



## 1.60.9 Complaints Management

<b>Policy Number:</b>	1.60.9
<b>Policy Name:</b>	Complaints Management
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	
<b>Date Approved by Senate:</b>	22/5/2008
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	22/5/2011
<b>Related Policies:</b>	<a href="http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=24999&amp;pid=24963">1.60.2 (http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=24999&amp;pid=24963)</a> , <a href="http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25007&amp;pid=24963">1.70.2 (http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25007&amp;pid=24963)</a> , <a href="http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25008&amp;pid=24963">1.70.3 (http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25008&amp;pid=24963)</a> , <a href="http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25012&amp;pid=24963">1.70.6 (http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25012&amp;pid=24963)</a> , <a href="http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25126&amp;pid=25075">3.40.10 (http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25126&amp;pid=25075)</a> , <a href="http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25287&amp;pid=0">5.70.8 (http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25287&amp;pid=0)</a>

## Overview

1.1 The University acknowledges that all staff, students, and members of the community have a right to complain about a service or product offered by the University.

1.2 Subject to paragraph 3.1, this policy provides the framework under which the University will handle and respond to complaints.

## Policy

### 2. Definition of complaint

2.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service offered or provided by the University, whether voiced by a member of the public, an employee or a student.

### 3. Related policies

3.1 The University has established detailed policies relating to the following categories of complaints:

- Student grievance or complaint (HUPP **3.40.10** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25126&pid=25075>) )
- Staff grievance or complaint (HUPP **5.70.8** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25287&pid=0>) )
- Sexual harassment grievance or complaint (HUPP **1.70.2** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25007&pid=24963>) )
- Discrimination and harassment (HUPP **1.70.6** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25012&pid=24963>) )
- Management of personal information (HUPP **1.60.2** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=24999&pid=24963>) )

3.2 The University will, at the date of next review, ensure that the existing policies and procedures are consistent with this policy. Where there is a conflict between this policy and another specific policy, the specific policy takes precedence to the extent of the inconsistency.

### 4. Principles

4.1 The University is committed to providing an effective complaints management system based on best practice. The University's complaints management system is based on the following principles:

- (a) The University supports the right of staff, students and the community to complain about University services, decisions or conduct.
- (b) It is the University's policy that its staff, students and the community are aware of the complaints management system. Information about the complaints management system is publicly available on the University website and other relevant publications.
- (c) The University provides simple, flexible and accessible arrangements for staff, students and the community to lodge complaints.
- (d) All University staff are expected to communicate to other staff, students and the community how to access the University's complaints processes.

(e) The University uses a straightforward and timely complaints process, which includes reasonable time frames for the management of complaints and regular communication with complainants about the management and progress of their complaints.

(f) The University acknowledges that complaints can be sensitive, complicated and take time to resolve. The University will ensure that complainants are kept informed about the complaints process, anticipated timeframes and any other factors likely to affect the progress of the complaint.

(g) The University will ensure that staff receiving, processing and/or responding to complaints are adequately trained in the application of this policy, relevant grievance or other specific policies and in complaints management.

(h) The University supports continued improvement in its administration and where there is a clear benefit, to either the University or the complainant, it will investigate issues not specifically raised in a complaint and provide meaningful feedback to relevant staff about the general nature and outcome of complaints.

(j) Decisions about complaints will be made as soon as possible following assessment or investigation of the complaint, and the decision will be communicated to the complainant as soon as practicable.

(k) The University will handle complaints fairly, and appropriately adhere to principles of natural justice and good governance. This includes the requirement for staff to clearly explain to the complainant the factors considered in making a decision and the reasons for the decision.

(l) The University will wherever possible protect personal information of the complainant in accordance with its [Privacy Management Policy \(http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=24999&pid=24963\)](http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=24999&pid=24963) . However, there may be some instances where the disclosure of personal information is necessary to adhere to the principles of natural justice and good governance.

(m) Complainants have a right to seek external review of a decision made by the University in relation to a complaint. This process will be explained at the time a decision is communicated to a complainant and the appropriate contact details for the external review agency will be provided.

## 5. Procedures

5.1 If the nature of a complaint is one of the following, please refer to the relevant policy and procedure for further advice:

- [Student Grievance Resolution Policy \(http://www.uq.edu.au/myadvisor/grievance-resolution-processes\)](http://www.uq.edu.au/myadvisor/grievance-resolution-processes)

- **Staff Grievance Resolution Policy** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25287>)
- **Management of Sexual Harassment Grievances Policy** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25007>)
- **Discrimination and Harassment Policy** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=25012>)
- **Privacy Management Policy** (<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/index.html?page=24999>)

5.2 If a complaint does not fall within any of the categories in paragraph 5.1:

- for minor expressions of dissatisfaction, lodge a complaint with the head of the relevant organisational unit;
- for all other matters, lodge a complaint with the Chief Operating Officer by writing to or telephoning:

Chief Operating Officer  
The University of Queensland  
Brisbane Qld 4072  
Email: [coo@uq.edu.au](mailto:coo@uq.edu.au) (<mailto:coo@uq.edu.au>)  
Telephone: +61 (7) 3365 1311

5.3 Complaints will be acknowledged and normally responded to within 28 days of receipt. Once received, the Chief Operating Officer may investigate the complaint personally, or may refer the complaint to another officer of the University. Complainants will be notified if their complaint is referred to another person for action.

5.4 If the person investigating the complaint is not the Chief Operating Officer and the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the complainant may apply for a review by writing to the Chief Operating Officer who will initiate an appropriate review.

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