

What this information sheet covers:

- Types of University decisions that are reviewable
- Types of decisions that are generally not reviewable
- The difference between review and appeal and grievance processes.

What type of decisions can be reviewed?

Students can request reviews of the following types of University decisions:

- An **academic decision** (the exercise of an academic judgement) in relation to their studies. For example, final grades, progression, honours classification, exclusion, termination of candidature, eligibility to graduate, special consideration, deferred exams.
- An **administrative decision** (the application of University policy and processes). For example, fees, admission, enrolment and attendance, termination of scholarship.

Refer to Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the [Student Review and Appeals Policy](#) for a full list of University decisions that may be reviewed.

When can a student request a review or appeal a University decision?

Students can request a review of a University decision that they believe has a real and practical effect on their rights or otherwise disadvantages them in some way. The University's Student Review and Appeals Policy and Procedures apply to these situations.

Are there decisions which are generally not reviewable?

Yes. However, the circumstances in which a decision would not be considered reviewable are narrow and include:

- Preliminary or interim decisions
- Decisions to institute investigations
- Decisions that are not capable of review, for example where only the opinion of an academic or professional expert will suffice
- Self-executing decisions, for example where a policy specifies that if specific criteria are met, then a specific consequence must happen
- Decisions that do not adversely affect the student
- Service and facility matters, for example the availability of resources, timing and location of clinical placements, or access to specialised facilities outside the University's standard operating hours
- Matters of University policy
- Frivolous or trivial matters
- Matters which have no merit

These situations are explained further in the University's [Staff Guidelines on Decision-Making in Student Cases](#).

Is there a difference between a review and appeal and a grievance or complaint?

Requests for reviews and appeals are about examining the decisions that the University makes in relation to a student's study.

Grievances or complaints relate to a situation experienced by a student which does not match the expectations set down in the [Student Charter](#) or the University's policies.

When a student seeks to review or appeal a University decision, they may also have a complaint about their treatment, quality of a service, or conduct of staff or other students.

It is important that:

- (i) the student's complaint be dealt with under the [University's Student Complaint Policy](#) and
- (ii) the student's request for a review of a decision be dealt with separately under the [Student Review and Appeals Policy](#)

What is the University's process for requesting a review or an appeal of a decision?

The University has a three step process for reviewing decisions.

Step 1: Understanding the decision

Students must informally contact the decision-maker in person or in writing to obtain an explanation of the decision, any additional information about the decision, check any details and correct any misunderstandings.

Step 2: Reviewing the decision

If the matter cannot be resolved informally in Step 1, students may request a review of the decision to the relevant review officer using the [Review of a Decision Form](#).

Step 3: Appealing the decision

If, after completing Steps 1 and 2, the student is still dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal the outcome of the review to the relevant Appeal Body (refer to Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the University's [Student Review and Appeals Policy](#)).

Note that not all decisions can be appealed.

How do staff and students know who the Review Officer or Appeal Body is for a specific decision?

Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the University's [Student Review and Appeals Policy](#) provides detailed advice on decisions that can be reviewed and identifies the initial Decision Maker, Review Officer and, where applicable, the Appeal Body/Officer.

How do students request a review or appeal of a University decision?

If a student has completed Step 1 (for a review) and Steps 1 and 2 (for an appeal, where available) and are still dissatisfied with the decision, then they may apply for a review or appeal of the decision using the [Review of a Decision Form](#), which can be found on [Student Forms](#).

What is the timeframe for requesting a review or appeal of a decision?

Unless specified otherwise in a University policy, the timeframe for applying for a review is within 10 working days of the original decision.

You should be aware that during this 10 day period students are expected to also undertake Step 1 – making contact with the initial decision maker to understand the decision. This is an important step in gathering information on which to base your application for review.

Similarly, the timeframe for appealing a decision is within 10 working days of notification of the review decision, unless a different timeframe is specified in a University policy.

Is there any further avenue for having a decision reviewed?

Yes. If the decision cannot be appealed or if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Step 3 appeal process, they may lodge a complaint with a relevant external agency (for example, the Queensland Ombudsman or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for matters relating to refund of student contribution, remission of HECS, HELP, FEE-HELP debt or re-crediting of a Student Learning Entitlement).

Can I get support for making an application to have a decision reviewed?

Yes. You can seek assistance and advice about applying for a review or an appeal from the following areas:

- Student representative organisations (The Griffith University Student Representative Council, the Gold Coast Student Guild and the Griffith Postgraduate Students Association)
- Student Administration Centres
- Student Services
- Higher Degree Research Advocates
- Griffith International
- GUMURRII

