaints

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Introduction | page 2 |
| 2. Academic Concerns | page 2 |
| 3. Formational Concerns | Page 3 |
| 4. Flowchart | Appendix on page 5 |

1. INTRODUCTION

The voice of LLM students is important and valued within the DoF, contributing to effective delivery and development of the LLM Training Pathway. There are a range of provisions made for LLM students to express their views about course experience. Alongside other forms of LLM Student feedback, LLM Student Representatives (reps) play a key role in ensuring LLM Student perspectives, comments and suggestions are conveyed to St Hild and DoF staff and given due consideration. The primary mechanism for this is the Biannual Staff/LLM Student Forum (see the *LLM Student Feedback Policy 25-26*).

LLM Student feedback on course content and delivery can also be conveyed anonymously through questionnaires provided for modules and formational events. Alongside this, feedback can also be offered informally to tutors or, where applicable, concerns can be raised through a formal complaints process.

Where possible, the LLM Training Programme hopes to manage concerns and complaints via routine feedback processes and informal channels, in a way that is sensitive to the needs of each specific case. St Hild and the diocese will seek to treat any concern, complaints or disclosure from a LLM Student/complainant with sensitivity and confidentiality. LLM students making a complaint are expected to identify themselves, particularly if there is a serious concern that involves LLM Student wellbeing, professionalism, or relates to the health and welfare of LLM students.

The Leeds Diocese – St Hild Partnership arrangement means that the Raising Concerns Process has been split into two pathways: academic and formational.

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

*This refers to any concerns about the **teaching or marking** of Common Awards modules taught by St Hild.*

The current St Hild Student Complaints Policy can be found here:

St Hild College YTEP Moodle > St Hild College Student Homepage > College Life > St Hild Policy Documents > SHC Student Complaints Policy

3. FORMATIONAL CONCERNS

This refers to any aspects of the training course provided by or overseen by the diocese e.g. setting up placements, Formation Days, Formational Mentor meetings, allocation of sermon assessors, policies & procedures.

Stage One: Recognising an Issue

- Issues where immediate attention might be appropriate should be raised with staff who are present, particularly if they could be addressed there and then
- Issues relating to course development can be raised with LLM Student reps, on feedback forms and through informal discussion with diocesan LLM Training staff
- Other issues which do not have an immediate practical solution can be raised with the LLM Student rep, who will either incorporate them into their feedback to the **Diocesan LLM Student Forum** or they may signpost to the appropriate person.
- Issues of a confidential nature may be raised by email or telephone with your formational mentor, who will either address the concern themselves or advise on next steps.

Stage two: Escalation

- If the staff present on the day cannot resolve the issue satisfactorily, contact the Director of Formation (steve.proudlove@leeds.anglican.org), who will attempt to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. In the case of a serious matter, you may be asked to describe the issue in writing as a formal complaint.
- In the case of a formal complaint, all relevant documents should be included in full and marked CONFIDENTIAL. Personal information about other people should not be submitted as part of the complaint unless necessary. If personal information is included it must be accompanied by consent to process the data.
- The formal complaint should be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. If this is not achieved, the complainant should be informed of the reasons why.
- The Director will work with the *LLMTP Group* to review and make a formal response to the formal complaint.
- The complainant will be advised of the expected timescale for responding to the complaint, with updates about any changes to the timescale if applicable.
- After due consideration of the relevant factors and supporting material, the Director of Formation and the *LLMTP Group* will either:
 - Seek further informal resolution of the complaint (e.g. through mediation or submission of proposals for consideration by the Staff/LLM Student Forum)
 - Uphold the complaint as a whole or in part (with action taken accordingly)
 - Dismiss the complaint if there is no case to answer
 - Dismiss the complaint if it is judged to be trivial, vexatious or malicious (with further action taken if appropriate). These types of complaints can be characterised in a number of ways:

- Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
- Insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
- Insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
- The LLM Student will be informed of the outcome in writing.

Stage three: Appeals process

- If the LLM Student(s) have completed stages one and two but are still dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal to the Warden of Readers against the final decision on the following grounds:
 - The procedure for handling the complaint was deficient in a way which materially prejudiced the LLM Student's case
 - The emergence of new and relevant material that was not available at the time the complaint was first submitted
 - Evidence that the judgement of the Director of Formation and the *LLMTP Group* was unreasonable in the light of the evidence supplied.
- If these conditions are met, the Warden of Readers will review existing materials, conduct further investigations if required and adjudicate on the preceding outcome. This will mean either upholding the preceding outcome without qualification; upholding it with further recommendations or replacing it with a fresh conclusion.
- There is no right of appeal to this Appeals Process.

See next page for a flowchart summarising these three stages

LLM Student Concern Flowchart

(See policy for expanded textual descriptors for each stage)

