



Student Complaints Resolution policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Policy is effective from 25 August 2020.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Policy provides a framework for responding to concerns and resolving complaints made by students, in a way that contributes to a supportive and fair learning environment.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to concerns and complaints by current, former or prospective students in relation to:

- a. services, processes and actions as well as academic or administrative decisions of the University or of any entity operating on behalf of the University, or
- b. the conduct of a member of staff, another student or other person associated with the University (including unfair or unreasonable behaviour, bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual harm, vilification and victimisation).

(4) Matters covered by another University policy are dealt with in accordance with that Policy.

Section 4 - Policy

(5) The University recognises a student's right to express legitimate concerns and complaints and is committed to responding in ways that contribute to a supportive and fair learning environment.

(6) The University aims to maintain a student complaints resolution process that:

- a. is accessible, impartial, fair and equitable
- b. is carried out with transparency and consistency
- c. encourages, where possible, informal resolution of concerns
- d. is implemented in a timely and responsive manner
- e. ensures, so far as is practicable, privacy, confidentiality and the health, wellbeing and safety of all parties
- f. encourages the maintenance of harmonious relationships.

(7) The University expects that all parties involved in a complaint will engage in good faith with the complaints resolution process.

(8) The University does not tolerate victimisation and may take action against a student or staff member who is found to have victimised another student or staff member for their participation in (or association with) alleging, making, supporting or resolving a complaint.

(9) Any student who uses the student complaints resolution process to make a frivolous or vexatious complaint or who lies or deliberately misleads in relation to a complaint may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

(10) The University can decline to investigate a complaint, particularly where another process is more appropriate or where there is insufficient nexus with the University.

(11) A complainant seeking the statutory protections afforded by the [Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 \(Vic\)](#) must take their complaint to the [Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission \(IBAC\)](#). The University's obligations in respect of a public interest disclosure are set out in the [Public Interest Disclosures procedure](#).

Responsibilities

(12) The Manager, Student Complaints and Appeals is responsible for:

- a. managing the University's student complaints resolution process
- b. ensuring that appropriate records of student complaints are securely maintained
- c. analysing student complaints data to identify systemic or particular issues requiring improvement
- d. initiating investigations with Faculties and Portfolios as appropriate to identify actions to address areas for improvement
- e. reporting on student complaints to the University Executive and Council (through its Audit and Risk Committee).

(13) Designated complaints contacts in Faculties and Portfolios of the University are responsible for:

- a. providing advice to students and staff in relation to the student complaints resolution process
- b. referring matters for action as appropriate.

Section 5 - Procedure

(14) The [Student Complaints Resolution procedure](#) documents how to comply with this Policy.

Section 6 - Definitions

(15) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. bullying: any repeated unreasonable behaviour that causes a risk to the health or safety of another person.
- b. complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction requiring formal resolution.
- c. concern: an expression of dissatisfaction by a student that can be resolved directly with the person or area involved without the need for formal action.
- d. sexual harm: as defined in the [Sexual Harm Prevention and Response policy](#).
- e. vexatious complaint: a complaint that lacks substance and has been intentionally fabricated.

Status and Details

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Status | Historic |
| Effective Date | 25th August 2020 |
| Review Date | 1st June 2021 |
| Approval Authority | Vice-Chancellor |
| Approval Date | 25th August 2020 |
| Expiry Date | 26th August 2020 |
| Responsible Executive | Liz Johnson Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic +61 3 92468303 |
| Implementation Officer | Lisa Hanna Dean of Students deanofstudents@deakin.edu.au |
| Enquiries Contact | Student Complaints, Office of the Dean of Students |