



Student Complaints Resolution Policy

1) Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all complaints by Unitec students are handled in a timely, fair and equitable manner.

2) Scope

- a) This Policy covers any complaint made by any Unitec student about any area of concern within their Unitec experience. Some areas of concerns are also specifically covered by other policies (see section 7 of this document).
 - b) Complaints must be based on evidence that the student making the complaint has witnessed, not on hearsay.
 - c) Complaints must be made within a reasonable time after the alleged incident.
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3) Policy Statements

- a) Unitec will ensure:
 - i) Advocacy and support is available for students throughout the process.
 - ii) There are clear pathways for students to raise complaints and have their complaints resolved.
 - iii) Students raising complaints and other related parties are kept informed.
 - iv) Complaints are promptly and properly investigated, and evidence based decisions made to resolve them which consider all the information available.
- b) Students are encouraged to use internal Unitec support and advocacy mechanisms such as the [Student Support Advisors](#) to assist them with resolving their complaint informally where possible. In many circumstances using informal channels may lead to a satisfactory outcome sooner.
- c) Where informal resolution is not possible Unitec encourages any Student with a complaint to raise a formal complaint as outlined in the [Student Complaints Resolution Procedures](#).
- d) The course of [natural justice](#) and procedural fairness will be followed and the principles of Te Noho Kotahitanga will be upheld.
- e) All Respondents must be informed of any formal complaint made against them, and should be given an opportunity to respond to such complaints before any decision that affects them is made.
- f) Every outcome/decision taken regarding a formal complaint will be notified in writing to the person/s concerned. This includes notification about any appeal or other rights.

4) Policy Implementation

- a) All complaints must be managed in accordance with the process outlined in the [Student Complaints Resolution Procedures](#).
- b) Unitec will inform international students of the complaints process and support them to ensure they understand how complaints are handled and to dispel concerns they may have related to process in the NZ environment.
- c) Staff members will be supported to implement this policy and associated procedures by the provision of supporting resources and training.

5) Policy Reporting

The Policy Owner or Sponsor will report each month to the Unitec Council, Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team on the number and nature of all formal complaints raised under this Policy and their outcomes identifying themes and areas of concern. The report will not contain reference to named persons or any detailed information about the complaints.

6) Associated Procedures and Forms

- a) Procedures: [Student Complaints Resolution Procedures](#)
- b) Form: [Notice of Complaint](#)
- c) Form: Student Complaint Decision Report (Staff-see the forms page on the staff intranet)

See also related policies and procedures listed in section 7 below

7) Reference Documents

Area of concern	Policy, procedures and forms
Bullying and Harassment	Inclusive Excellence Policy Countering Harassment and Bullying Procedure Counter Harassment and Bullying Process Map - Staff Member Counter Harassment and Bullying Process Map - Student See also Unitec website
Grades Appeals	Student Appeals Procedure Notice of Appeal form Procedure for the Conduct of Appeals Request for Recount Form and Request for Exam Script form See also Unitec website
Staff misconduct	Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy Disciplinary and Performance Management Procedures Code of Conduct
Student misconduct	Student Disciplinary Statute Student Disciplinary Investigation Record (Staff - see the forms page on the staff intranet)
Privacy	Privacy Policy and Privacy Procedures

International students concerns	Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 see also http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/education-code-of-practice/
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8) Approval Details

Version number (this version)	5	Issue Date (this version)	June 2018
Version History (Amendments made to this version)	Date of amendment/s: July 2004 - May 2018	Description of amendment: See Amendment History below	
Consultation Scope (if appropriate)	The review took place over 2 months. A small working group drafted the initial documents. Feedback from key stakeholders and staff was invited over a 2 week period, after which the final drafts were submitted to Academic Board in June 2018		
Approval authority	Academic Board	Date of Approval	5 June 2018
Policy Sponsor (Has authority to approve minor amendments)	Te Tumu/Executive Director, Student Success	Policy Owner	Director Student Success
Contact Person	Director Student Success	Date of Next Review	June 2021

Amendment History

Version	Issue Date	Reason for Revision	Approved by
1	09/07/2004	Brand new document – first edition.	Senior Executive
1.1	07/2007	USU Advocate details updated (Schedule B)	Director, Student Affairs
1.2	15/07/2008	USU Advocate details updated and details of USU Education Coordinator added (Schedule B) and Hyperlink to General Disciplinary Statute created	Director, Student Affairs
1.3	01/02/2009	Position title changes made to reflect new organisational structure	Leadership Team
2	27/07/2009	Formal periodic review. Revised and updated, renamed Student Grievance Policy (formally Student Complaints Policy)	Leadership Team
2.1	10/03/2011	Policy Owner (Responsible Manager) changed to Director, Student Wellbeing, not Director Student Services	Director, Student Wellbeing (Policy Owner)
3	09/07/2012	Formal periodic review. Revised and updated to make process clearer for students and staff; highlight informal resolution as a possible option and more clearly identify links with Countering Harassment Policy and Student and Staff Disciplinary Statutes. Renamed Student Complaints Resolution Policy (formally Student Grievance Policy).	Executive Director, Student & Community Engagement (Policy Sponsor)
4	May 2016	To reflect changes in organisational structure	Chief Operating Officer
5	June 2018	The reason for this version was to separate the policy from the procedures, simplify and streamline the process for students and staff, ensure that all complaints are handled and resolved fairly, and clarify the specific rights of international students to also complain externally	Academic Board
5.1	August 2018	Job title of Document owner changed from GM Student Experience to Director Student Success	Tumu Tauwhirowhiro Māori, Executive Director, Student Experience

5.2	March 2019	Changes made to reflect recent changes at Unitec for sections 3(b), 7 and job title change in section 8.	Te Tumu/Executive Director Student Success
5.2.1	August 2019	Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 link correction to the latest reprint as at 1 July 2019	Director Student Success