



Integrity and Standards (ISU) Unit

INFORMATION SHEET

No. 2, May 2016



Please refer to the [ISU website](#) for information on:

- [Complaint Resolution Process](#)
(complaint procedures, guidelines, process flowcharts, templates)
- [Conflicts of Interest / Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality](#)
(CofI Register, CofI procedures, CofI types, process flowchart, FAQs)
- [Public Interest Disclosures](#)
(what, how, when, links to Public Sector Commission information)
- [Fraud and Corruption Prevention](#)
(plan, policy, risks, case studies, red flags)

and to access the:

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Online Complaints Portal](#)
- [Valuing Integrity booklet](#)
- [External avenues for lodging a complaint](#)

Overcoming the “fear factor”

As you all know, one of [Curtin’s Values](#) is **Courage** i.e. *to lead, take responsibility and question*. But what does this value mean to you in your day-to-day work?

The ISU sometimes comes into contact with people who tell us they are hesitant to raise a complaint because they believe it will put them at risk of adverse action by a colleague or their manager.

Building on a foundation of integrity and respect, and through courage, we will achieve excellence and have an impact on the communities we serve.

This of course is a natural reaction and for some people, it will be enough to prevent them from speaking out. Unfortunately, it also means that sometimes a serious matter will not be addressed in a timely manner and just continue to get worse.

We acknowledge that some types of complaints may put the complainant in a difficult position in the workplace but the University has formally recognised these risks and has effective mechanisms in place for dealing with them if and when they arise — see [Complaints Procedures](#).

So if you’re concerned that something you tell us or something you want to register via the Complaints Portal may place you at risk, we do encourage you to contact us in the first instance to discuss your concerns and the various options available for addressing them.

Anonymous complaints

The Complaints Portal permits complainants to electronically submit **anonymous complaints**. In such cases, the University does not have the means to identify or make contact with the complainant.



The problem with anonymous complaints in relation to complaint resolution is that they are often submitted with insufficient detail for further action to be taken and with no obvious way of contacting the actual complainant to obtain this detail. In addition, the complainant cannot be informed of the outcome of the complaint resolution process so may be unaware of what if any action has been taken by the University. This in turn may lead to further complaints from the same complainant.

Before deciding to submit an anonymous complaint, please consider contacting the ISU to discuss your submission and the options that may be available to you in pursuing your complaint further.

Suggestion Box vs Complaint Portal

While the ISU does encourage staff, students and the wider community to submit feedback via the Complaints Portal, the University has also provided staff with the capability to register suggestions for improvement via the online [Suggestion Box](#).

The purpose of the Suggestion Box is to encourage staff to submit their ideas, thoughts and suggestions on how they believe Curtin’s culture and working environment can be improved. Once received, suggestions are processed in a different manner to complaints.

As such, complaints (as defined in the [Complaints Procedures](#)) should not be submitted via the Suggestion Box.



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Complaint Data— Quarter 1, 2016

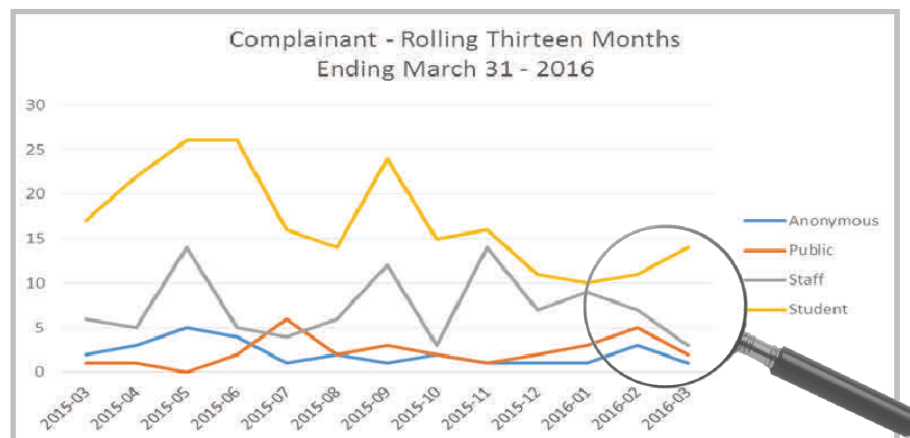
The ISU collects and reports on complaint data on a quarterly, rolling 13 months, and end of financial year (12 months) basis. For the three months and rolling 13 months period ending 31 Mar 2016:

Quarterly data

- 69 matters which met the University's definition of *complaint* were registered in the first quarter.
- 64 other matters were received concerning feedback, enquiries, duplicates, and matters to be dealt with by other areas. These were directed to the appropriate party for attention.
- One in every two complaints registered came from students, while one in every three came from staff; the rest were divided between anonymous complainants and complaints from the public.
- One in every two complaints registered were assigned to the four Faculties for resolution.
- Only one matter remained unresolved from 2014, and 17 matters from 2015, at time of reporting.
- In terms of complaint status at quarter end, the ratio of upheld to not upheld complaints remained at around 1:1.

Rolling 13 months data

- Analysis of data again shows the typical cyclical nature of complaint notification whereby complaint numbers tend to ebb and flow in alignment with the academic cycle and the presence of staff and students on campus i.e. complaints tend to peak during the second and third quarters when University is at its busiest.
- Of interest is the divergence of student and staff complaint numbers as the first quarter progressed. This trend is not expected to continue into the second quarter.



ISU Training Workshops

The ISU has developed four new training workshops which will focus on building better understanding and skills amongst Curtin staff in the following four areas:

- Managing Complaints
- Avoiding Conflicts of Interest
- Fact Finding
- Fraud and Corruption — Prevention, Detection and Response

These workshops will be made available via iPerform sometime in the second quarter of 2016 and will be offered on a regular basis to the University community, depending on demand. Please stay tuned!

Review of the Code of Conduct

The University's [Code of Conduct](#) (the Code) became effective on 30 June 2009. It has not been through a major review since then, though there have been minor administrative changes made to it.

Under the ISU's 2016 Operational Plan, we are intending to review the Code in the next few months.

Earlier this year, and as part of the pre-review and consultation process, we asked the Public Sector Commission (PSC) to review the existing Code and provide any recommendations as far as best practice goes.

Their general observation was that:

.. The Code is well written and addresses desired standards of conduct, setting out the parties to and application of the code and the relevant reporting avenues.

However, they also offered some suggestions for improvement which we will take on board.

Now, prior to the formal review and consultation process beginning in the University, we also invite you, as a staff member of Curtin, to submit any comment or suggestions for improvement which you believe will help us develop the best outcome for the University. Please send any comments you have to the [Director ISU](#) by 30 June 2016.

Rules for accepting / disclosing gifts

The basic rules for accepting gifts, benefits or hospitality in the University (hereafter referred to as *gifts*) are as follows (refer to Section 6 of Appendix A of the [Conflict of Interest Procedures](#) for more detail):



As a recipient or potential recipient of a gift, first do a personal assessment of the situation; refuse, return or repay the gift if you believe you have an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest in receiving the gift. If you believe there is no conflict, then and only then apply the following rules:

1. For gifts valued at under \$150: do not register on the online Conflict of Interest Register.
2. For gifts between \$150-\$300: register and obtain approval from your line manager.
3. For gifts valued at over \$300: register and obtain approval from your Executive Manager.
4. Small gifts from the same entity that add up to more than \$300 per year must also be registered.

If you are unsure, please seek advice!

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