

Student Grievance Resolution Policy

1 Purpose

To facilitate the timely investigation and resolution of Student Grievances in a manner which is fair and just.

2 Scope

This policy applies to Students, including Students studying with a Third-Party Provider.

3 Policy Statement

Student Grievances may arise out of academic Decisions, administrative Decisions and actions, or are general grievances relating to the Student experience for which the Student is seeking resolution. The University is committed to dealing with grievances in a reasonable timeframe and in a supportive environment, without Victimisation or intimidation of anyone connected with the grievance, either during or consequent to the resolution process.

The stages involved in resolving a Student Grievance are listed below. These are explained in detail in the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure. The stages are:

- Informal Resolution (optional)
- Stage 1 - Formal Student Grievance
- Stage 2 - Review of Stage 1 outcome or other Decision
- Stage 3 - Appeal against Stage 2 outcome
- Stage 4 - Application to external agencies.

This Policy aligns with the:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021: Standard 2.4 Student Grievances and Complaints*
- *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (2018): Standard 10: Complaints and Appeals*

4 Principles

4.1 Principles for Resolving Student Grievances

Any Student or University Member involved in a Student Grievance must participate in good faith and behave according to the relevant Code of Conduct.

The University will:

1. facilitate access to the Student Grievance resolution process by widely publicising its procedures and communicate the support available for Students during the process
2. deal with Student Grievances promptly within the time limits set out in the procedures and in accordance with the principles of Procedural Fairness
3. ensure that Student Grievances are properly and impartially considered by the relevant decision-maker, including declaring and managing perceived, potential or actual Conflicts of Interest
4. assess and respond to Student Grievances with due regard to the requirements of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)
5. permit Students to be accompanied by a Student Support Person when required to attend meetings associated with the process of resolving the Student Grievance
6. maintain a Student's Enrolment until the internal grievance resolution process is completed
7. keep the Student informed of progress in resolving the Student Grievance
8. respect confidentiality by disclosing only information necessary to consider and respond to a Student Grievance
9. explain a Decision clearly in writing to the Student including the reasons for the Decision
10. ensure that any subsequent steps a Student may take in the resolution process, such as submitting an Appeal, are set out in writing as part of a Decision notification
11. cooperate fully with any review of the Student Grievance process instigated by an external complaint handling agency
12. maintain confidential records of investigations and outcomes in resolving Student Grievances in accordance with the University's Record and Information Management Policy.

Students will:

1. attempt to respectfully resolve Student Grievances as close as possible to the source of the grievance, where it is reasonable and appropriate to do so
2. familiarise themselves with the Student Grievance Resolution Policy and subordinate procedures prior to submitting a formal Student Grievance
3. be responsible for accessing assistance and support during the grievance resolution process, if the Student believes that they require such assistance and support.

5 References

Nil

6 Schedules

This policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Policy Information

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Accountable Officer | Vice-Chancellor |
| Responsible Officer | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education) |
| Policy Type | Governance Policy |
| Policy Suite | Student Appeals Procedure Student Grievance Resolution Procedure |
| Subordinate Schedules | |
| Approved Date | 14/12/2021 |
| Effective Date | 14/12/2021 |
| Review Date | 15/11/2026 |
| Relevant Legislation | Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) Higher Education Support Act 2003 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| | <u>University of Southern Queensland Act 1998</u> |
| Policy Exceptions | <u>Policy Exceptions Register</u> |
| Related Policies | <u>Code of Conduct Policy</u> <u>Employee Complaints Policy</u> <u>Employee Diversity and Inclusion Policy</u> <u>Fraud and Corruption Management Policy</u> <u>Handling Personal Student Information Policy and Procedure</u> <u>Policy on Complaints Involving Council Members</u> <u>Privacy Policy</u> <u>Public Interest Disclosure Policy</u> <u>Records and Information Management Policy</u> <u>Refund of Student Fees Policy and Procedure</u> <u>Research Code of Conduct Policy</u> <u>Student Academic Integrity Policy</u> <u>Student General Conduct Policy</u> <u>Students with a Disability Policy and Procedure</u> <u>Under 18 International Students Policy</u> <u>Work Health and Safety Policy</u> <u>Work Integrated Learning Activities Policy</u> |
| Related Procedures | <u>Children on Campus Procedure</u> <u>Complaints Involving Council Members Procedure</u> <u>Credit and Exemption Procedure</u> <u>Enrolment Procedure</u> <u>Higher Degree by Research Student Admissions and Enrolments Procedure</u> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Higher Degree by Research Thesis Examination Procedure</p> <p>Privacy Procedure</p> <p>Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure</p> <p>Smoke-Free Procedure</p> <p>Student Academic Misconduct Procedure</p> <p>Student Academic Progress Procedure</p> <p>Student Discrimination, Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Response Procedure</p> <p>Student General Misconduct Procedure</p> <p>Transfer Between Providers Procedure</p> |
| <p>Related forms, publications and websites</p> | <p>Feedback, Complaints and Appeals</p> |
| <p>Definitions</p> | <p>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</p> <p>Appeal</p> <p>A formal, written request made by a Student or Employee to a higher authority to have a Decision overturned.</p> <p>Conflict of Interest</p> <p>If a University Member has an interest that conflicts or may conflict with the discharge of the University Member's duties the University Member should Declare the nature of the interest and the conflict to the University Member's Supervisor as soon as practicable after the relevant facts come to the University Member's knowledge and must not take action or further action relating to a matter that is or may be affected by the conflict until authorised. An Executive Leader may direct a University Member to resolve a conflict or possible conflict between an interest of the University Member and the University Member's duties. A reference to an interest or to a Conflict of Interest is a reference to those matters within their ordinary meaning under the general law, and, in relation to an interest, the definition in the Acts Interpretation Act 1954, Schedule 1, does not apply. A Conflict of Interest will arise when a University Member's Private Interests conflict with their duty to the University or to serve the public interest as a University Member. The risk of having a conflict of interest increases</p> |

where a University Member's responsibilities include the authority to make decisions. A conflict of interest may be potential, perceived or actual - when a University Member is in a role where future decision making may be influenced by their Private Interests if a certain condition is fulfilled, they have a potential conflict of interest; a perceived conflict of interest arises where it appears that decisions a University Member make in the course of their University employment may be influenced by their Private Interests, whether or not this is in fact the case; an actual conflict of interest exists where a University Member's actions could be unduly, improperly or excessively influenced by their Private Interests. Serious misconduct can occur when a conflict of interest is concealed, understated, mismanaged or abused.

[Decision](#)

A determination made by an Employee, contractor or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the University.

[Enrolment](#)

The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year.

[Procedural Fairness](#)

Has the meaning ascribed to it from time to time by the applicable common law of the State of Queensland.

[Respondent](#)

A member of the University community against whom a Complaint has been made.

[Special Circumstances](#)

Matters which are, in most cases, beyond the control of the Student and which will impact their capacity to progress with their planned program of study or meet a submission deadline. In some legislation, Special Circumstances are referred to as "compassionate and compelling circumstances".

[Student](#)

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of

Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

[Student Grievance](#)

A problem or concern raised by a Student who considers they have been negatively impacted because of an action, determination or omission within the control or responsibility of the University. Student Grievances are resolved in accordance with the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure and must be related directly to a Student's studies at the University and the outcome must directly impact the Student.

[Student Support Person](#)

Any individual who is providing support and assistance to a Student involved in a grievance resolution process, including accompanying the Student to meetings or interviews. A Support Person may confer with the Student during the meeting or interview and may be invited by the Chair (or meeting convenor) to present the Student's case in their capacity as a Support Person.

[Third Party Provider](#)

A party with which the University has a Third Party Arrangement for the purposes of delivering some or all of a higher education program that leads to the award of an Australian regulated higher education qualification.

[University Members](#)

Persons who include: Employees of the University whose conditions of employment are covered by the UniSQ Enterprise Agreement whether full time or fractional, continuing, fixed-term or casual, including senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University; members of the University Council and University Committees; visiting, honorary and adjunct appointees; volunteers who contribute to University activities or who act on behalf of the University; and individuals who are granted access to University facilities or who are engaged in providing services to the University, such as contractors or consultants, where applicable.

[Victimisation](#)

Any unfavourable treatment, or threats of unfavourable treatment against a person as a result of their actual or intended involvement in a complaint. Such involvement might include making a complaint or supplying information or producing documents to someone making a

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| | <p>complaint. Unfavourable treatment may include adverse changes to their study or work environment, denial of access to resources, opportunities or training, ignoring the person or giving a lower assessment of Student work.</p> |
| | <p>Definitions that relate to this policy only</p> |
| <p>Keywords</p> | <p>Grievance, complaint, grievance resolution, complaint resolution, informal complaint, informal grievance, formal complaint, formal grievance, Appeal, review of Decision, natural justice, Procedural Fairness</p> |
| <p>Record No</p> | <p>20/529PL</p> |