Student Grievance Resolution Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) The University is committed to providing an effective student complaints management system based on best practice. The Policy and Procedure reflect, practically and philosophically, the expectations and responsibilities of both the University and its students when dealing with grievances or appeals.

Section 2 - Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Terms	Definitions
Appeal	An application made by a student to have a decision reviewed where that decision relates to a matter affecting their studies or life as a student.
Enterprise Agreement	The University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2021-2026, or as amended or replaced.
Frivolous or Vexatious	Grievances are identified as frivolous and/or vexatious when the substance of the grievance is recognised as any of the following: 1. trivial; 2. without merit; 3. not in good faith; 4. pursued with undue persistence or with malice; or 5. already considered by the University and satisfactory measures taken to resolve the matter.
Good Faith	Honest, sincere, without malice or ill intent.
Grievance	A problem or concern raised by a student about something affecting their studies or life as a student, for which the student is seeking resolution. The term complaint is often used interchangeably with grievance.
Procedural Fairness	The processes by which an outcome is reached and not the outcome itself. With regard to complaint resolution at The University of Queensland, procedural fairness (natural justice) requires that a respondent to a complaint must be provided with: 1. Sufficient details of the complaint to enable the respondent to formulate a response; 2. information about the process by which the matter is to be resolved, and 3. opportunity to put their case and respond to the complaint. In addition: 4. any decision-maker must act impartially and without bias; 5. all relevant submissions and evidence must be considered; 6. irrelevant matters must not be taken into account; and 7. the complaint must be dealt with in a timely manner.

Section 3 - Policy Scope/Coverage

(2) This Policy applies to all students enrolled in courses, shorter form credentials and programs and to University staff involved in managing or responding to student grievances or appeals to decisions made in accordance with University policy, procedures and rules.

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(3) Where it is considered that the matters contained in the grievance may amount to misconduct or serious misconduct (as defined in the Enterprise Agreement) by a staff member, the matter must be referred to the staff member's supervisor for consideration in accordance with the relevant provision of the Enterprise Agreement.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(4) The following principles guide the Student Grievance Resolution Guideline processes:

a. The resolution of student grievances will be handled informally where possible and appropriate.
b. Student grievances will be addressed as close as possible to the source of student dissatisfaction.
c. A student is entitled to appeal to the next most senior decision maker, providing they can either supply new or additional information to support their case or they can substantiate an argument as to why the original decision did not comply with University's policies, rules or procedures. (It is not sufficient to simply disagree with the decision and to want it examined by a more senior staff member).
d. Grievances will be resolved expeditiously, with due regard to legislative requirements (For example, Standard 8 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 requires the process to commence within 10 business days, is to be at no direct cost to the student and is to be finalised as soon as practicable) and confidentiality as endorsed in the University's Privacy Policy.
e. A student's enrolment will be maintained while the complaint and appeal process is ongoing. However, this does not entitle a student to enrol in courses, shorter form credentials or programs for which they are not eligible.
f. A student will not suffer any reprisal as a result of lodging a grievance or an appeal.
g. A student who lodges a grievance that is frivolous and/or vexatious, will have their grievance dismissed or discontinued. Such conduct may be considered as misconduct and investigated under the University's Student Integrity and Misconduct Policy.
h. A student attending an interview associated with resolving their grievance or appeal may be accompanied by a support person. This person must not be a legal representative or a currently practicing solicitor or barrister.
i. The student grievance process will promote the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
j. Grievance procedures and the support available to students will be widely publicised to facilitate access to the grievance resolution process.
k. A student may choose to have their grievance reviewed by an external complaint handling process. The University will not continue further consideration of matters where the process options have been exhausted or where the student has taken their grievance to an external agency.

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Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Kathryn Blyth Director, Academic Services Division and Academic Registrar
Enquiries Contact	Academic Services Division

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