

Student Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

The Student Complaints Procedure supports the implementation of the Student Complaints Policy. It ensures that, in relation to Australian award programs and short courses, workplace participants:

- 1) know the correct procedure to be followed when a student raises a complaint; and
- 2) follow the same procedure to optimise consistency and the student experience.

2. Applicability

This procedure applies to all College of Law students (whether current, prospective or former) and Workplace Participants (ie employees, agents and contractors, including temporary contractors) in relation to Australian award programs or short courses.

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3. Definitions

Terms are as defined in the Student Complaints Policy.

4. Procedure

To resolve any complaint, the following process must be followed noting that if the complaint has been made anonymously or on a confidential basis, the Director or their delegate is only required to complete the steps in this process to the greatest extent possible.

Step 1: Assessing whether the complaint is formal or informal

If any workplace participant receives a complaint, they must assess whether it is an informal complaint or a formal complaint.

If the workplace participant is unsure whether a complaint is an informal or formal complaint, they can seek further guidance from the Director or their delegate, or if they are a Director, then from the Academic Secretary.

If the workplace participant assesses that it is an informal complaint, they must seek to resolve the complaint as expeditiously and informally as may be practicable.

If the workplace participant assessed the complaint to be an informal complaint and the complaint cannot be resolved informally or if the complainant remains dissatisfied, the workplace participant who received the complaint should inform the complainant that they can make a formal complaint in accordance with this policy.

If a workplace participant other than the relevant Director receives a formal complaint, they must refer it to the relevant Director or their delegate as soon as practicable and within 10 working days of the complainant having made the complaint to them.

Step 2: Assessing the formal complaint

Upon the relevant Director or their delegate's receipt of the formal complaint, they must commence assessment of the complaint within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint.

The Director or their delegate must also write to the complainant within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint:

- a) Provide the complainant with a copy of this policy and the Privacy Policy; and
- b) To advise the complainant that:
 - i) They have received their complaint
 - ii) They have commenced assessing the complaint
 - iii) They will endeavour to finalise an outcome as soon as practicable
 - iv) They may contact the complainant to seek more information or for clarification

- v) If a meeting is to be arranged, the complainant may have a support person accompany them
- vi) The complainant can submit additional information to them at any time during the complaint process
- vii) The complainant can request an update in relation to progress under the complaints process at any time
- viii) If the complaint has been made on a confidential basis, that this may impact the extent to which the complaint can be investigated or resolved
- ix) If the complainant requires any additional support in relation to the complaint or any other issue, that they can contact the Student Liaison Officer
- x) If the complainant disengages from the complaint process including refusing to provide information requested, then it may not be possible to resolve part or any of their complaint, and the College may close their complaint 30 days after the disengagement without reaching an outcome;
- xi) If the complaint relates to a workplace participant, the College will not discuss the complaint with that staff member nor reveal the complainant's identity without first advising the complainant;
- xii) Typical outcomes include policy changes, an apology and/or rectification of errors;
- xiii) Their personal information will be handled in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy;
- xiv) Written material will be kept confidential and will not be shown to anyone who is not directly involved in handling complaints;
- xv) At the conclusion of the complaint process, they will provide the complainant with a written statement of the outcome with reasons as well as notice of their right to appeal any determination made by them
- xvi) The College aims to reach an outcome within 30 days of the complaint being made, however, potential factors that may foreseeably and reasonably cause a delay include if the complainant or any person who is the subject of the complaint does not engage or does not provide requested information in a timely way, or if a staff member involved in handling the complaint unexpectedly takes leave
- xvii) If the complaint cannot be resolved within 30 days, the complainant will be informed of this, including the reasons why this is the case and the date that it is anticipated that the complaint may be resolved. If an outcome is not reached by any extended date, the complainant will be informed as soon as practicable about the reasons why this is the case and the further extended date that it is anticipated that the complaint will be resolved.
- xviii) If the complainant is dissatisfied with the manner in which the complaint is being handled, they may make a further complaint to the Director or they can complain externally.
- xix) Complainants can complain externally to the:
 - [National Student Ombudsman](#);

- [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency](#); or
 - [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) for complainants holding a student visa.
- xx) The College will keep a written record of the complaint or appeal, including any statement of the outcome and reasons for the outcome.
- xxi) Any applicable confidentiality requirements including when those requirements may end and exceptions to allow a student to access psychosocial support, health professional support and legal advice.

Step 3: Seeking missing information

If the Director or their delegate determines that the formal complaint does not contain any of the following:

- a) a submission of details;
- b) supporting evidence if relevant; or
- c) details of the outcome sought

the Director or their delegate must seek this information from the complainant.

If the complainant is unable or unwilling to provide information sought within 14 days, or if the complainant is unresponsive after 14 days, the Director or their delegate may write to the student to advise them that without the information they have sought, until such time that information is provided, they are unable to:

- a) assess the complaint;
- b) fully consider all issues relevant to any assessment;
- c) resolve the formal complaint to some or any extent.

If after a further 30 days the complainant remains unable or unwilling to provide information sought or if the complainant is unresponsive after 30 days, the Director or their delegate may write to the complainant to inform them that the College may close their complaint without reaching an outcome.

Step 4: Referring the formal complaint to the Principal

Once the Director or their delegate has received a submission of details, any relevant supporting evidence and details of the outcome sought by the complainant, if the Director or their delegate assesses that all or part of the formal complaint alleges a breach of the Code of Conduct applicable to workplace participants, that part of the complaint relating to the breach must be referred to the Principal or their delegate.

Step 5: Informing the student

If a formal complaint is referred to the Principal or their delegate, the Principal or their delegate must write to the complainant as soon as practicable to inform them that they will be assessing the part of the complaint that has been referred to them and that any further communication in relation to that part of their complaint should be directed to the Principal or their delegate.

If all or part of a complaint is referred to the Principal or their delegate, the Principal or their delegate will continue to follow the further steps in the complaints process.

Step 6: Keeping the student informed

The Director or their delegate or the Principal or their delegate as relevant must write to the student as soon as practicable if the complaint is not resolved within 30 days setting out:

- a) Why this is the case; and
- b) The date that it is anticipated that the complaint may be resolved.

Each time the complaint is not resolved by the anticipated date, the complainant must be informed in writing about:

- a) Why this is the case; and
- b) The date that it is next anticipated that the complaint will be resolved.

Step 7: Implementing and communicating outcomes to the student

Once the Director or their delegate or the Principal as relevant reaches an outcome, they must:

- a) if the outcome favours the complainant, immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventative or corrective action required by the decision; and
- b) write to the complainant within 10 working days, subject to the Privacy Policy, to inform them of:
 - i) Activities undertaken to manage the complaint;
 - ii) Any outcomes of the complaint;
 - iii) Reasons for those outcomes;
 - iv) Action, including preventative or corrective action, taken to implement their decision or recommendation;
 - v) The complainant's right to appeal to the Appeals Committee only in relation to an alleged procedural error such as an irregularity or procedural unfairness, and that, if the appeal favours the complainant, then the complaint will be remitted back to the decision maker to reconsider the complaint and the outcome.
 - vi) That the Appeals Committee cannot consider the merit of the complaint.
 - vii) If the complainant would like to discuss their option to appeal or if they would like more information about appealing, they can contact the Student Liaison Officer by emailing them at complaints@collaw.edu.au
 - viii) Appeals to the Appeals Committee must be submitted within 28 days by writing to the Appeals Committee at complaints@collaw.edu.au setting out the alleged grounds in relation to procedural unfairness.

- ix) An extension of time to appeal to the Appeals Committee may only be allowed in extenuating circumstances such if the complainant did not submit an appeal within 28 days due to illness or bereavement.
- x) The options for the complainant to make an external complaint to the:
 - [National Student Ombudsman](#);
 - [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency](#); or
 - [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) for complainants holding a student visa
 and to provide feedback to the College on their experience if they do complain externally.

Step 8: Keeping a record of the complaint

The Director or their delegate or the Principal as relevant must record the formal complaint including the outcome in the [Formal Complaints Register](#) [Restricted staff access].

Documents containing sensitive information, such as medical material, must not be attached in the Student Complaints Register.

5. Related documents

Parent Policy

Student Complaint Policy

Related policies and procedures

[Academic Conduct Policy](#)

[Assessment Rules: Practical Legal Training](#)

[Assessment Rules: Postgraduate Programs](#)

[Privacy Policy \(Australia\)](#)

[Privacy Policy \(New Zealand\)](#) [for data collected by COLNZ only]

[Student Non-Compliance Rules](#)

[Support for Students Policy](#)

Other documents

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students](#)

[TEQSA Guidance Note: Grievance and complaints handling](#)

[TEQSA Statement of Regulatory Expectations: Student grievance and complaint mechanisms](#)

[TEQSA Threshold Standards \(Standard 2.4\)](#)

6. Approval information

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Policy file	Student Complaints [Restricted staff access]
Superseded documents	Student Complaints and Grievances Register Staff Procedure

7. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	AS	15/06/26	23/06/2026	New procedure