



## Standard Operating Procedure

**Procedure Title:** Student Complaints/Federal Compliance Assurance

**Procedure #:** AA.025

**Revision #:** 000

**Unit Responsible:** Student Affairs

**Individual Responsible:** Dean or Designee

**Effective Date:** 09/29/2023

**Initial Approval Date:** 09/29/2023

**Last Review/Update Date:** 09/29/2023

**Next Review Date:** 09/01/2026

**\*Does this procedure support a Board Policy? Yes**

**If yes, identify:** [3.180 – Student Complaints](#)

Board policies can be found on: [LCC Board of Trustees Policy Page](#)

**\*Does this procedure support HLC criteria? Yes**

**If yes, identify:** [2A; Assumed Practices A3 and A4](#)

HLC Criteria can be found at: [HLC Accreditation Criteria](#)

**\*Does this procedure support a State or Federal Regulation? Yes - Federal**

**If yes, identify:** [34 CFR §602.16\(a\)\(1\)\(ix\)](#)

**\*Note:** Standard Operating Procedures should be in furtherance of some LCC policy and/or accreditation criteria, even if the relationship is not direct. Assistance in determining this information can be obtained from the Academic Procedure Advisory Committee (APAC) and/or the Accreditation Liaison Officer.



## **Student Complaints/Federal Compliance Assurance; BP 3.180**

### **1. Purpose**

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To implement the Board policy on Student Complaints to meet Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Federal Compliance guidelines, to ensure that student complaints are addressed in a timely and consistent manner, and to provide for continuous quality improvement.

### **2. Scope**

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This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) covers procedures and practices related to “Question 2 – Institutional Records of Student Complaints” of the HLC Federal Compliance requirements. The SOP applies to those units of the College involved in receiving, resolving, and/or tracking student complaints.

### **3. Prerequisites**

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The current HLC Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions form and procedures became effective on September 1, 2020. Both the form and the procedures are subject to change, which may alter whether Question 2 is the relevant question as cited in this SOP.

More details on filing formal academic and non-academic complaints can be found in the Lansing Community College (LCC) [College Catalog](#).

### **4. Responsibilities**

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- Dean of Student Affairs – responsible for ensuring that student complaint procedures are included in the College catalog and on the College website and are readily accessible by students; and ensuring that proper personnel are assigned to receive and track complaints when those complaints are assigned to proper individuals for resolution.
- Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) – responsible for ensuring that the student complaint processes meet HLC’s Federal Compliance guidelines.

## **5. Procedure**

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Before submitting a formal complaint, students are encouraged to resolve their complaint informally. Students wishing assistance with this process should contact the LCC [Ombudsperson](#) in the Gannon Building, Room 2302, or an Enrollment Support Specialist in the StarZone.

Complaints or appeals may be academic or non-academic in nature and do not supersede or replace misconduct or grievance procedures already in place.

1. The student completes and submits the General Student Complaint Form located on the [LCC Student Appeals & Complaints](#) webpage or submits a paper copy to the StarZone.
2. The Student Affairs designee will log the complaint to include the student number, student name, date received, date the complaint was sent to the department/area of complaint, and complaint narrative.
3. The Student Affairs designee will direct the complaint to the designated contact of the area the complaint concerns.
4. The designee of the area the complaint concerns will email the student through their LCC email to confirm receipt and to direct the complaint to the responsible administrator.
5. The assigned administrator (or designee) will take whatever steps they decide proper to investigate and resolve the complaint. This may include but is not limited to meeting with the individuals involved and/or consulting with other College staff.
6. The administrator will communicate the decision to the student and the Student Affairs designee via LCC email within 15 business days of the date the complaint was submitted.
7. The Student Affairs designee will update the complaint log to include final decision reply/communication date and any actions recommended and/or taken because of the complaint.
8. If the resolution is not satisfactory to the student, the student may request an appeal in writing within 10 business days to the proper Executive Leader or designee.
9. After receipt of an appeal, the Executive Leader or designee may accept, reverse, or alter the resolution reached in Step 6.
10. The office of the Executive Leader or designee will communicate the decision via LCC email to the student and the Student Affairs designee within 10 business days. This is the final decision, and there shall be no further appeals.
11. The Student Affairs designee again will update the complaint log to include final decision reply/communication date and any actions recommended and/or taken because of the complaint.
12. At the end of each academic year, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee will provide the Provost and the Deans of each Division an audit of all general student complaints processed during that academic year, to include data on gender and ethnicity.

13. The Provost and the Deans of each Division will review the annual audit of general student complaints to ensure quality and equity, and to identify and address any areas for improvement.

## **6. Reference**

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[HLC Federal Compliance Program Website](#)

[LCC Student Appeals & Complaints Website](#)

## **7. Definitions**

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**Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)** – The individual identified by LCC to serve as a contact point with the Higher Learning Commission, in addition to the College’s President. The ALO is expected to be aware of HLC requirements and to guide the College’s efforts in relation to compliance.

**HLC Federal Compliance** – When LCC undergoes its 10-year Comprehensive Evaluation for Reaffirmation of Accreditation, the College must complete the HLC Federal Compliance Overview. This process confirms that LCC is complying with federal regulations pertaining to credits/program length, student complaint records, publication of transfer policies, practices for verifying student identity, protection of student privacy, publication of student outcome data, the College’s standing with other accrediting agencies, and practices related to recruiting/admissions.