

Monash University Policy

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| Policy Title | Student Complaints and Grievances Policy |
| Date Effective | 23-April-2015 |
| Review Date | 22-April-2018 |
| Policy Owner | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); Vice-Provost (Faculty and Graduate Affairs) |
| Category | Academic Quality and Standards |
| Version Number | 2.2 |
| Content Enquiries | Education Policy Unit Graduate Education Policy |
| Scope | <p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All campuses and teaching locations • All coursework and graduate research courses, including non-award courses • Current and former students • Prospective students whose complaint or grievance relates to administrative processes during application, selection or admission <p>Complaints must be made, or grievances lodged, within the timeframe prescribed in the procedures.</p> <p>The University has separate procedures for exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress, progress management, discipline, revocation of degrees or awards, exclusion for safety reasons and complaints of unprofessional or inappropriate conduct by staff, discrimination or harassment. This policy may not be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate an action about discrimination or harassment or to complain about the outcome of a matter which has been handled under the University's Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures; • Initiate an action relating to unprofessional or inappropriate conduct by staff or to complain about the outcome of a matter which has been handled under the Conduct and Compliance Procedures - Staff / Student Relationships; • Complain about an outcome reached under processes contained in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monash University (Council) Regulations Part 7 - Student Discipline ○ Monash University (Council) Regulations Part 8 - Revocation of Degrees or Other Awards ○ Monash University (Academic Board) Regulations Part 4 - Exclusion for Unsatisfactory Progress or Inability to Progress ○ Monash University (Academic Board) Regulations Part 6 - Student Progress Management ○ Monash University (Vice-Chancellor) Regulations Part 6 - Exclusion for Health Reasons <p>Grievances relating to financial assistance decisions that are reviewable decisions under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 do not fall within the</p> |

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| | scope of this policy. |
| Purpose | <p><i>Please note that this Policy applies to grievances lodged after 22 April 2015. For grievances lodged on or before 22 April 2015, please refer to the previous Academic and Administrative Complaints and Grievances Policy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a framework for resolving complaints and grievances made by students; • To set out the rights and responsibilities of both the University and the student with regards to academic and administrative complaints and grievances. |
| POLICY STATEMENT | |

Principles

1. The University recognises a student's right to make complaints and is committed to addressing complaints and grievances effectively and fairly.
2. The University aims to address complaints and grievances through a resolution process that:
 - a. is impartial and fair to all parties involved;
 - b. is carried out with transparency and consistency;
 - c. is accessible and available to all students;
 - d. is handled within established timelines;
 - e. respects the privacy of all parties involved;
 - f. is appropriate for dealing with complex and sensitive issues.
3. A student making a complaint or grievance has the right to a fair and thorough investigation, based on the principles of this policy.
4. A student may make a complaint or grievance without fear of reprisals.

Process for complaints and grievances

5. The resolution process for academic and administrative complaints and grievances is conducted in three stages:
 - a. Complaint - informal resolution process. Complaints are dealt with by a staff member close to where the complaint arose.
 - b. Grievance - formal resolution process. Grievances are investigated by designated staff members who have not had previous involvement with the complaint.
 - c. Review - internal review process conducted by the University Student Ombudsman. The University Student Ombudsman is appointed by the University Council and is independent of the university administrative structure.
6. To ensure quick and effective resolution the University strives to resolve complaints and grievances as close as possible to their source, with the people most directly involved.
7. The University may set limits on its handling of a complaint or grievance or discontinue any process if the student making the complaint or grievance engages in behaviour which because of its nature or frequency raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues or the complaint is frivolous, vexatious or lacking in substance.
8. Outcomes or decisions reached through application of complaints and grievances procedures must be achievable within University legislation and policies, and State or Commonwealth legislative requirements or other applicable legislation in countries where Monash campuses and teaching locations are situated.

Student responsibilities

9. A student making a complaint or grievance is expected to cooperate with the review of the complaint or investigation of the grievance. This includes providing all relevant information that the student has in his or her possession or knowledge at the time of making the complaint or grievance or as soon as possible thereafter. Failure to do so may result in the investigation or review of the complaint being discontinued.
10. A student making a complaint or grievance is expected to treat staff with courtesy and respect. Failure to do so may result in the investigation or review of the complaint being discontinued.
11. Only the individual student concerned may make a complaint or lodge a grievance under this policy.

Roles and responsibilities of staff

12. All University staff are responsible for
 - a. giving serious consideration to student complaints that relate to a decision, an event, any action or inaction that is within the responsibility of the staff member;
 - b. responding to student complaints in a timely manner and with courtesy and respect;
 - c. respecting the privacy of students making a complaint.
13. Grievance officers are responsible for:
 - a. receiving grievances and maintaining records of all related documents;
 - b. determining the nature of the grievance and directing it to the appropriate investigating officer;
 - c. maintaining a grievance register by recording and monitoring the number and nature of grievances received from students.
14. Investigating officers are responsible for:
 - a. determining whether an investigation of a grievance is necessary;
 - b. carrying out a fair investigation and negotiating a resolution, as required in each case.

The University Student Ombudsman ensures that the resolution of student grievances follows consistent procedures across the University and provides independent and impartial review of academic and administrative grievances.

| Supporting Procedures | Student Complaints and Grievances Procedures |
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| Responsibility for implementation | University staff Grievance officers Investigating officers University Student Ombudsman Staff responsible for orientation and induction Office of the General Counsel Deans of faculties Faculty managers Division/section directors and managers Associate Deans (Education) and Deputy Deans (Education) Associate Deans responsible for graduate research students Deans Vice-Provost (Faculty and Graduate Affairs) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) |

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| | <p>Vice-Chancellor and President</p> <p>Safer Community Unit</p> <p>Academic Board</p> <p>University Council</p> <p>Pro Vice-Chancellor and President (Malaysia)</p> |
| Status | Revised |
| Approval Body | <p>Name: Academic Board</p> <p>Meeting: 2/2015</p> <p>Date: 22-April-2015</p> <p>Agenda item: 10.1</p> |
| Endorsement Body | <p>Name: Learning and Teaching Committee</p> <p>Meeting: 2/2015</p> <p>Date: 17-March-2015</p> <p>Agenda item: 8.1</p> <p>Name: Graduate Research Committee</p> <p>Meeting: 1/2015</p> <p>Date: 03-February-2015</p> <p>Agenda item: 11.2</p> |
| Definitions | <p>Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction from a student with a decision of the University or the manner of delivery of a service offered or provided by the University.</p> <p>Grievance: A formal written notice given by a student after an unresolved complaint which initiates action under this policy.</p> <p>Grievance officer: Staff member responsible for receiving grievances and maintaining grievance records and registers.</p> <p>Investigating officer: Staff member responsible for investigating a grievance.</p> <p>Student: For the purposes of this policy, 'student' includes prospective, current and former students of the University and includes prospective, current and former students of graduate research degrees.</p> |
| Legislation Mandating Compliance | <p>Monash University (Council) Regulations Part 7 - Student Discipline</p> <p>Monash University (Council) Regulations Part 8 - Revocation of Degrees or Other Awards</p> <p>Monash University (Academic Board) Regulations Part 4 - Exclusion for Unsatisfactory Progress or Inability to Progress</p> <p>Monash University (Academic Board) Regulations Part 6 - Student Progress Management</p> <p>Monash University (Vice-Chancellor) Regulations Part 6 - Exclusion for Health Reasons</p> <p>Australian Commonwealth and Victorian State Governments</p> <p>Higher Education Support Act 2003</p> <p>Commonwealth Ombudsman Act 1976</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 - National Code of</p> |

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| | <p>Practice 2007</p> <p>Public Records Act (Victoria) 1973</p> <p>Malaysian Government</p> <p>Private Higher Educational Institutions Act 1996 (Act 555) as amended from time to time and, where the context requires, includes any other relevant Malaysian laws applicable to private higher educational institutions</p> <p>South African Government</p> <p>Higher Education Act 101 of 1997</p> |
| Related Policies | <p>Conduct and Compliance Procedures - Staff / Student Relationships</p> <p>Conduct and Compliance Procedures - Whistleblowers</p> <p>Conduct and Compliance Procedures - Privacy</p> <p>Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures (Australia only)</p> <p>Recordkeeping Policy</p> <p>Graduate Research Progress Management Policy</p> <p>Monash Residential Services - Policy on the Resolution of Breaches of Residential Community Standards</p> <p>Monash University Malaysia</p> <p>Conduct and Compliance - Staff / Student Relationships Procedure</p> <p>Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Procedure</p> |
| Related Documents | <p>University Student Ombudsman</p> <p>See the University Student Ombudsman web page</p> <p>Victorian Ombudsman</p> <p>Victorian Ombudsman's website</p> <p>Complaint handling good practice guide</p> <p>South African Government Bodies</p> <p>Council on Higher Education</p> <p>Higher Education Quality Committee</p> <p>Monash University</p> <p>Student complaints and grievances website</p> <p>Unreasonable Complainant Conduct (Safer Community Unit website)</p> <p>Grievances relating to financial assistance decisions</p> <p>Graduate Research Handbooks</p> <p>Privacy at Monash</p> <p>Retention and Disposal of University Records</p> <p>Monash University grievance templates:</p> <p>Grievance lodgement form</p> <p>Grievance register</p> |

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| | <u>Grievance acknowledgement letter</u> <u>Grievance outside scope letter</u> <u>Grievance request further info letter</u> <u>Grievance status letter</u> <u>Grievance outcome letter</u> <u>Student file grievance checklist</u> |
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