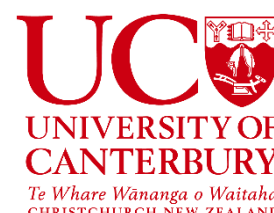


Student Critical Incidents and Complaints 2025



Introduction

The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice sets out requirements on tertiary education providers for public reporting of statistics on the number and nature of critical incidents, the number and nature of student complaints, and student experiences with the complaints process.¹ This report details UC's critical incidents and complaints for 2025 in line with these requirements.

Student Critical Incidents

UC defines a critical incident as any unplanned or unforeseen traumatic event affecting a student or students that has an impact on the University, its staff, its students and/or the wider community, or any actions of a UC student which, in virtue of their nature, give rise to significant alarm for the safety of other students, staff and/or the wider community.

Critical incidents include all student deaths on campus, and all off-campus deaths of students who had been assessed by the University as a learner at risk. It also includes all events or matters where a student has experienced serious physical or mental harm and either planning and/or managing the event or matter was inadequate, a plan was not followed, or an external review or investigation was carried out.

Table 1: Summary of 2025 Critical Incidents

Critical Incident Type	2025
Serious Assault	0
Sudden Death - On Campus	0
Sudden Death - Off Campus	0
Death (medical event/unknown cause) - Off campus	1
Serious Injury/illness - Off campus	0
Arrest	0
Total	1

¹ Refer to clauses 10(3)(g), 13(f)(i), and 13(f)(ii) in the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice.

Student Complaints

The UC Complaints Procedures Guide categorises student grievances into “Concerns” and “Formal Complaints”. Each term is defined as follows:

Concern: A complaint sent to the GAPA which is able to be informally resolved, and the submitter is either satisfied with the response or does not want a formal investigation carried out into the matter.

Formal Complaint: A complaint sent to the GAPA which requires formal investigation by the university and follows the UC Student Complaints Procedures accessible on the [UC website](#).

Procedure

UC provides clear and accessible information for students on how to raise a concern or make a formal complaint through a series of dedicated [webpages](#) that explain available options and directs students to the appropriate process based on the nature and seriousness of the issue. The information makes clear that a formal complaint is appropriate when a student has a serious concern that they wish the University to investigate. Step-by-step instructions direct students to read the [University of Canterbury Student Complaint Procedures](#) which provides transparency for the complaint process, including advising the student of the next steps and their rights to appeal or seek external review if required.

To initiate a formal complaint, a student must submit their complaint in writing with appropriate and applicable details and any relevant supporting evidence. The formal complaint is handled by the Grievance and Academic Processes Advisor (GAPA) who will acknowledge receipt, assess the nature of the complaint and establish how it will be addressed. The GAPA is the central point of contact for receiving concerns and formal complaints from students and for keeping them informed about progress in managing those complaints. The GAPA ensures that all items and information are directed appropriately for resolution, monitors progress, and ensures the correct processes are followed. Advocacy support is available to students through the UCSA Advocacy and Welfare team, which works in close liaison with the GAPA, and pastoral support is available through UC’s Student Care team. The GAPA also produces an annual report on complaint data and highlights any emerging trends to the UC Senior Leadership Team and the Risk Advisory Committee, both of which are chaired by the Vice Chancellor.

In 2025 fifty-two complaints were lodged classified as formal complaints under the University’s procedures. Students can lodge complaints individually or on behalf of a group. If a student is acting on behalf of a group, the complaint will count as one intake item. The nature and general outcome of the formal complaints are detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of 2025 Formal Complaints

Formal Complaint Outcome	Nature of Formal Complaint							Total
	Admission and Enrolment	Assessment	Customer Service and Advice	Fees	Quality of Learning	Staff Conduct	Other	
Withdrawn	1	1			1			3
Dismissed				1		3	1	5
Partially Upheld		1	2		1		3	7
Upheld	1	7	2	1	5	3	2	21
Not Upheld		2	2		1	2	5	12
Ongoing						4		4
Total 2025	2	11	6	2	8	12	11	52

A demographic breakdown of those making formal complaints during 2025 is detailed below in Table 3. All information used to analyse demographics is drawn from the Student Management System with information voluntarily provided by students at the time of enrolment. During 2025 52 formal complaints were made by 63 complainants. This is because some formal complaints were raised by more than one person.

Table 3: Demographic details of student complaints

Demographic Breakdown	Percentage	Number
Female	63.5%	40
Male	33.3%	21
Diverse	3.2%	2
Age		
Under 20	4.8%	3
20 – 29	61.9%	39
30 – 39	22.2%	14
40+	11.1%	7
Ethnicity		
NZ Māori	3.2%	2
NZ European/Pakeha	58.7%	37
Other	38.1%	24