

Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE

- (1) The main purpose of this procedure is to describe the process and assign responsibility for the management of student complaints and related appeals processes that support the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.

SECTION 2 - SCOPE

- (2) This procedure applies to staff, students, contractors, third-party service providers and visitors involved in a student or student-related complaint or appeal made under the Student Complaints and Appeal Policy.
- (3) This procedure also applies where the complaint relates to a decision-making process applied under another policy, where it provides an alternative appeal or means of complaint process.

SECTION 3 - PROCEDURE

- (4) This section provides a summary of Melbourne Polytechnic's Student Complaint and Appeal Framework. Refer to [Appendix A](#) for a detailed workflow process and relevant timeframes for complaint and appeal lodgement.

Seeking Local Level Resolution

- (5) Discuss (where possible) your concerns with the other party (staff or student) and make every reasonable effort to resolve the matter informally and as soon as practicable.
- (6) If resolution at a local level does not occur or is not appropriate or applicable, a written complaint may be lodged with Melbourne Polytechnic for investigation.

Lodging a Written Complaint

- (7) Complaints should be submitted through the [Online Complaints and Feedback Portal](#).
- (8) Where this is not possible, complaints can also be submitted through the following channels:
 - a. in hard copy at the Student Hub
 - b. via email to feedback@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au
- (9) When the complaint is received, it will be recorded and acknowledged in writing within five (5) working days.
- (10) The Student Complaints Liaison Officer, tasked with triaging all complaints, will initially review and assess all complaints lodged considering the following:
 - a. the seriousness of the complaint;
 - b. whether the complaint raises concern about health and safety;
 - c. if the concerns raised are within Melbourne Polytechnic's capacity to resolve and/or meet the criteria set out in this policy;
 - d. how the Complainant is affected;

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- e. the potential risk involved if attempted resolution of the complaint is delayed; and
 - f. if the complaint requires the involvement of other areas of Melbourne Polytechnic and if so, the appropriate investigating authority.
- (11) Where necessary, a complaint will be escalated to the Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships who will review and determine if immediate action is required and if so, may instigate any precautionary measures required to support the wellbeing of the Complainant.

Outcomes and Decisions

- (12) Whilst recognising every complaint is unique in nature, possible outcome/s for a Complainant could include:
- a. taking steps to address the matter i.e. such as having a penalty overturned or having a record corrected;
 - b. issuance of an apology;
 - c. a change to practices or procedures;
 - d. staff refresher training;
 - e. improved communications; or
 - f. no action being taken.
- (13) Where a Complainant alleges misconduct or there are adverse findings about a specific staff member or student, Melbourne Polytechnic will consider any privacy obligations under the [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#) before divulging any rulings about that individual. This may result in advising a Complainant that their complaint was dealt with under the misconduct provisions of the relevant Staff Enterprise Agreement or Student Discipline Policy, but not advise the particular findings or outcomes of that process.
- (14) The outcome of student complaints and appeals will be monitored to ensure completion of any resulting actions.

Requesting an Internal/External Appeal

- (15) A Complainant has the right to appeal a decision made in relation to a complaint or process under the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy or other Melbourne Polytechnic policy.
- (16) All appeals should be made in writing to appeals@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au outlining the reasoning for the appeal. Reasons may include:
- a. procedural irregularity;
 - b. new information available;
 - c. decision is manifestly wrong; and/or
 - d. evidence of prejudice or bias in decision of complaint.

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Privacy, Recordkeeping and Reporting

- (17) Relevant Directors/Managers are responsible for ensuring that records of all lodged complaints and appeals will be kept within Melbourne Polytechnic's complaints management system and maintained in accordance [Public Records Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#) and any other applicable legislation.
- (18) Melbourne Polytechnic undertakes routine analysis and monitoring of complaints data and trends to identify opportunities for improvement that shall contribute to continuous improvement of Melbourne Polytechnic policies and practices. Refer to [Appendix B](#) for detailed information.
- (19) In certain circumstances, Melbourne Polytechnic may be required to report the matter to external bodies, even if a complaint is withdrawn.
- (20) All complaint reporting will be de-identified and may include information such as:
 - a. number and categories of complaints and how the complaint was received;
 - b. desired (if known) and final outcome of complaints, including corrective action taken at an individual or systematic level;
 - c. the course, department and/or sector in which the student is/was enrolled;
 - d. trends; and
 - e. response timeframes for assessment and action, including average time to resolution.

Appeals Regarding Academic Policies and Procedures

- (21) Many academic policies and procedures have a review and/or appeals process embedded within them, and students should follow these processes in the first instance (see *Supporting Documents* in [Section 5](#) of this procedure).

Offshore Students

- (22) Where a complaint or appeal is made by an offshore student a modified procedure will be used which reflects the intent of the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy, whilst taking into account the different circumstances.
- (23) The procedure will be overseen by the Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the process.

Third Party Arrangements

- (24) Where a complaint or appeal is made by a student at a third-party provider, Melbourne Polytechnic will be responsible for ensuring that the matter is appropriately investigated and resolved.

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SECTION 4 - RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- (25) All responsible and accountable parties (as outlined in [Appendix C](#)) must act in accordance to the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- (26) The Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring and promoting complaint handling is considered a priority for Melbourne Polytechnic and is the approving authority for this policy. The Chief Executive also holds responsibility for the external review process.
- (27) The Executive Director, Student Engagement International and Community Partnerships will be responsible for monitoring, reviewing and improving the effectiveness of complaints handling within Melbourne Polytechnic. The Executive Director also holds responsibility for the internal review process.
- (28) The Executive Leadership Team and relevant Academic Boards are responsible for ensuring monitoring of all continuous improvements, reporting and corrective actions arising from complaints.
- (29) All Directors and Managers will be responsible for ensuring respectful and timely resolution to complaints raised in their area, with implementing corrective action and process improvement analysis processes.
- (30) The Investigator will be responsible for ensuring issues outlined in a complaint are investigated appropriately, recommending a decision and outcome to their supervisor.
- (31) The Complainant will be responsible for presenting the facts and providing objective evidence that relate to the complaint, maintaining respectful conduct according to relevant Melbourne Polytechnic policies and procedures.
- (32) All Melbourne Polytechnic staff are to ensure that they are familiar with the terms of relevant complaint handling and support services available at Melbourne Polytechnic and to address and attempt to resolve complaints they are involved with in a respectful and timely manner, without engaging in any form of victimisation or harassment.

SECTION 5 - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- (33) Related Melbourne Polytechnic policies and procedures:
 - a. Assessment (HE) Policy
 - b. Assessment (VET) Policy
 - c. Credit (HE) Policy
 - d. Information Technology Usage (Students) Policy
 - e. International Students Academic Course Progress and Attendance Policy
 - f. International Students Withdrawal, Transfer and Refund Policy
 - g. Records Management Policy
 - h. Student Academic Integrity (HE) Policy
 - i. Student Academic Progress (HE) Policy
 - j. Student Code of Conduct Guidelines
 - k. Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
 - l. Student Discipline Policy
 - m. Student Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment Policy
 - n. Student Privacy Statement

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(34) Related Legislation and Regulation:

- a. [Age Discrimination Act 2004](#)
- b. [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#)
- c. [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- d. [Equal Opportunity Act 2010 \(Vic\)](#)
- e. [Freedom of Information Act 1982 \(Vic\)](#)
- f. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)
- g. [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)
- h. [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#)
- i. [Ombudsman Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#)
- j. [Privacy Act 1988](#)
- k. [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 \(Vic\)](#)
- l. [Protected Disclosures Act 2012 \(Vic\)](#)
- m. [Public Records Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#)
- n. [Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)
- o. [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)
- p. [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#)

SECTION 6 - DEFINITIONS

(35) In this Procedure, the following definitions apply:

- a. **Complaint**: an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of an action taken, decision made, or service provided by Melbourne Polytechnic, contractors or third-party providers, or a delay or failure in providing a service, taking an action, or making a decision by Melbourne Polytechnic, its contractors or a third-party provider.
- b. **Contractors**: third party contractors carrying out services on Melbourne Polytechnic's behalf.
- c. **Corrective Action**: action taken to address an issue or resolve a complaint or appeal.
- d. **De-identified**: information that has been altered so that it is no longer possible to identify an individual, enabling information to be shared or published without jeopardising personal privacy.
- e. **Final Decision**: the written decision of the Chief Executive (or delegate) as to whether or not to accept and/or implement the recommendations made in an External Review Report, which includes the reasons for the decision.
- f. **Frivolous**: a finding that a complaint or appeal is not seriously made, or relies on trivialities that do not warrant a review of the matter concerned.
- g. **Improvement Plan**: a plan to address any policy and process issues identified during root cause analysis of complaints and appeals.
- h. **Lacking in Substance**: a finding that a complaint or appeal lacks any merit. That is, on the merits there is no reasonable prospect the complaint or appeal will succeed.

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- i. **Local Level:** the area of Melbourne Polytechnic or the member(s) of staff responsible for delivering the service or conducting the process about which the complaint is being made. For example, a member of teaching or administrative staff.
- j. **Serious Complaint:** refers to a complaint which includes, but is not limited to allegations and/or incidents that:
 - i. require the institute to take direct action (e.g. sexual harassment, threat of harm to self or others);
 - ii. are potential offences under law that could be proven (e.g. actual or alleged sexual, physical or other assault); or
 - iii. may otherwise present a significant risk to Melbourne Polytechnic, its students, staff and/or community.
- k. **Sexual Harassment:** where a person makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to another person, or engages in any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the other person, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.
- l. **Third Party Providers:** third party providers who deliver higher education, vocational education training (VET) or other courses under Melbourne Polytechnic's auspices.
- m. **Vexatious or Malicious Complaints or Appeals:** complaints or appeals deliberately intended to annoy bring distress or suffering to other parties.

SECTION 7 - PROCEDURE CONTROL

Approving authority	<i>Chief Executive</i>
Date approved	<i>3 December 2021</i>
Date promulgated	<i>6 December 2021</i>
Procedure owner	<i>Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships</i>
Procedure implementation officer	<i>Manager – Student Services</i>
Procedure category	<i>Student Support</i>
Edition	<i>2</i>
Review date	<i>December 2024</i>

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APPENDIX A – COMPLAINT AND APPEAL PROCESS

Summary of the Student Complaints and Appeals Process

Step 1: Local Level Resolution	➤ Attempt local level resolution with the people involved as soon as practically (if appropriate).
Step 2: Written Complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lodge a written complaint if local level resolution is not possible or appropriate: www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/feedback ➤ Receive the complaint, assign a suitable Investigator (triaging the complaint where appropriate) and contact the Complainant within ten (10) working days. ➤ Investigate the complaint, consulting with the Complainant, Respondent, Witness and any party who may have relevant information. ➤ Decision and proposed resolution. ➤ Respond to Complainant in writing within thirty (30) working days. ➤ Record all decisions and documentation and close the complaint if no appeal is lodged within ten (10) working days of a decision being reached.
Step 3: Access to Internal Appeal	➤ Lodge an internal appeal request in writing to: appeals@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au
Step 4: Access to External Review	➤ Lodge an external review request in writing to: appeals@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au

Detailed Student Complaints and Appeals Process

Step 1: Local Level Resolution

Task	Responsibility	Notes
<p>Discuss Concerns with Relevant Parties</p> <p>Discuss (where possible) their concerns with the other party (staff or student) and make every reasonable effort to resolve the matter informally.</p>	<p>Complainant Staff (if applicable)</p>	<p>It is expected that many concerns will be resolved at this stage and will not progress to become a written complaint.</p> <p>Melbourne Polytechnic Student Counsellors can give students emotional support and advice about complaints and appeals processes.</p>

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Step 2: Lodge Written Complaint

Task	Responsibility	Notes
<p>a. Lodge Complaint Submit complaint via the online form accessible from the Melbourne Polytechnic website, the Student Portal or the Thrive App.</p>	Student/Complainant	<p>Complaint to be lodged if concerns remain after attempts at informal resolution, or if the Complainant feels that they cannot approach the person directly.</p> <p>Students preferring to lodge a hard copy form can obtain one from Student Services.</p>
<p>b. Receive and Acknowledge Complaint If staff receives a hard copy form or email, forward to Student Services.</p> <p>An email confirming receipt, including assigned case file number, is sent to student once feedback is received.</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Student Complaints Liaison Officer</p>	<p>If complaint was lodged using online form acknowledgement is automatic.</p>
<p>c. Student Services Review the Complaint Triage complaints and determine which department is best placed to investigate complaint and liaise with relevant Program Leader, Department Manager, or Director to assign an Investigator.</p> <p>Forward complaint from student to the investigator.</p>	<p>Student Complaints Liaison Officer with Program Leader, Department Manager or Director (or their delegate)</p> <p>Student Complaints Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Usually within five (5) working days of receipt.</p> <p>Complaints requiring immediate action will be triaged to Executive Director Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships.</p> <p>If the complaint concerns allegations of bullying or harassment by a staff member, the Executive Director, People, Culture and Corporate Services will be consulted.</p> <p>To avoid any conflict of interest, a staff member cannot oversee the investigation of a complaint which involves them.</p>
<p>d. Investigate Complaint Contact relevant staff and student/s</p>	Investigator	Respondent is to be informed that a complaint has been lodged against

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<p>(asrequired) and gather information.</p> <p>An investigation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of written complaint; • interview/s with Complainant; • interview/s with Respondent; • interviews with relevant Witness/es; and/or • review of relevant policies and documents <p>The Complainant MUST be contacted by the Investigator within ten (10) working days of lodgement of a written complaint.</p> <p>Where the complaint is still under investigation, then an update is to be provided to the Complainant.</p>		<p>them and given the opportunity to respond.</p> <p>Any Respondent, Complainant or Witnessis allowed to have a Support Person attend meetings with them.</p> <p>Complainants who are under 18, vulnerable or unable to represent themselves may request to have an Advocate speak to their wishes and views at complaints meetings.</p> <p>Confidentiality is to be maintained, with details of feedback to be known only to those directly involved in its resolution.</p>
<p>e. Make Decision</p> <p>Based on results of investigation, make a decision and forward to relevant Manager or Director.</p>	<p>Investigator</p>	<p>A template for written response to a complaint is available on the Staff Portal.</p> <p>Decision to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the outcome of the investigation; • attempts to resolve the issue; and • any action to be undertaken.
<p>f. Review/Approve a Decision</p> <p>Review results of investigation, and approve, or if required revise, the decision made by the Investigator regarding the complaint.</p> <p>Send draft outcome response to Student Services for review.</p>	<p>Investigator's Manager</p> <p>Student Complaints Liaison Officer</p>	

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<p>g. Send Complaint Response Send written response/decision to Complainant.</p> <p>Forward copy of findings and written response to Student Services for saving in Online Complaints Management System.</p>	<p>Investigator or delegate following review by Manager</p>	<p>To be sent ASAP, usually within ten (10) working days of a decision being reached.</p>
<p>h. Close Complaint Close complaint in Online Complaints Management System.</p>	<p>Student Complaints Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Upon receipt of response letter to Complainant.</p> <p>A complaint or appeal is not considered closed until all documentation has been received by Student Services.</p>

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Step 3: Request an Internal Appeal

Task	Responsibility	Notes
<p>a. Request an Internal Appeal A Complainant has the right to appeal a decision made in relation to a complaint.</p>	Student/Complainant	<p>To be lodged within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written decision.</p> <p>Complainant is to outline reason for appeal. Reasons may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procedural irregularity; • new information available; • decision is manifestly wrong; and/or • evidence of prejudice or bias in decision of complaint.
<p>b. Receive and Acknowledge Request for Appeal Review request for an appeal and decidewhether there are grounds for an appeal.</p> <p>Inform Complainant in writing if there is/is not grounds for appeal and explain next steps.</p>	Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships, or their delegate	Within five (5) working days of receipt of appeal.
<p>c. Review Complaint Assign an appropriate Senior Manager toconduct an internal review and notify Student Services and the Internal Reviewer.</p> <p>Send copies of relevant documents to Internal Reviewer.</p>	Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships, or their delegate Student Complaints Liaison Officer	
<p>d. Investigate Internal Appeal Conduct internal review, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of written complaint andrequest for appeal; • review of complaint decision andrelated documents; • further interview/s with Complainant, Respondent/s or Witness/es as required; and/or • review of relevant policies and 	Internal Reviewer	To commence within ten (10) working days of receipt of appeal

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documents.		
<p>e. Make Recommendation/s Draft an Internal Review Report, making recommendation/s about any action Melbourne Polytechnic could take.</p> <p>Forward Internal Review Report to Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships</p>	Internal Reviewer	Complete as soon as reasonably practicable (usually within ten (10) working days).
<p>f. Review/Approve Recommendation/s Review recommendations outlined in Internal Review Report and make decision regarding outcome of internal appeal.</p>	Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships	
<p>g. Respond to Complainant Send written response to Complainant.</p> <p>Forward copy of Internal Review Report and written response to Student Services for saving in Online Complaints Management System.</p>	Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships, or their delegate	Complete as soon as reasonably practicable (usually within five (5) working days)
<p>h. Close Internal Appeal Forward copy of findings and written response to Student Services for saving in Online Complaints Management System.</p>	Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships, or their delegate	

Step 4: Request an External Review

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Task	Responsibility	Notes
<p>a. Request an External Review A Complainant has the right to request an external review if they are not satisfied with the outcome or process of an internal appeal.</p> <p>Student is to outline reason for an external review.</p>	Student/Complainant	<p>Within ten (10) working days of receiving the Internal Review outcome.</p> <p>Complainant is to outline reason for appeal. Reasons may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procedural irregularity; • new information available; • decision is manifestly wrong; and/or • evidence of prejudice or bias in decision of complaint.
<p>b. Receive and Acknowledge Request for External Review Review request for an external review and decide whether there are grounds for an external review.</p> <p>Inform student in writing if there are/are not grounds for external review and explain next steps.</p>	Chief Executive, or their delegate	Within five (5) working days of receipt of appeal.
<p>c. Assign External Reviewer Select an External Agency to complete an external review and notify Student Services and External Reviewer.</p> <p>Send copies of relevant documents to External Reviewer.</p>	<p>Chief Executive, or their delegate</p> <p>Student Complaints Liaison Officer</p>	<p>The cost for the external review and the preparation of the External Report will be borne by Melbourne Polytechnic.</p> <p>As soon as reasonably practicable (usually within five (5) working days).</p>
<p>d. Conduct External Review Conduct External Review, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of written complaint and request for internal appeal and external review; • review of complaint decision, appeal decision and related documents; • further interview/s with Complainant, Respondent/s or Witness/es as required; and/or • review of relevant policies and documents. 	External Reviewer	As soon as reasonably practicable within ten (10) working days of receipt of request for external review.

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<p>e. Make Recommendation Draft an External Review Report, making recommendation/s about any action Melbourne Polytechnic could take.</p> <p>Forward External Review Report to Chief Executive.</p>	<p>External Reviewer</p>	<p>As soon as reasonably practicable (usually within ten (10) working days).</p>
<p>f. Consider External Review Recommendation Consider the recommendations in the External Review Report and make a final decision.</p>	<p>Chief Executive, or their delegate</p>	<p>Within thirty (30) days of the Chief Executive receiving the External Report.</p>
<p>g. Notify Complainants & Respondent/s Send final decision to the student and Respondent/s.</p>	<p>Chief Executive, or their delegate</p>	<p>As soon as is reasonably practicable after Final Decision is made.</p>
<p>h. Close External Review Forward copy of External Review Report and written response to Student Services for saving in Online Complaints Management System</p> <p>Ensure all documentation and correspondence relating to a complaint or appeal is forwarded to Student Services for archiving in Online Complaints Management System.</p>	<p>Chief Executive, or their delegate</p> <p>Relevant staff involved in conducting investigation or appeal</p>	<p>As soon as is reasonably practicable after the Decision/Final Decision is made.</p> <p>A complaint or appeal is not considered closed until all documentation has been received by Student Services.</p>

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APPENDIX B – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

Summary of the Student Complaints Continuous Improvement Process

Staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide relevant staff with training about student complaints and appeals process, student complaints management system, and conducting root cause analysis.
Regular reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prepare and distribute monthly reports including relevant student complaint data to program and service areas.
Root cause analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct root cause analysis where a complaint is assessed as medium or high risk. ➤ Conduct root cause analysis where student complaint data shows there may be a systemic issue emerging.
Identify corrective measures and implement an action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify corrective measures that address the underlying root causes, consulting with relevant staff as required. ➤ Develop and implement an improvement action plan.
Monitor progress and impact of improvement activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Academic corrective or improvement activities resulting from complaints are monitored by the relevant Academic governance committees. ➤ Non-academic corrective or improvement activities resulting from complaints are monitored by the Executive Leadership Committee.

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Corrective Actions and Process Improvements

This table outlines the detailed steps and responsibilities in the management of Corrective Actions and Process Improvements.

Task	Responsibility	Notes
Step 1: Implementation of Corrective Action		
a. Implement Corrective Actions Implement any agreed corrective action in order to resolve a complaint or appeal as soon as practical.	Relevant Program Leader, Department Manager or Director (or their delegate)	It is recognised that some complaints or appeals maybe symptoms of more complex, systemic issues which will be addressed through process improvement steps.
Step 2: Reporting on Complaints and Appeals Data		
a. Distribute Monthly Reporting Create and distribute (de-identified) monthly reports to any Academic or Corporate Department which has received complaints or appeals in the previous month, or has any outstanding open complaints or appeals. Report will be distributed to relevant Executive Directors, Directors and Managers. Executive Director, Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships and Director Performance and Improvement to receive whole of organisation monthly complaint reports.	Student Complaints Liaison Officer Relevant Program Leader, Department Manager or Director (or their delegate)	Reports to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overview of numbers of complaints and appeals and the themes/topics; • completion deadlines met/not met against target and standard; and • Overview of corrective actions to be implemented.
Step 3: Continuous Improvement Analysis and Monitoring		
a. Oversee Resulting Continuous Improvement Activities Analyse complaints and appeals trends and report on implementation of appropriate corrective actions and resulting business improvements across the organisation.	Director Performance and Improvement in tandem with relevant Academic and Corporate Services Directors / Managers	
b. Potential Cause Identification Involve key stakeholders in root cause analysis of the issue/s identified in complaints or appeals	Director Performance and Improvement in tandem with relevant Academic and Corporate	

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	Services Directors / Managers	
c. Develop and Implement Improvement Plans Develop improvement plan to address policy and process issues identified by the root cause analysis	Relevant Program Leader, Department Manager or Directors	
d. Monitor Process Improvement Activities Monitor all continuous improvement activities, reporting and corrective actions.	<p>Academic Boards have oversight of academic complaints and appeals.</p> <p>Melbourne Polytechnic Executive has oversight of all non-academic complaints and appeals.</p> <p>Melbourne Polytechnic Academic Operations and Corporate Service Groups to review complaints data monthly as part of routine performance monitoring.</p>	<p>Reports to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvement plans; • corrective actions; and • summary of complaints and appeals data <p>Reports for each Semester are tabled in line with annual Academic Board workplans.</p>

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APPENDIX C – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following table provides an outline of the responsibilities of different parties who may be involved in resolving a complaint:

Responsibility	Accountability
<p>STAFF All persons who are employed by Melbourne Polytechnic, including teaching, academic and administrative staff, whether employed on a permanent, part-time or casual basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure they are familiar with the terms of the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure. • Upon inquiry, provide Complainants with general information about the complaints and appeals process, including where to access the Policy and Procedure and who can give them advice or support. • Address and attempt to resolve complaints they are involved with in a respectful, responsible and timely manner and without engaging in any form of victimisation or discrimination.
<p>STUDENT (COMPLAINANT) The Complainant is a student who is making a complaint.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain respectful conduct in accordance with Melbourne Polytechnic policies, procedures and guidelines. • Seek advice from Melbourne Polytechnic staff and define the exact nature of the issue. • Present the facts that relate to the complaint. • Collect and provide objective evidence to support the facts. • Outline the resolution they are seeking and cooperate with reasonable conciliatory offers. • Maintain confidentiality. Any person identified within a complaint must not be publicly named.
<p>RESPONDENT The Respondent is a person/department the complaint is being made about.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be informed about the substantive allegations in the complaint. • Be given time and the right to respond to the complaint. • Participate in options for resolution. • Seek support and advice if required e.g. from a colleague or friend.
<p>WITNESS A Witness is any person other than the Complainant or Respondent who is questioned as part of investigating a complaint, internal appeal or external review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend interviews or meetings and provide written responses to assist with determining the facts of the matter relating to a complaint, internal appeal or external review.

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<p>SUPPORT PERSON</p> <p>A Support Person is a person who provides support to or acts as an observer for a Complainant, Respondent or Witness during the student complaints and appeals process. Usually the Support Person will not be a potential Witness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May attend any meetings or interviews convened as part of investigating the complaint and may take notes on discussions and agreements. • Must agree to comply with all reasonable directions given by a Melbourne Polytechnic staff member during any meetings or interviews. • A support person cannot be legally qualified.
<p>ADVOCATE</p> <p>An Advocate (friend, guardian or nominee) supports a Complainant who cannot act for themselves because they are under the age of 18 years or because there are special circumstances which result in the Complainant being vulnerable, and represents their wishes and views with their prior permission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May act on behalf of the Complainant. • Must agree to comply with all reasonable directions given by a Melbourne Polytechnic staff member during any meetings or interviews. • An advocate cannot be legally qualified or a Melbourne Polytechnic staff member.
<p>INVESTIGATOR</p> <p>An Investigator is a staff member delegated responsibility for investigating a complaint and is usually a Program Leader or Department Manager.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the issues outlined in the complaint in a fair, respectful and timely manner. • If required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - speak with the Complainant; - interview relevant Witnesses (staff and students); - speak with other staff who may have relevant information; and - review relevant policies, procedures and documentation. • Recommend a decision and outcome to their Manager.
<p>INVESTIGATOR'S MANAGER</p> <p>An Investigator's Manager is usually the Investigator's line manager and the Manager or Director accountable for the person/department the complaint is being made about.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice and support to the investigator to ensure they complete the investigation in a fair, respectful and timely manner. • Review and approve the decision and outcome as recommended or determine an alternative decision and outcome. • Ensure any corrective actions are implemented in a timely manner. • Ensure the department undertakes required process improvement analysis and implementation. • Ensures all relevant records relating to the complaint are held centrally within the complaints system upon conclusion of the process.

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STUDENT SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and disseminate information about the student complaints and appeals process. • Facilitate access to interpretation services if required. • Provide access to Student Counsellors who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide a potential Complainant the opportunity to discuss his or her concerns confidentially prior to deciding whether to lodge a complaint; and - provide emotional support and impartial guidance for a Complainant, Respondent or Witness if requested. <p><i>Note: Student Services does not manage any meetings regarding the complaint, advocate for the Complainant in meetings or give advice to Complainant or Respondent during meetings. Melbourne Polytechnic Student Counsellors may not act as a Support Person or provide legal advice.</i></p>
STUDENT COMPLAINTS LIAISON OFFICER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and advice to students and staff members about the student complaints and appeals process. • Triage all complaints lodged and escalate complaints to Executive Director Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships where necessitated. • Liaise with staff investigating and resolving complaints, ensuring requirements and timeframes are met. • Oversee maintenance of accurate, objective and confidential records and files. • Report to departments, directorates and the executive as required, providing relevant statistical data and analysis in a suitable format for the intended audience. • In consultation with the Executive Director Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships, develop and deliver (or arrange the delivery of) appropriate training to relevant Melbourne Polytechnic staff covering Melbourne Polytechnic’s student complaints and appeals process and student complaints management systems.
DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse complaints data for trends • Supports academic and non-academic departments to undertake root cause analysis in response to complaints. • Identify opportunities for improvement as per Melbourne Polytechnic’s performance and improvement framework.

Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure

<p>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the documentation of complaints is maintained in compliance with the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure and any relevant regulations. • Monitor, review and improve effectiveness of complaints handling within Melbourne Polytechnic. • Determine suitable Investigator and ensure timely response to all escalated complaints. • Nominate a suitable Investigator if the Respondent to a Complaint is a Manager or Director. • Nominate a suitable Internal Reviewer if the complaint is escalated. • Make policy determinations and interpretations as required. • Seek legal advice as appropriate. • Report on the implementation of appropriate corrective and improvement actions. • Report, as appropriate, to Melbourne Polytechnic Boards and Committees.
<p>INTERNAL REVIEWER An Internal Reviewer is an appropriate senior manager nominated by the Executive Director Student Engagement, International and Community Partnerships to investigate an internal appeal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the issues outlined in the internal appeal in a fair, respectful and timely manner. • Prepare a written report about the complaint which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a copy of the complaint; - any written response provided by a respondent; - summary of the evidence considered in the internal appeal review; - findings regarding the substantiation or refutation of the complaint or proposed resolution; and - any recommendations regarding appropriate resolution of the complaint. • Recommend the decision and outcome of the complaint.
<p>EXTERNAL REVIEWER An External Reviewer is an appropriately qualified external agency appointed by the Chief Executive or their delegate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an independent investigation into an internal appeal. • Provide an External Review Report setting out the findings and recommendations of an investigation to the Chief Executive.

Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make complaint handling a priority of Melbourne Polytechnic. • Use their discretion to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reinstate a complaint; - escalate a complaint to the External Review step; or - grant a request to review a complaint about that has occurred more than twelve (12) months ago. • Request that an external agency conduct an external review of a complaint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if request by the Complainant holds merit; and - if the Complainant has exhausted all avenues of the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure. • Consider the recommendations of the External Review Report and determine the final decision and outcome.
ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE BOARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor all continuous improvement activities, reporting and corrective actions arising from <i>academic</i> related student complaints.
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor all continuous improvement activities, reporting and corrective actions arising from <i>non-academic</i> related student complaints.