

Complaint Resolution – Decision Matrix

Question	Informal Processes		Formal Process
	Self-Resolution	Assisted-Resolution	Formal Complaint
Does the complainant attempt to resolve the complaint themselves?	Yes	Yes, but with assistance from their supervisor.	No.
Who can provide assistance in resolving the complaint?	Self (advice can be sought from FTCO or HR Advisor prior to attempting self-resolution)	Supervisor on request	The supervisor or Head of School/Branch manages the complaint resolution process Information about the process is available from FTCO; or Confidential advice from HR Advisor; EAP Counselling services
Does the complainant have a say in how the complaint is resolved and what the outcome is?	Yes, full control of the resolution process (subject to cooperation between the parties).	Yes, your supervisor will ask what outcome you want and will try to resolve the complaint according to the request.	Yes, The complainant will be asked what outcome they want, however, their supervisor will control the process and/or conduct an investigation and/or take the most effective approach to resolve the complaint. The parties to the complaint will be able to respond and/or agree to the recommendation of the supervisor
Can the complainant and respondent access information, advice and support?	Yes, the complainant and respondent can talk to a Fair Treatment Contact Officer, or their HR Advisor. The University's EAP provider can be contacted for counselling support.	Yes, the complainant and respondent can talk to a Fair Treatment Contact Officer, or their HR Advisor. The University's EAP provider can be contacted for counselling support.	Yes, the complainant and respondent can talk to a Fair Treatment Contact Officer, or their HR Advisor. All parties to a complaint can also have a support person at any stage in the formal complaint resolution process. The University's EAP provider can be contacted for counselling support.
I consider the complaint is serious, sensitive or complex, is this process suitable?	No. Generally self-resolution is best suited to simple and straight forward complaints.	You may elect to try to resolve a more complex situation with the assistance of your supervisor.	Yes, the formal complaint resolution process is the most effective process for complex complaints. Sometimes matters are raised through the complaint process, but due to their seriousness or sensitivity must be managed under a different process. E.g. misconduct, research misconduct. Such matters will be referred to Human Resources and /or the relevant area and managed under the relevant process. Allegations of criminal or illegal conduct may be notified to the Police, ICAC or other relevant authority.
Can I raise a complaint with an external agency e.g. Police, as well as, or instead of following the University Procedure?	Yes, you can. Whilst the University encourages staff to try to resolve complaints through this procedure in the first instance, complaints may be raised with external agencies at any time. If an external agency is engaged, or a matter is under investigation by an external agency, any process under this procedure will be paused.		
Can complaint resolution be attempted in more than one process?	Yes, Self-resolution is a first step and is most suited to simple complaints	Yes, assisted resolution is ideal if the complainant is not confident in approaching the respondent, or if the complainant is unable to resolve the complaint through self-resolution.	Yes, if a complaint is not resolved in an informal process, it can be raised as a formal complaint. If the complaint is complex, serious, or requires investigation, then the formal process is appropriate.

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Is the complaint put in writing?	No	No	Yes, must be made in writing to the supervisor. A template is available to assist you in formalising the complaint in writing.
How long after the event can a complaint be raised?	Complaints should be addressed as soon as possible after the event/incident that gave rise to the complaint	Complaints should be raised as soon as possible and not more than 12 months after the event/incident that gave rise to the complaint.	Within 12 months of the event/incident that gave rise to the complaint. Only in extenuating circumstances can an extension be given.
Will the complaint be investigated, what is the process and how long will it take?	No	The supervisor will assess the circumstances, facts and evidence, but will not undertake a full investigation	Yes, a formal complaint will be assessed and/or investigated. The duration of any investigation, will depend on the complexity, availability of information, time taken to gather facts and/or evidence and/or interview any witnesses. The respondent will have an opportunity to provide their own account of the matter and respond to the complaint. At the conclusion of the investigation, the supervisor will be provided with a report of the investigation and their findings and recommended actions.
Who makes a decision about the actions to be taken	N/A	Supervisor	The supervisor, or supervisor's supervisor, who is responsible for the complaint will recommend a resolution and seek feedback from the parties. The parties to the complaint will be able to respond and/or agree to the recommendation of the supervisor
What approaches may be used to resolve the complaint?	Usually resolved through discussion and agreement between the parties	The supervisor may try to resolve the complaint by discussing with the parties, either together or separately; or The supervisor may present complaint resolution options to the parties; or The supervisor may recommend or direct (as appropriate) staff to cease or modify their behaviour; and/or The respondent may be asked to apologise	A variety of complaint resolution methods (interventions) may be used to resolve the complaint and return to a productive work environment. Common examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mediation - Training - Coaching - An alternate complaint resolution process
Can the complainant and/or respondent be directed to provide information, or participate in mediation or other interventions to resolve the complaint?	The complainant and respondent aim to reach a resolution together.	The supervisor, who is assisting may ask you to provide information and/or participate in an intervention.	Yes, the person responsible for the complaint can (where appropriate) direct the parties to provide information and/or participate in interventions in order to understand and resolve the complaint.
After the intervention(s), how will I know that the complaint	The behaviour or conduct that has caused concern will stop.	The supervisor and complainant will be satisfied that the behaviour or	The supervisor or supervisor's supervisor will monitor to ensure there is no recurrence.

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has been resolved and the problem will not continue?		conduct that has caused concern has ceased.	Only when they are satisfied that the complaint is resolved they will close the complaint.
If a complaint is found to be vexatious or malicious, what happens?	N/A	N/A	Vexatious or malicious complaints will be reported to the Executive Director, Human Resources. The University may take action against the complainant under clause 8.2 of the University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement (as amended).
Is my complaint handled confidentially?	N/A The complainant will attempt to resolve the complaint themselves Parties to the complaint should maintain their own and the confidentiality of others and should not discuss the complaint.	Where practicable, the complaint will be handled confidentially and sensitively by the supervisor. Parties to a complaint are also expected to maintain their own and others' identity and should not discuss the complaint.	In so much as is practicable, the complaint will be handled confidentially and sensitively, understanding that in the course of investigation and/or resolution, it may be impossible to maintain full confidentiality. Parties to a complaint have a responsibility to maintain their own and others' identity and should not discuss any aspect of the complaint, except to participate in the course of the assessment or investigation..
What if the complaint is not resolved, is there something else I can do?	Yes, you could try assisted resolution, or formal complaint resolution.	Yes, if unsuccessful in resolving the complaint, it may be appropriate to resolve it through a formal process.	If a complaint is unable to be resolved formally, or is unsubstantiated the complaint will be closed. Unless the complaint is a grievance about workload allocation under clause 5.4.6.2 of the Enterprise Agreement, there is no avenue for review.
Will the parties be informed if a complaint is closed because it is unsubstantiated, or unable to be resolved?	N/A	Yes, notified by the supervisor.	Yes, the complainant and respondent will be notified in writing
Can I withdraw my complaint?	N/A	Yes	Yes, at any time you can withdraw a complaint. The University may take direct action to investigate a matter or report criminal or unlawful conduct, even if the complaint is withdrawn.
Are records kept of the complaint	No	Yes, at local level by the supervisor	Yes a record is retained of the complaint and all correspondence by HR