

# OMBUD'S NEWS

## What does the Student Ombudsman do?

### Academic Complaints

The Student Ombudsman reviews Faculty decisions in relation to academic complaints by coursework and HDR students. When a student appeals to the SO, the SO reviews the matter, interviews relevant people, and ensures that Faculty decisions have been made:

- on the basis of evidence;
- using due process; and
- with all available information.

The SO may:

- Decide there are insufficient grounds for the appeal;
- Facilitate a negotiated outcome between the parties; or
- Uphold the appeal and determine a new outcome.

#### POLICIES:

- *Higher Degree Research Student Academic Complaints Policy*
- *Coursework Student Academic Complaints Policy*



*Associate Professor Samantha Hardy, Student Ombudsman*

The Student Ombudsman is an **independent** and **impartial** person who **reviews and monitors** how the university manages academic complaints, and **provides advice and assistance** to both students and staff in relation to any concerns about **academic matters**.

The Student Ombudsman does this by:

- Reviewing Faculty academic complaint decisions when a student appeals that decision;
- Chairing the Coursework Exclusion Appeals Committee;
- Providing advice to the relevant officers of the university about academic complaint patterns, policy issues, and any other matters relating to academic complaints;
- Serving on a number of university committees that have an input into academic matters.

## Coursework Exclusion Appeals

The Student Ombudsman chairs the Coursework Exclusion Appeals Committee, which hears appeals from students against exclusion from the University for failing to make satisfactory course progress.

### POLICIES:

- *Course Progress Policy*

## Staff support for ethical issues

The Student Ombudsman can provide advice to staff about ethical issues that they may face in the course of their work at the university.

### POLICIES:

- *University Code of Conduct*

## Referred complaints

Any member of the University Senior Executive may refer any complaint concerning a student or that impacts on student matters to the Student Ombudsman for investigation or for review.

### POLICIES:

- *Student Ombudsman Terms of Reference*

### Where to find the SO:

Room 19.G003 (Building 19, Ground Floor, north-east wing).  
Office hours are Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm

## Student Ombudsman Terms of Reference

### 2.1 The student ombudsman has the following powers:

- To conduct enquiries with and to request information that is relevant to a complaint from any member of staff of the university;
- To determine complaints based on the Student Ombudsman's findings in accordance with relevant University policy documents;
- To act within the confines of the powers of the University, and not beyond these confines.
- To interpret and, as appropriate, apply University policy, but not to make or amend university policy.

### 2.2 Staff and students at the University will at all times cooperate with the Student Ombudsman in order that the Student Ombudsman may effectively discharge the functions of the office.

### 2.3 The Student Ombudsman must ensure that staff whose conduct is subject of a complaint are given reasonable opportunity to respond to any potentially adverse outcome before the finalisation of the matter.

### 2.4 The Student Ombudsman must provide reasons for any outcome reached by the Student Ombudsman on a complaint.

### 2.5 Students and staff shall not suffer any detriment as a result of bringing a complaint to the Student Ombudsman or as a result of cooperating or participating in an investigation of a complaint by the Student Ombudsman.

## The SO sits on the following committees

- Academic Senate
- Student Health Assessment and Leave Panel
- Education Policy Review Subcommittee
- Student Awards Committee
- Heads of Students meetings