

Student Complaints Resolution - Academic Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for students to submit a complaint, review or appeal, to ensure that these cases are dealt with in a timely, fair and just manner and resolved without victimisation or intimidation of anyone connected with the complaint, review or appeal.

1.2 This policy must be read in conjunction with the linked Student Complaints Resolution - Procedures.

2. Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to all University staff and enrolled, prospective and past students.

2.2 For the purpose of this policy, a person whose enrolment is suspended or cancelled by the University can access this process to raise a complaint about the decision to suspend or cancel their enrolment.

2.3 Students who undertake cross-institutional study at another university are considered a student of the host institution for matters directly relating to their studies at that institution.

2.4 This policy operates from 01 January 2025 and applies to all complaints submitted from this date.

3. Definitions

3.1 Refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for definitions as they specifically relate to policy documents.

3.2 For the purposes of this policy, when a 'complaint' is referenced, it is intended to include a complaint, review or appeal.

4. Principles

4.1 In managing the student complaints resolution process the expectation is that the University:

(a) considers student complaints in accordance with principles of procedural fairness and in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*;

(b) ensures that student complaints are properly and impartially considered by the relevant decision maker;

(c) administers and responds to student complaints within the time frames as determined in the Student Complaints Resolution - Procedures;

(d) respects confidentiality by disclosing only information necessary to consider and respond to a request for resolving a complaint;

(e) explains a decision clearly in writing and ensure that any further actions the student can take in the resolution process are conveyed with the decision;

(f) neither intimidates nor victimises a complainant, respondent or any other person involved with the complaint; and

(g) seeks to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity and at a level closest to the source of the complaint as possible.

4.2 In partaking in the student complaints resolution process students are expected to:

(a) familiarise themselves with the Student Complaints Resolution – Academic Policy and Student Complaints Resolution - Procedures prior to submitting a request for the resolution of a complaint;

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Academic Board

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services

FIRST APPROVED

5 November 2024

LAST AMENDED

1 January 2025

REVIEW DATE

5 November 2029

STATUS

Active

- (b) ensure that all requests are submitted in writing and within the specified timeframes in accordance with Appendix 002: Student Complaints Summary of Timelines;
- (c) provide the required documentation for the type of complaint in accordance with the relevant procedures;
- (d) explain their complaint clearly with reasons;
- (e) provide all evidence in support of their complaint;
- (f) act in accordance with the Student Conduct - Governing Policy and Student Charter; and
- (g) act in good faith and not submit complaints for frivolous or vexatious reasons.

5. Student complaints resolution process

5.1 The resolution of student complaints are managed through the student complaints resolution process outlined in Figure 1: Student complaints resolution process and detailed in the Student Complaints Resolution - Procedures.

Figure 1: Student complaints resolution process

5.2 Decision makers for each stage of the student complaints resolution process are identified in Appendix 001: Student Complaints Decision Makers.

6. Authorities and responsibilities

6.1 As the Approval Authority, Academic Board approves this policy in accordance with the *University of the Sunshine Coast Act 1998 (Qld)*.

6.2 As the Responsible Executive Member of this policy the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) can approve procedures and guidelines to operationalise this policy. All procedures and guidelines must be compatible with the provisions of this policy.

6.3 As the Designated Officer of this policy the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services can approve associated documents to support the application of this policy. These must be compatible with the provisions of the respective policy document.

6.4 This policy operates from the 01 January 2025, will all previous policies related to student complaints resolution are replaced and have no further operation from this date.

6.5 All records relating to student complaints resolution must be stored and managed in accordance with the Records Management - Procedures.

6.6 This policy must be maintained in accordance with the University Policy Documents - Procedures and reviewed on a standard 5 year policy review cycle.

6.7 Any exception to this policy to enable a more appropriate result must be approved in accordance with the University Policy Documents - Procedures prior to the deviation of the policy document.

6.8 Refer to Schedule C of the Delegations Manual in relation to the approved delegations detailed within this policy document.

7. Appendices

Appendix 001: Student Complaints Decision Makers

Appendix 002: Student Complaints Summary of Timelines

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Anti-Discrimination and Freedom from Bullying and Harassment - Operational Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - Operational Policy
- Monitoring Academic Progress - Academic Policy
- Public Interest Disclosures - Governing Policy
- Public Interest Disclosures - Procedures
- Records Management - Procedures
- Review of Assessment and Final Grade - Procedures
- Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment and Respectful Relationships (Students) - Operational Policy
- Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment and Respectful Relationships (Students) - Procedures
- Student Misconduct - Procedures
- Student Ombudsman - Operational Policy
- University Policy Documents - Procedures

LINKED DOCUMENTS

- Student Complaints Resolution - Procedures

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

- Student Complaints and Appeals - Governing Policy

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Student Charter
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
- AS/NZS 10002:2014 Australian/New Zealand Standard, Guidelines for complaint management
- TEQSA Guidance Note: Grievance and Complaint Handling