

POLICY

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

(06.002)

POLICY

Northland Polytechnic shall receive, acknowledge, register and act upon formal student complaints and make every effort to resolve them to the satisfaction of all parties. A set of guidelines will:

1. assist Northland Polytechnic staff to respond to formal student complaints in a timely, consistent and equitable manner;
2. assure students that any formal complaints they have about Northland Polytechnic structures, procedures, programmes or personnel will be systematically addressed.

PURPOSE

To provide a framework for resolving formal complaints; any concerns that students raise should be resolved and recorded as part of the day to day business of the Programme/Service area. This policy is an internal process using internal personnel to resolve issues. It is not intended to replace any provisions that exist in legislation.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all Northland Polytechnic programmes.

DEFINITIONS

- *Concern*
A student seeks improvement in a situation where the student considers appropriate standards have not been met. The student perceives that the impact on him/her has not been large and it is likely that resolution can be obtained by direct, informal consultation with the staff concerned.
- *Complaint*
An expression of dissatisfaction where the student seeks some form of redress or change in a situation where the student considers that there has been a direct and significant adverse impact on him/her that requires a formal process of resolution. The complaint is lodged with Northland Polytechnic in writing, using a complaints form.
- *Complainant*
The student making a formal complaint.
- *Respondent*
The person about whom the formal complaint is made.
- *Advocate*
The person who assists the student by being present and guiding them through the process. The role will normally include:
 - Observing that the process is followed
 - Advising the complainant regarding process and optionsAn Advocate will be a Student Advisor, or their nominee.

- *Mediation*
The process by which the participants, together with the assistance of a neutral person or persons, systematically review the complaint in order to develop options, consider alternatives and reach a consensual agreement that will accommodate their needs.

COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS

- *Human Rights Act 1993*

Responsibility	Director Education Services
Approval dates	October 2008
Next Review	October 2011

OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

Policy: Anti-Harassment and Bullying (04.014)
Policy: Equal Education Opportunity (05.002)
Student Diary

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

- 1.0 Students must make every attempt to resolve any concerns they may have at the earliest opportunity with those most directly involved within the programme or service area in which it originated.
- 2.0 All formal complaints shall be investigated in a manner that is timely and protects the rights of all parties involved.
- 3.0 Where the student wishes to make a written formal complaint, they should complete a complaints form to be sent to the Chief Executive, stating the nature of the complaint and outlining the steps already taken to address the issue. To ensure that formal complaints can be resolved effectively, there is a time limit of 3 months after the initial incident.
- 4.0 The Chief Executive or a delegated representative will investigate and track formal complaints and notify all complainants of the outcome in writing.
- 5.0 All complainants have the right to an advocate.
- 6.0 At any stage during the process prior to the Chief Executive's final decision the complainant or respondent can request mediation. The polytechnic will provide a mediator with the agreement of both parties.
- 7.0 Where a formal complaint relates to harassment, the relevant policy should be applied.
- 8.0 The outcome of formal complaints is to prevent re-occurrence, and to provide a fair resolution, not to take punitive measures.
- 9.0 The Chief Executive will implement and maintain a procedure for resolving formal complaints.
- 10.0 From time to time (and at least annually) the Institutional Quality Manager will examine the complaints register and report to the Senior Management Team and Academic Board on any trends or systemic issues and any unresolved complaints.

KEYWORDS

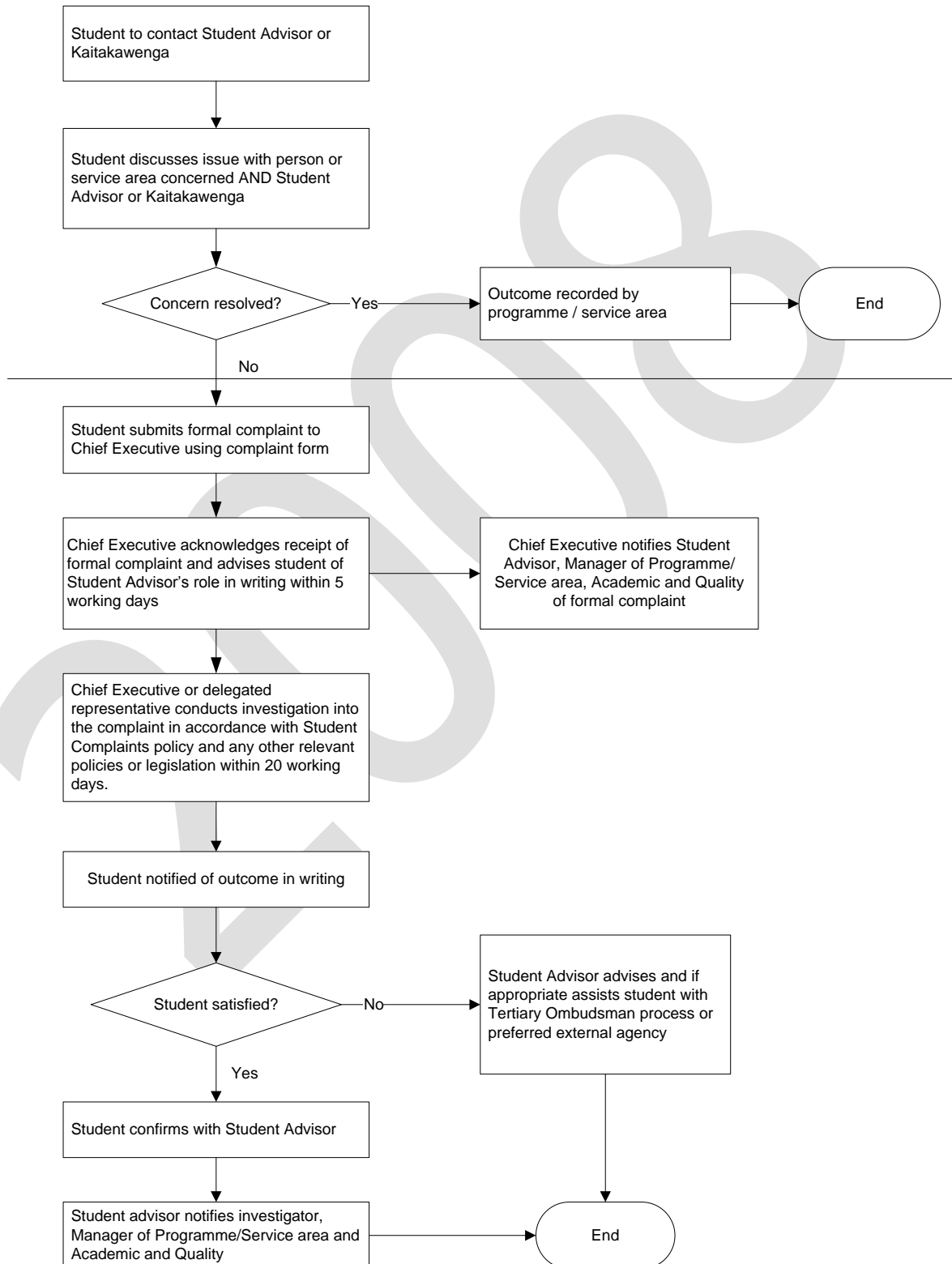
Concern
Complaint
Complainant
Advocate
Mediation
Harassment

SIGNED: R Scobie **Date:** July 2010
**Director Institutional Quality
under delegation from Academic
Board**

2008

Student Complaints (06.002)

Version 5 –July 2010



Formal Student Complaints Form

Date	
Name	
Programme Name	
Address	
Contact Number	
Email Address	
Preferred contact option	

Northland Polytechnic's Student Advisor may support you in this process and it is recommended that you discuss your complaint with them. The Student Advisor can be contacted directly by phone on (09) 470 3735 or through 0800 808 856.

Complaint Detail

Please describe how you have tried to resolve the complaint already

Outcome Sought (Please describe how you think your complaint can be resolved)

Please attach additional pages if necessary

Student signature:

Date:

This Form is to be submitted to NorthTec's Chief Executive

It may be handed in at a campus reception or posted to:

The Chief Executive
NorthTec
Private Bag 9019
Whangarei 0148