

Context and Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to set out the University's processes for responding to student complaints and in accordance with the Student Complaints Resolution Policy.

This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Student Complaints Resolution Policy](#) (Policy).

Responsibility

The Chief Academic Services Officer is responsible for organisation-wide adherence to this Procedure.

Procedure

A. General provisions

1. If at any stage in the complaints process it is considered that the behaviour or conduct of a staff member may fall within the definition of misconduct or serious misconduct under the University's industrial instruments, the matter must be referred to the Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture who will consider the complaint in accordance with the processes set out in the applicable industrial instrument.
2. Students are expected to raise complaints at the local level in the first instance. This usually means a direct approach outlining their concerns to the individual, the Academic Unit, central administrative unit, or the service provider that is the subject of the complaint.
3. Students may seek advice from Campus Central and/or a USASA Student Advocate to assist them in making and resolving complaints.
4. If the complaint is resolved at the local level to the satisfaction of the student and agreed actions have been implemented, no further action is required.
5. If the complaint cannot be resolved with the individual or area directly responsible for the matter that has given rise to the complaint, then the student may lodge their complaint with [UniSA Tell Us](#).
6. At any stage in the complaint resolution process students are entitled to attend before a reviewer to present their case. They may bring a support person to meetings and discussions regarding the complaint. Respondents may also bring a support person. Individuals may nominate their support person provided that the person is not a legal practitioner to support them in the process.

7. A student may withdraw their complaint at any time by advising the staff member managing the complaint in writing. The staff member managing the complaint will advise all parties within two working days that the complaint has been withdrawn.
8. If a complaint is referred directly to the Vice Chancellor, or any senior person, before the processes set out in this Procedure have been undertaken, the matter will be referred to the relevant area as set out below.

B. Complaint resolution responsibilities

9. ***UniSA Tell Us***
 - a) [UniSA Tell Us](#) is responsible for determining if complaints that are lodged fall within the scope of the Student Complaints Resolution Policy. If the complaint falls outside the scope of the policy, [UniSA Tell Us](#) will direct the student, in writing, to the relevant area or process.
 - b) If the complaint is to be managed under the [Student Complaints Resolution Policy](#), [UniSA Tell Us](#) is responsible for referring the complaint to the Executive Officer(s) or equivalent who is responsible for coordinating the complaint resolution process at the Academic Unit or central administrative support unit level. [UniSA Tell Us](#) will provide a copy of the complaint and any supporting documentation to the Executive Officer(s) or equivalent.
 - c) Within two working days of receiving the complaint, [UniSA Tell Us](#) will refer the complaint to the relevant Executive Officer and respond in writing to the student to explain the next steps in the resolution process.
10. **The Executive Officer**
 - a) The Executive Officer(s) (or equivalent) is responsible for assessing the details provided about the complaint and assigning the complaint to the appropriate manager/supervisor within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint for further management of the matter.
 - b) The Executive Officer(s) (or equivalent) will monitor the progress of the complaint at all stages to ensure the matter is addressed and finalised as soon as is practicable.
11. **The manager/supervisor**
 - a) The manager/supervisor is responsible for reviewing the details of the complaint, seeking any additional information or clarification and taking steps they consider appropriate to address the matters raised or as required by a relevant policy or procedure. Such steps may involve contacting and seeking information from the student and other relevant parties.
 - b) The manager/supervisor will commence the resolution process within ten working days of receiving the complaint and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly and efficiently as possible and provide regular updates to the student.

- c) The manager/supervisor will provide the following information to the student in writing, within ten working days of the resolution of the complaint:
 - i) the outcome, that is, whether the complaint is either not substantiated or has been substantiated and how it will be addressed;
 - ii) the reasons for the outcome; and
 - iii) information about the option for internal review
- d) A copy of the outcome will be forwarded to [UniSA Tell Us](#) and the Executive Officer
- e) If the complaint is upheld, the manager/supervisor will take any necessary steps to implement the outcome or provide a recommendation to the appropriate person or responsible area to implement the outcome.
- f) The manager/supervisor will keep confidential records of the steps taken to resolve the complaint in accordance with the university's [Records Management Policy](#).

C. Internal review

12. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request that the decision is reviewed by the relevant Senior Manager. The student must request an internal review via the [UniSA Tell Us](#) email inbox within 10 working days of being notified of the outcome. If a request is not received within this timeframe then the matter will be deemed closed. If the Senior Manager is a party to the complaint, they will refer the matter to a staff member who holds an equivalent position.
13. **The Senior Manager**
 - a) The Senior Manager is responsible for determining the manner of their review as relevant to the circumstances of the complaint and for completing the process as soon as is practicable, but not exceeding 20 working days.
 - b) Where appropriate the Senior Manager will meet with the student and other relevant parties to clarify the details of the complaint. Regular updates will be provided to all parties.
 - c) The Senior Manager will consider the facts of the matter and make a determination about whether the complaint is substantiated, and any actions needed to address the matter.
 - d) Within 10 working days of making the determination the Senior Manager will advise the student in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome. This communication must also include details about the option to take the matter to the Student Ombud (see clause 14 below), as well as the right to lodge a complaint about the matter with an external agency (see section E below). A copy of the communication must be sent to [UniSA Tell Us](#) and the Executive Officer.

- e) If the complaint is upheld, the Senior Manager will take the steps required to implement the outcome or provide a recommendation to the appropriate person or responsible area to implement the outcome.
- f) The Senior Manager will keep confidential records of the steps taken to resolve the complaint.

D. Student Ombud

- 14. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a review by the relevant Senior Manager, they may take the matter to the [Student Ombud](#). The Student Ombud will not normally investigate matters until all internal grievance processes have been exhausted.

E. External complaint

- 15. The University will make every reasonable effort to resolve complaints internally. However, if the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may lodge a complaint with an [external agency](#). Students will be advised of the contact details of the relevant external agency according to the nature of their complaint.

Further Assistance

Contact [UniSA Tell Us](#) for assistance in relation to student complaints.

Associated Documentation:

[Student Complaints Resolution Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct for Students](#)

[Records Management Policy](#)

[C-12.5 Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment](#)

Officer Responsible for Update and Review: Chief Academic Services Officer

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Minor amendments approved by the Chief Academic Services Officer, 20 April 2023

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History: This Procedure supersedes Policy C-17.5 Student complaints resolution