

What happens when you make your complaint?

It will be acknowledged promptly.

On receiving your complaint, an Ombudsman will decide whether or not it can be investigated. If your complaint cannot be investigated, we will tell you why and may direct you to other options or agencies.

If your complaint can be investigated, an Ombudsman will seek information from the institution concerned about the subject matter of your complaint.

We will keep you informed throughout the investigation.

At the end of the investigation, an Ombudsman will reach a view on whether the institution acted unreasonably or unfairly towards you. If it is considered that your complaint cannot be upheld, you will have an opportunity to respond to that view before a final decision is made. Where appropriate, an Ombudsman may recommend a remedy.

Making telephone enquiries with an agency can often satisfactorily resolve complaints. A formal investigation will not usually be conducted if it appears that we can deal with your complaint in this way.

Contacting the Ombudsmen

Complaints free phone: 0800 802 602

Email: complaint@ombudsmen.govt.nz

Website: www.ombudsmen.govt.nz

Office enquiries: 8.30am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

AUCKLAND

Level 10, 55-65 Shortland Street

PO Box 1960

AUCKLAND

Phone: (09) 379 6102

Fax: (09) 377 6537

WELLINGTON

Level 14, 70 The Terrace

PO Box 10152

WELLINGTON

Phone: (04) 473 9533

Fax: (04) 471 2254

CHRISTCHURCH

Level 6, 764 Colombo Street

PO Box 13482

CHRISTCHURCH

Phone: (03) 366 8556

Fax: (03) 365 7935

This pamphlet is available in Maori, Samoan and Mandarin Chinese.

Other Ombudsmen pamphlets cover making complaints about central and local government agencies, prisons, requests for official information and the Protected Disclosures Act.

Making complaints about Tertiary Education

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMEN

Nga Kaitiaki Mana Tangata

Have you been treated unfairly by:

- ▶ a University?
- ▶ an Institute of Technology?
- ▶ a Polytechnic?
- ▶ a Wananga?
- ▶ a College of Education?

Contact the Ombudsmen who investigate complaints about tertiary education institutions which are government owned.

**FREE
IMPARTIAL
INDEPENDENT**

What can an Ombudsman do for you?

Ombudsmen investigate complaints about administrative acts and decisions of central and local government agencies, including publicly owned tertiary education institutions.

An Ombudsman:

- ▶ is an independent investigator
- ▶ has wide powers to investigate tertiary institutions and to call them to account for their actions
- ▶ will give your complaint careful and just consideration
- ▶ will decide whether the institution's acts or decisions were unreasonable, unfair or wrong
- ▶ will recommend a remedy where a complaint is found to be justified.

Some Ombudsmen staff specialise in complaints about tertiary education institutions and visit those institutions on a regular basis.

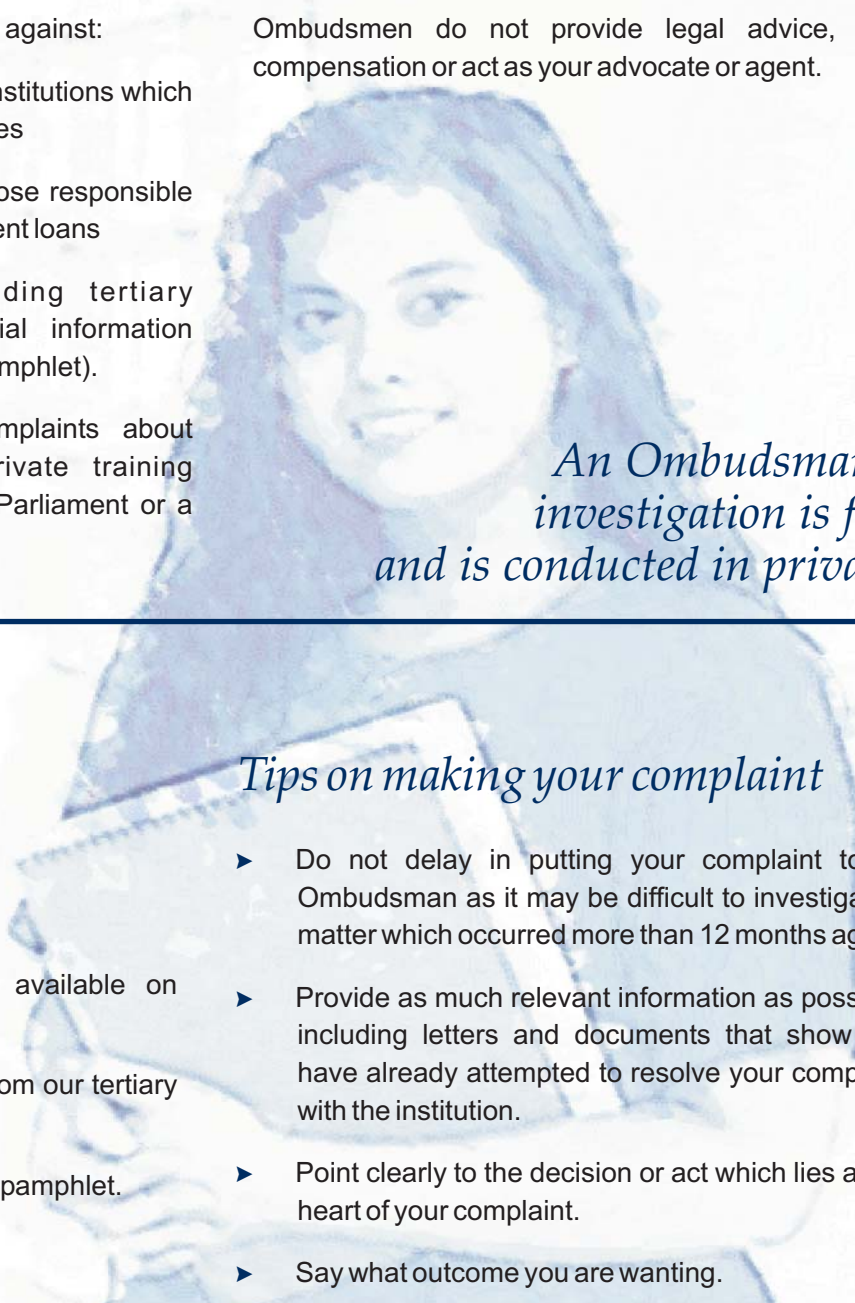
Ombudsmen **can** investigate complaints against:

- ▶ publicly owned tertiary education institutions which make decisions affecting your studies
- ▶ government agencies including those responsible for granting and administering student loans
- ▶ government agencies, including tertiary institutions, to which the official information legislation applies (see separate pamphlet).

Ombudsmen **cannot** investigate complaints about private individuals, companies, private training establishments, lawyers, Members of Parliament or a Court or Tribunal.

Ombudsmen **cannot** investigate complaints about the Police or Government Ministers (unless your complaint relates to a request for official information).

Ombudsmen do not provide legal advice, award compensation or act as your advocate or agent.



An Ombudsman's investigation is free and is conducted in private.

The complaints process

What should you do first?

Before you make a complaint to an Ombudsman, try to resolve it using the complaints processes of the tertiary institution. Information about these is in your student handbook or similar publication.

An Ombudsman may decide not to investigate unless you have attempted to do this.

How to make a complaint

You can make your complaint by:

- ▶ letter, fax or email
- ▶ using an online complaint form available on our website
- ▶ phoning the Office for assistance from our tertiary education investigating staff.

See the contact details on the back of this pamphlet.

Tips on making your complaint

- ▶ Do not delay in putting your complaint to an Ombudsman as it may be difficult to investigate a matter which occurred more than 12 months ago.
- ▶ Provide as much relevant information as possible, including letters and documents that show you have already attempted to resolve your complaint with the institution.
- ▶ Point clearly to the decision or act which lies at the heart of your complaint.
- ▶ Say what outcome you are wanting.