



UNSW Policy	
Responsible Officer	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) and Registrar
Contact Officer	Student Conduct and Appeals Officer (tel 9385 8515)
Authorisation	UNSW Council CL08/43 8 December 2008
Effective Date	2 March 2009
Modifications	v1.0: 8 December 2008, UNSW Council (CL08/43) v1.1: 19 February 2009, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) and Registrar
Superseded Documents	Grievance Resolution Policy for Students (2005/2246) Student Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Policy and Procedures (960671) Grievance Resolution Procedure for Undergraduate and Postgraduate (Coursework Students) Grievance Resolution Procedure for Research Students All other inconsistent UNSW documents existing at the effective date.
Review	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) and Registrar March 2012
File Number	2008/4234
Associated Documents	Student Complaint Procedure Student Misconduct Rules Behaviour Required of Students Code of Conduct Special Consideration – Illness and Misadventure Assessment Policy Academic Standing Rules for Undergraduate Students Academic Standing Rules for Postgraduate Students

1. Preamble

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the resolution of student complaints. This policy supports the University's intention to provide a safe and fair learning environment for all its students and outlines the principles and procedures to be used in addressing student complaints.

2. Scope

The policy applies to complaints that may arise from all aspects of a student's experience at the University. Under certain circumstances it may also apply to a previously enrolled student.

3. Definitions

A complaint is any type of problem, concern or grievance about the University or the University environment. Students may also make a complaint about a matter relating to their studies and student life at the University, which concerns the University and relates to the operations of the University and where they have had an adverse experience which is not addressed in another rule, policy or procedure of the University. This may include but is not limited to bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation or vilification.

For definitions of bullying, refer to the University's Workplace Bullying Policy. For definitions of harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation or vilification, refer to the University's Equal Opportunity in Education Policy Statement.

4. Policy Statement

The University of New South Wales is committed to providing a learning environment that is safe and fair for all members of the University community. This policy applies to students of the University who have complaints, including complaints of bullying, discrimination, harassment, victimisation or vilification (see section 3 for definitions). It may also cover previously enrolled students under certain circumstances. Wherever possible such complaints will be resolved by a process of discussion, cooperation and mediation, as soon as possible after an incident or situation has occurred. Complaints will be treated seriously, expeditiously and sensitively having due regard to procedural fairness and confidentiality. Frivolous or vexatious complaints or complaints without substance will not proceed beyond preliminary investigation. Students are expected to participate in the complaint resolution process in good faith. Anonymous complaints will only be investigated at the discretion of the University, where the conduct they raise is of a serious nature.

Staff and students are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour contributes to the maintenance of a learning environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.

5. Legal & Policy Framework

This policy operates within the context of state and federal anti-discrimination and harassment legislation and within the context of University policies.

6. Implementation

Procedures for implementation of the Student Complaint Policy are detailed in the Student Complaint Procedures.

6.1 Roles & Responsibilities

All University staff are required to abide by the University Staff Code of Conduct and all University students are required to abide by the University's rules concerning student conduct, including but not limited to the 'Behaviour Required of Students' statement and Student Misconduct Rules.

6.2 Support & Advice

Support and advice in relation to this policy is available from the Student Conduct and Appeals Officer within the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) and Registrar, and the Director, Student Equity and Disabilities Unit.

6.3 Communication

This Policy will be communicated to students via the *Low Down* online news, *Graduate Research Student News*, Student Equity and Disabilities Unit, Student Central and communication to Faculties.

6.4 Procedures and Forms

Refer to the Student Complaint Procedures.

6.5 Guidelines

Guidelines for implementation of the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures are under preparation.

7. Review

This Policy is due for review three years from its date of effect.

8. Acknowledgements

NSW Ombudsman Complaint Handling at Universities: Best Practice Guidelines 2006

Discussion Paper 21 (1989) – Alternative Dispute Resolution: Training and Accreditation of Mediators, Lawlink NSW

Discussion Paper 30 (1993) Review of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW), Lawlink NSW

Complaints policies and procedures from a range of Australian universities were reviewed as part of the revision of the UNSW Student Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedures. Related policy documents from the following universities are gratefully acknowledged:

Australian National University
Macquarie University
Queensland University of Technology
University of Melbourne
University of Newcastle
University of Technology Sydney
University of Queensland
University of Western Sydney

Version	Date	Approval	Sections modified	Details of amendments
1.0	08/12/2008	UNSW Council 8 December 2008 CL08/43	N/A	This is a new policy
1.1	19/02/2009	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) and Registrar	6.5	Date of guidelines availability amended.