

Media release – 29 November 2024

National Student Ombudsman Legislation has passed

Today, legislation was passed to establish the National Student Ombudsman (NSO).

The National Student Ombudsman will be a new complaints function within the Commonwealth Ombudsman and will commence operations from 1 February 2025.

The NSO will be independent, impartial and provide an effective, trauma-informed complaints mechanism for higher education students.

The types of matters students can complain to the NSO about include:

- student safety and welfare
- racism
- gender-based violence
- course administration
- disciplinary processes
- reasonable adjustments

The NSO is excited to engage with higher education students, and providers, to bring to bear a national perspective and experience of what is going on across our universities. In doing so, the NSO will work across the sector to share information and identify systemic issues.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman is excited to announce that Sarah Bendall will lead the National Student Ombudsman function.

OFFICIAL

Ms Bendall has extensive expertise in complaints management, investigations and dispute resolution from a variety of agencies and departments. Her leadership will be invaluable to the important work that the NSO will undertake.

Statement attributable to Iain Anderson, Commonwealth Ombudsman

'I am pleased to welcome Sarah Bendall to lead the new National Student Ombudsman function within the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman. Ms Bendall has extensive expertise in complaints management, investigations and dispute resolution. She will provide invaluable leadership to the important work of the NSO.'

Statement attributable to Sarah Bendall, First Assistant Ombudsman, National Student Ombudsman

'The NSO will provide an avenue for students to escalate complaints about their education provider. We will be independent, impartial and provide trauma informed complaints mechanisms.'

For more information visit ombudsman.gov.au or for media enquiries email media@ombudsman.gov.au