



LSNZ COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Learner complaints, concerns and appeals

Applies to	Christchurch and Queenstown campuses
Owner	General Manager
Relevant standard	Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 – Outcome 2, Process 2
Review cycle	At least annually and following any material regulatory or process change
Status	Internal procedure – proposed LSNZ operational standard

Purpose. To ensure complaints are easy to raise, handled fairly and promptly, recorded consistently, and used to improve learner wellbeing, safety, academic quality and LSNZ services.

Definition. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about LSNZ services, decisions, actions, staff, agents, academic matters, accommodation, wellbeing/safety, administration, fees or another matter affecting a learner. A complaint may be verbal or written and may be made by an individual or a group.

Important: A learner must not be disadvantaged for raising a concern or complaint in good faith. LSNZ will provide reasonable support for language, accessibility and cultural needs, and the learner may have a support person.

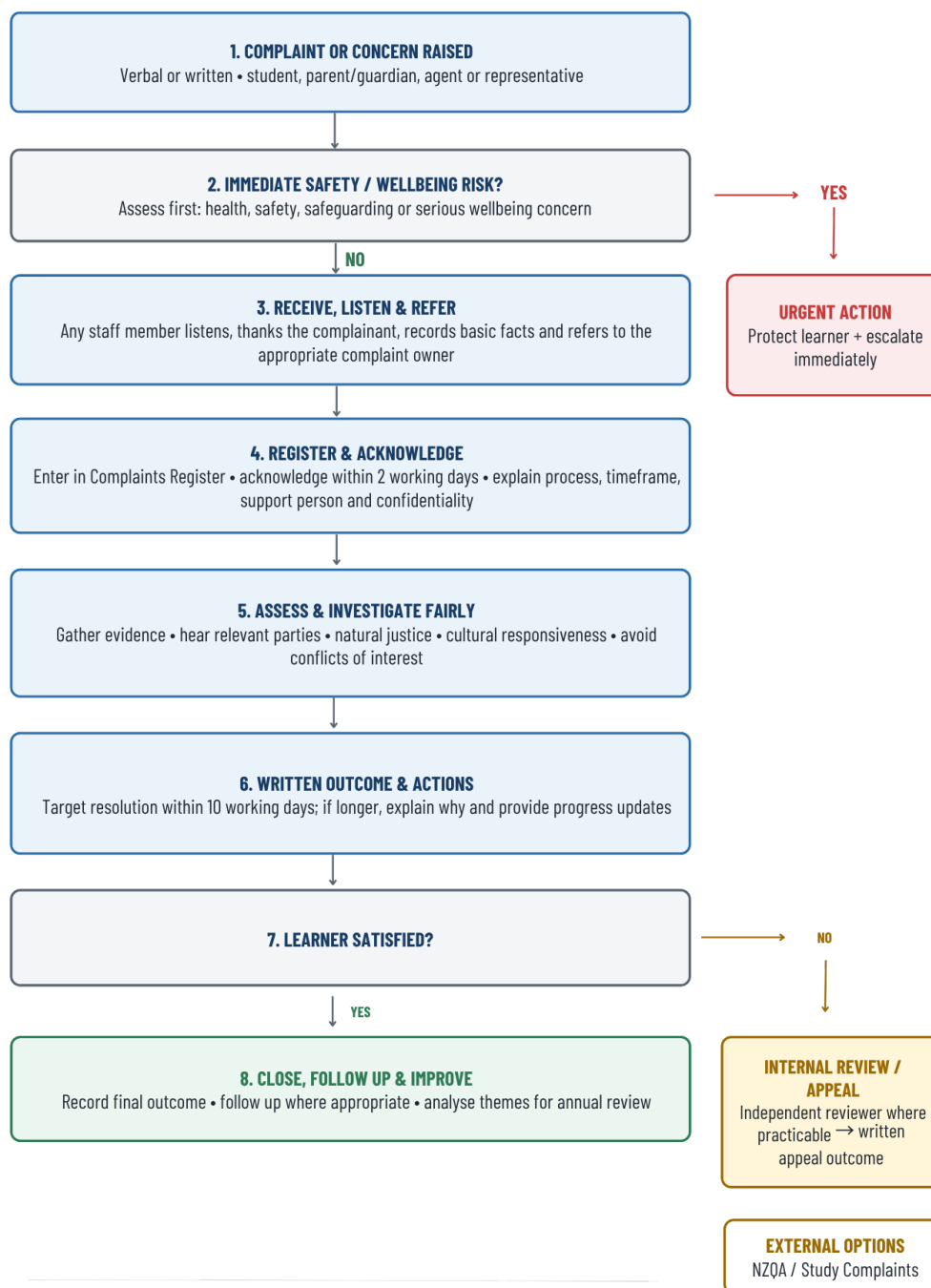
1. LSNZ Complaints Flowchart

LSNZ service standards shown in the flowchart (2 working days / 10 working days) are internal targets. NZQA requires complaints to be handled in a timely and efficient way, with learners informed about how the complaint will be handled and how it is progressing; the Code does not prescribe these exact day limits.

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Christchurch & Queenstown

LSNZ 1.2026



2. Step-by-Step Procedure

Step 1 – Receive the complaint

- A complaint may be made verbally or in writing to any LSNZ staff member.
- The staff member listens respectfully, does not argue, promise an outcome, investigate independently or dismiss the concern.
- Ask whether the learner wants the matter handled informally or formally. If the issue is serious, repeated, safety-related, or may require investigation, it must be referred as a formal complaint.
- Offer a support person and reasonable language/accessibility assistance. Group complaints are permitted.

Step 2 – Check immediate risk

- If there is an immediate health, safety, safeguarding, harassment, violence, self-harm or serious wellbeing risk, take protective action first and escalate immediately to the appropriate senior manager/General Manager.
- Emergency or critical-incident procedures operate alongside the complaint process; the complaint must still be recorded.

Step 3 – Refer to the appropriate complaint owner

- Academic/class/assessment: Director of Studies or delegated academic lead.
- Accommodation/homestay: Accommodation Coordinator/Manager or delegated senior manager.
- Student services/administration: relevant manager.
- Staff conduct or sensitive complaint: General Manager or an independent senior delegate.
- If the complaint concerns the General Manager, refer it to the owner/director
- Avoid conflicts of interest: a person who is the subject of the complaint should not be the sole decision-maker.

Step 4 – Register and acknowledge

- Enter the complaint in the LSNZ Complaints Register, including date received, campus, category, summary, risk level, owner, actions, outcome and closure date.
- Acknowledge the complaint within 2 working days wherever practicable.
- Tell the learner who is managing the complaint, the expected process and timeframe, how updates will be provided, and that they may use a support person.
- Explain confidentiality and that information will be shared only with people who need it to assess or resolve the matter, subject to legal and safety obligations.

Step 5 – Assess and investigate

- Clarify the issues and the outcome the learner is seeking.
- Collect relevant information such as emails, enrolment records, attendance, academic records, accommodation records, policies, statements or other evidence.
- Give any person whose conduct or decision is in question a fair opportunity to understand the substance of the concern and respond.
- Consider the matter from an appropriate cultural perspective and use culturally responsive or restorative approaches where suitable.
- Keep the learner informed if the investigation is taking longer than expected.

Step 6 – Decide and communicate the outcome

- Aim to provide a written outcome within 10 working days of formal acknowledgement wherever practicable.
- The outcome should summarise the issue, findings, decision, actions/remedies (if any), reasons, and any follow-up required.
- If the matter cannot be resolved within the target timeframe, explain why, give a revised timeframe and provide progress updates.
- Possible outcomes may include explanation/clarification, apology, correction, service or academic action, accommodation action, staff/process improvement, referral to another process, or no further action where the complaint is not upheld.

Step 7 – Internal review / appeal

- If the learner is dissatisfied, they may request an internal review/appeal, preferably in writing, explaining the reason for review and any new information.
- The review should be carried out by a person not materially involved in the original decision wherever practicable.
- The reviewer checks procedural fairness, relevant evidence, consistency with policy/Code obligations and whether the outcome was reasonable.
- The learner receives a written appeal outcome and is told about external options if still dissatisfied.

Step 8 – Close, follow up and improve

- Record the final outcome, actions and closure date in the Complaints Register.
- Where appropriate, check with the learner after resolution to assess whether the process and outcome were understood and whether support is still required.
- De-identify and analyse complaint themes. Use findings for staff training, policy/process improvement and LSNZ's annual Code self-review/reporting.

3. Roles and Escalation

Role	Main responsibility	Do not
Any staff member	Listen, thank the complainant, identify immediate risk, record basic details, refer promptly.	Promise an outcome, debate the complaint, or conduct an unauthorised investigation.
Complaint owner / manager: Jake Gambitsky (Queenstown) Lucy Hoskins (Queenstown) Naiara Guaraldo (Christchurch) Amber Finch-Sortain (Christchurch)	Acknowledge, manage investigation, communicate progress, document evidence and recommend/decide outcome within authority.	Allow a conflict of interest or deny reasonable support.
General Manager: Jihane Sato	Oversight of serious, sensitive, cross-campus or escalated complaints; ensure consistency and Code compliance.	Be sole reviewer of their own decision/complaint.
Appeal reviewer	Conduct an independent review and issue the final internal response.	Simply repeat the original investigation without considering appeal grounds.

4. Minimum Complaints Register Fields

- Unique complaint ID
- Date received and date acknowledged
- Campus
- Complainant / learner ID (stored securely)
- Complaint category
- Short description and desired outcome
- Immediate safety/wellbeing risk identified
- Complaint owner
- Support person / accessibility or language support offered
- Key investigation actions and dates
- Progress updates provided
- Outcome and reasons
- Corrective / preventive actions
- Appeal requested and appeal outcome
- Date closed
- Learner feedback on the process/outcome where practicable
- Theme / improvement action for annual review

5. External Options After LSNZ's Internal Process

NZQA – concerns about provider quality or Code compliance. Current NZQA guidance says learners should complete the provider's internal complaints and appeals process first. If concerns remain, the learner may notify NZQA using the online 'Concerns about education providers' webform.

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira – financial or contractual disputes. This is an independent, free dispute-resolution service for domestic tertiary and international learners. It may be appropriate for disputes involving fees, refunds, contracts or other financial/contractual matters.

Current external information: NZQA decommissioned the former risk@nzqa.govt.nz complaints mailbox in 2025. LSNZ materials should direct learners to NZQA's current webform rather than the old email address.

6. NZQA Alignment Checklist

- ☐ Complaints process is visible, easy to understand and available to learners and their supporters.
- ☐ Learners can raise complaints verbally or in writing and barriers such as language, internet access, fear of reprisal or accessibility are addressed.
- ☐ Learners may choose a support person and groups may make joint complaints.
- ☐ Learners are told how their complaint will be handled, expected timeframes and progress.
- ☐ Complaints are handled according to complexity/sensitivity, cultural context and natural justice.
- ☐ Complaints are recorded securely.
- ☐ Complaint numbers, nature, outcomes and learner experience are reviewed and reported annually in line with Code/self-review requirements.
- ☐ Internal and external complaint/dispute-resolution options are publicised and kept current.