

Student Complaints Policy

Policy Code: CG1090

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Purpose

To provide a clear set of principles for the making, handling and resolution of student concerns and complaints.

Scope

This policy applies to complaints made by students of the University, including students studying with partner providers.

All staff when handling student concerns or complaints must comply with this policy.

This policy does not apply to decisions under University statute or regulation, University appeals or where another specific policy applies.

Legislative context

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Australian Quality and Training Framework Standards.
- Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority Guidelines [to Minimum Standards 2016](#)
- Victorian [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012](#)

Definitions

Term	Definition
Complaint	A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with an aspect of a student's experience with the University or the University environment. A complaint may be made about a partner provider, contractor or agent.
Natural Justice	Means general procedural fairness in the handling of a complaint and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving a person who may be affected by a decision a reasonable opportunity to respond; • the right to attend meetings with a support person, if required (the support person may be internal or external to the University and should not hold a legal qualification); • the right to a fair and unbiased process for all parties involved; • genuine consideration by the decision-maker of any submissions made; • genuine inquiry into any areas of dispute; • the right to an independent, unbiased decision-maker; and • a final decision that is based solely on the relevant evidence.
Partner Provider	Means a third party provider, located either onshore or offshore, who has entered into an agreement with the University to deliver all or part of a course or program to students.
Staff	Includes any person who has an employment contract with the University on a full-time, part-time, sessional or casual basis, or those employed through a contract for services.
Student	Means a person enrolled or admitted as a student of the University.
Student Integrity Office	The office responsible for the student complaint process and administering the online complaints portal. The Student Integrity Office can be contacted at Student.Integrity@federation.edu.au
University Grievance Officer	This role is held by the Associate Director, Risk and Integrity. The University Grievance Officer can be contacted at grievanceofficer@federation.edu.au .

Policy statement

The University aims to resolve student complaints and concerns in a transparent, consistent, fair and timely manner.

Feedback received through the complaint process provides Federation University with valuable insights, allowing the University to make improvements and improve the student experience.

At all stages of the [Student Complaints Procedure](#), the University is committed to:

- an accessible, impartial and fair process;
- transparency and consistency;
- natural justice and procedural fairness;
- the timely resolution of complaints (including keeping the student informed on progress);
- the informal resolution of complaints wherever possible;
- equal opportunity and recognition of diversity; and
- privacy and confidentiality.

The University will not tolerate retribution or victimisation towards an individual that raises a concern or complaint.

Supporting Documents

- [Student Complaints Procedure](#).
- Sexual Harm Policy
- Sexual Harm Procedure
- [Public Interest Disclosure Procedure](#)

Responsibility

The Vice Chancellor's Senior Team reports and provides assurance to the University Council that student complaints are being monitored and appropriate steps are being taken to address underlying causes.

The Chief Operating Officer (as Approval Authority) is responsible for approving and overseeing the implementation of this procedure.

The Director Corporate Governance (as Policy Sponsor), through the University Grievance Officer and Student Integrity Office, is responsible for reviewing and implementing this policy.

The University Grievance Officer and the Student Integrity Office is responsible for the effective processing and reporting of student complaints.

Promulgation

This policy will be communicated by:

1. A FedNews announcement and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the University's Policy Central website;
2. Distribution of e-mail communication to the Vice Chancellor's Senior Team / Deans or equivalent / Directors or equivalent / staff and corresponding roles within partner providers.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented by:

1. A FedNews announcement and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the University's Policy Central website;
2. Staff training sessions.