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](http://www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/feedback)
Our Online Complaints System

LODGE A COMPLAINT

In order to investigate your complaint we will need to contact you; we 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 your complaint.

We will use the information you provide to assess, investigate and/or resolve 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 Policy.

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

Fields marked with a star (*) are mandatory.
ATTEMPT LOCAL LEVEL RESOLUTION
with people involved (if possible)

LODGE WRITTEN COMPLAINT*
If informal resolution not possible or inappropriate

www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/feedback

COMPLAINT RECEIVED AND INVESTIGATOR ASSIGNED
Student Services liaises with relevant Head of School/Department or Director

STUDENT CONTACTED
The student MUST hear from Investigator within 10 working days.

INVESTIGATION UNDERTAKEN
Relevant students and staff consulted

DECISION MADE
Sign off by relevant Head of School/Department or Director

WRITTEN RESPONSE SENT TO STUDENT

DOCUMENTATION FORWARDED and COMPLAINT CLOSED
Student Services closes complaint AFTER all documentation received
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
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