

Student Complaints

**We have the system...
But what next?**

Karen Cook & Karen Mann

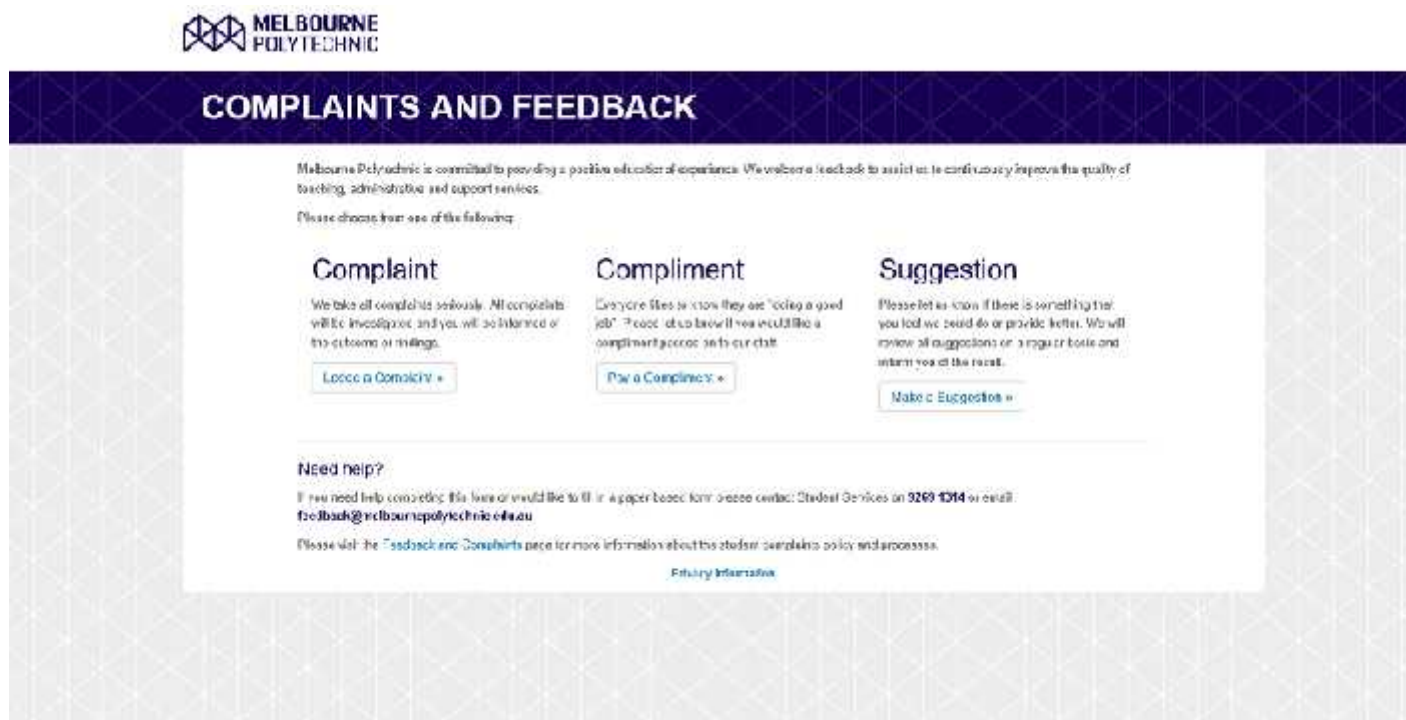
Why an Online Complaints System?



Image courtesy of marcolm at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Our Online Complaints System

- www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/feedback



The screenshot shows the 'COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK' page of the Melbourne Polytechnic website. At the top left is the Melbourne Polytechnic logo. The page title is 'COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK'. Below the title, a paragraph states: 'Melbourne Polytechnic is committed to providing a positive educational experience. We welcome feedback to assist us to continuously improve the quality of teaching, administrative and support services. Please choose from one of the following:'

There are three main sections:

- Complaint:** 'We take all complaints seriously. All complaints will be investigated and you will be informed of the outcome of findings.' Below this is a button labeled 'Lodge a Complaint »'.
- Compliment:** 'Everyone likes to know they are "doing a good job". Please let us know if you would like a compliment given to our staff.' Below this is a button labeled 'Pay a Compliment »'.
- Suggestion:** 'Please let us know if there is something that you feel we could do or provide better. We will review all suggestions on a regular basis and inform you of the result.' Below this is a button labeled 'Make a Suggestion »'.

At the bottom of the page, there is a 'Need help?' section with the text: 'If you need help completing this form or would like to fill in a paper based form please contact Student Services on 0209 1314 or email feedback@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au. Please visit the [Feedback and Complaints](#) page for more information about the student complaints policy and processes. [Privacy Information](#)'

Our Online Complaints System



LODGE A COMPLAINT

In order to investigate your complaint we will need to contact you, so please provide your name and contact details, including one contact number if possible. If you do not provide this information we may not be able to deal with the complaint.

We will use the information you provide to assess, investigate and/or conciliate your complaint, by completing and submitting this form you consent to Melbourne Polytechnic providing your information to the most appropriate person to address the matter.

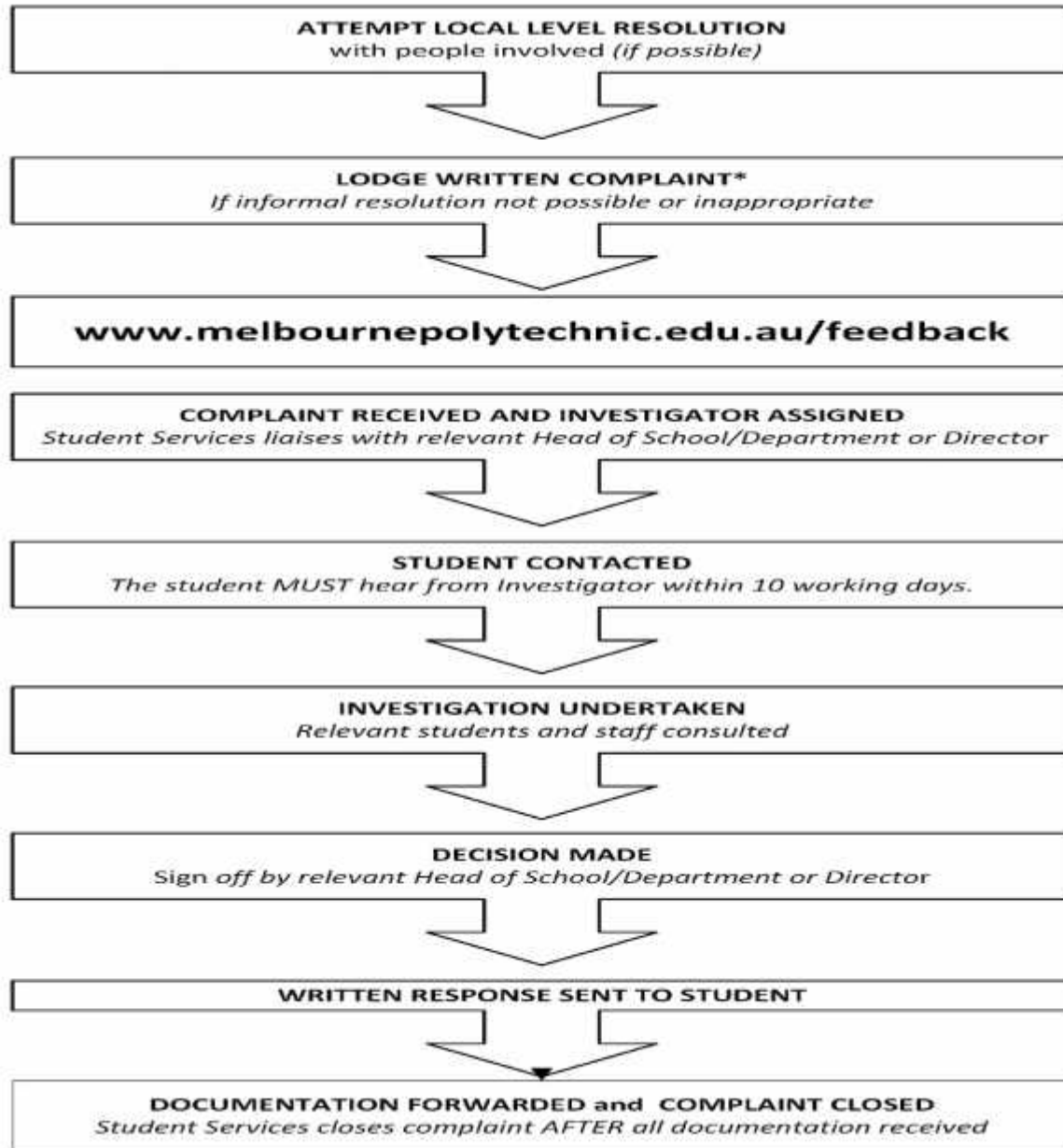
Your personal information will be used and stored in accordance with [Melbourne Polytechnic Privacy Policies](#).

You will be contacted within 10 working days with an update of the progress of your complaint.

Fields marked with a star (*) are mandatory.

Your Information

Title	* First Name
<input type="text" value="--None--"/>	<input type="text"/>
* Last Name	<input type="text"/>
* Email	<input type="text"/>
* At least one of the phone number fields must be supplied	
Mobile Phone	<input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>



The System Works!!!!



Image courtesy of Stuart Miles at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

"The customer doesn't expect everything will go right all the time; the big test is what you do when things go wrong."

- Sir Colin Marshall

When the System DOESN'T Work

Top 3 reasons the system sometimes doesn't work:

1. Avoidance/Fear
2. Defensiveness/Taking it personally
3. Not following processes

Tips to Overcome Avoidance /Fear



Image by Stuart Miles at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

How to Overcome Defensiveness

- **A complaint is NOT...**
 - “I hate you! You (personally) are a terrible person!”
- **A complaint IS...**
 - “Please help me!!!
Something is not working and I need your help to fix a problem!”

Follow the Process: It Supports Best Practice



Image by Stuart Miles at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

What has Worked Well

- Personal contact with staff & students
- Templates
- Checklists
- Resources on intranet
- Mentoring and support



Image courtesy of David Castillo Dominici at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Improvements in the Making

- More staff training
- Executive endorsement
- Consistent Monthly reporting
- Regular Root Cause Analysis
- More accountability

Complaints are Opportunities... in Disguise

*“Statistics suggest that when customers complain... managers ought to **get excited about it.**”*

The complaining customer represents a huge opportunity for more business.”

– Zig Ziglar

A Complaint is an Opportunity to...

- **LISTEN** carefully
- **FIX** something
- **HELP** someone
- **IDENTIFY** process improvement opportunities
- **SEE** the institute through the student's eyes
- **IMPROVE** the experience for our students!

Lessons Learned

Student feedback contributes to a better student experience when staff:

- Feel safe
- Are supported
- Have simple steps to follow
- Implement fixes and analyse issues
- Close feedback loop with students