

# Internal Appeal Procedure

<b>Head Policy</b>	<a href="#">Student Complaints Policy</a>
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<b>Document Owner</b>	Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration
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<b>Related documents</b>	<a href="#">Resolving a Complaint Informally</a> <a href="#">Formal Complaint Procedure</a> <a href="#">External Review Procedure</a> <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Charter</a>

## 1. Introduction

The Media Design School (MDS) encourages students and staff to create a positive communication process that both benefits MDS and the classroom. MDS wishes to foster an environment of continuous improvement and expects both staff and students to raise concerns early to allow preventative measures to be put into effect.

This document should be read in conjunction with the MDS 'Student Complaints Policy' for full policy context and definitions.

## 2. Scope

These procedures apply to:

- students who want to appeal decisions on their formal complaints, and
- students who wish to appeal a determination made under the *Student Charter*.

## 3. Purpose

The purpose of this process is to provide a mechanism for:

- appealing decisions made on formal complaints or review requests, and
- appealing decisions made under the *Student Charter*.

The purpose of this process is to provide a mechanism for escalating and addressing an unresolved issue to a formal complaint.

## 4. Media Design School’s approach to complaint management

- 4.1. Informal discussion
- 4.2. Formal complaint
- 4.3. Internal appeal
- 4.4. External review

## 5. Process for lodging an internal appeal

	Steps
<b>Step 1</b>	<p>If a student is not satisfied with the response to their formal complaint, they may appeal the decision within 20 working days of receiving the written response. They must email Student Complaints Team (<a href="mailto:studentappeals@mediadesignschool.com">studentappeals@mediadesignschool.com</a>) with the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the decision and circumstances the student is requesting be reviewed, and</li> <li>• an outline of how the policies and procedures have not been followed, and</li> <li>• the student’s desired outcome.</li> </ul> <p>Where applicable, the student should provide additional and/or new evidence to support their claim.</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	<p>The Student Complaints Manager or Officer will assess the application and send a written confirmation of receipt of the appeal application via email within five working days of receiving the request for an internal appeal. Students must note that not all appeal requests will be accepted. Appeals are accepted if the application meets the criteria outlined in section 6.3 of the <i>Student Complaints Policy</i>.</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	<p>The Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration (or delegate) may take one of the following actions within 10 working days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refer the internal appeal back to a formal complaint</b> – After reviewing the appeal, the Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration (or delegate) may decide to refer it back to Formal Complaint (e.g. if the original decision-maker had limited access to supporting documents or evidence in the first instance).</li> <li>• <b>Independently investigate the internal appeal</b> – The Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration (or delegate) will review the student’s submission and assess additional information presented. The Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration (or delegate) may interview and seek information from stakeholders involved in the matter. The student may be invited to present their case. The</li> </ul>

	Steps
	<p>student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person when or if being interviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refer the internal appeal to a senior staff</b> – Depending on the nature of the internal appeal, the Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration may deem it necessary to refer it to another senior staff (e.g. appeals of academic nature may be referred to the Dean or delegate, complaints against staff may be referred to the Vice President for People &amp; Talent).</li> <li>• <b>Refer the internal appeal to the Student Review Panel</b> – A Review Panel will be formed where the Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration (or delegate) finds it necessary to seek the formal independent advice of other staff due to the nature or complexity of the subject of the internal appeal. The Review Panel will constitute no less than three Academic Policy and Appeals Committee members who are independent of the original complaint or matter under review. The Review Panel will assess the student’s submission and provide a consensus recommendation.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4</b>	<p>Upon completion of one of the above options, the Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration (or delegate) will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advise the student in writing that the internal appeal has been rejected outlining the outcome, rationale for the decision and further avenues for appeal or complaints externally, or</li> <li>• advise the student in writing that the internal appeal has been decided in favour of the student outlining the outcome, the reasons for the decision, and implement the changes or recommend changes to the relevant staff or department. Changes, where relevant, will be recorded in the <i>Student Records Management System</i>.</li> </ul> <p>The written outcome will be sent to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. The student will be notified during this period of any likely delays.</p>
<b>Step 5</b>	MDS will implement actions resulting from the internal appeal.

Students can contact the Student Complaints Team by emailing [studentappeals@mediadesignschool.com](mailto:studentappeals@mediadesignschool.com) at any stage during the process, if they would like further clarity on the process or updates on the progress of their internal appeal.

## 6. Conflict of interest

If the appeal directly involves or where there is conflict of interest with the Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration, the appeal will be referred to the:

- Dean for academic appeals, or
- General Manager for non-academic appeals.

## 7. Important notes

Any student who lodges an internal appeal must remain enrolled during the process and is encouraged to continue attending classes and working towards their qualification unless otherwise advised.

At any point, the student may decide to refer the matter to an external agency (e.g. a student may lodge their complaint with the [New Zealand Qualifications Authority](#)). However, MDS strongly encourages that students exhaust all internal processes before they lodge a complaint externally. For information on how to make an external complaint, refer to the *External Review Procedure*.

## 8. Record keeping and confidentiality

Records of all appeals handled under this procedure and their outcomes will be recorded in the Student Records Management System and will be maintained for at least five years. This is to allow all parties to the complaint or appeal appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the Vice President, Governance, Strategy and Student Administration.

All records relating to complaints will be treated as confidential and will be covered by the *Privacy Policy*.