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FREE SPEECH UNION

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Professor Andy Collop
Acting Vice-Chancellor
De Montfort University
The Gateway
Leicester LE1 9BH

18th May 2020

By email to: vcoffice@dmu.ac.uk

Dear Professor Collop,

Discipline Investigation of [REDACTED]

I wrote to Mr Matthew Dean, copied to yourself, on 30th March 2020 to complain on behalf of our member, [REDACTED], a journalism student at De Montfort. I attach our letter.

More than six weeks have passed and I have not had so much as an acknowledgement, let alone a response.

Apart from this being discourteous, it is also a breach of your own Complaints Procedure which states that acknowledgement will be given (normally) within three working days and attempts “to resolve or make a formal response to the complaint” will be made within 20 working days.

We understand that complaints should normally be made to a designated individual, but given the much broader issues raised by this complaint – the University’s failure to take account of its obligation to protect its students right to freedom of expression – we were hoping this is a matter you would address personally.

We acknowledge that the coronavirus crisis has been extremely disruptive, and you will have faced unavoidable delays across a number of fronts. But could you please now give [REDACTED] due consideration?

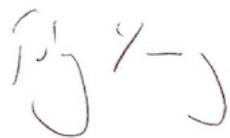
In light of the delay, we would like you to do the following:

- i. make an apology to [REDACTED], accepting that he did no wrong;
- ii. remove the record of the incident from [REDACTED] disciplinary record and confirm that it will not be taken into account in any future disciplinary proceedings; and
- iii. make a commitment to review your social media and disciplinary procedures, as explained in our earlier letter, to ensure that no investigation is started against a student where to do so would infringe their right to freedom of expression.

In return, [REDACTED] will refrain from pursuing further any complaint he may bring regarding the University’s breach of his right to procedural fairness.

I am copying this letter to Matthew Dean, as well as the Universities Minister and the Chair of the Office for Students.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Toby Young'.

Toby Young
General Secretary
The Free Speech Union
toby@freespeechunion.org