

Complaint Process

Guideline for handling complaints.

All minor complaints and disputes should be resolved as promptly as possible. In matters assessed as less serious an informal resolution should be attempted first, whenever possible.

Complaints must be reported via the Complaint form, located on the bottom of the www.montcalm.edu main page, or to the Dean of Student and Enrollment Services (DSES) via email, unless the complaint is less serious and is resolved informally. Students, Employees, Partners, Stakeholders and all community members may utilize this avenue to register a complaint. The matrix following this overview describes the path of each type of complaint.

A matter is considered less serious if it involves a minor breach or complaint and is not seen to be part of a pattern of conduct that would lead to disciplinary/ remedial action or a major change in existing processes. An example of this type of complaint is money lost in a vending machine. This is a mechanical issue that can be resolved with a refund and a call to the vending company.

If assistance is needed in deciding whether or not a complaint is 'serious', refer to the Complaint Matrix or seek advice from a supervisor, Director of HR or the DSES. If in doubt, report the complaint via the Complaint/Suggestion form, located on the bottom of the www.montcalm.edu main page, or to the DSES via email.

A person making a complaint will have expectations as to how their complaint should be handled and may require assistance in making the complaint. To manage complainant expectations:

- explain the complaint handling process to the complainant or tell them where to get information about it;
- if the matter is to be referred, explain why and to whom;
- confirm with the complainant that their complaint is fully understood and ask what outcome they are seeking;
- outline the possible outcomes, including whether or not the outcome they are seeking is reasonable;
- provide realistic timeframes for dealing with the matter;
- ensure that any promises made are followed through.

All parties to a complaint are expected to treat the matter confidentially, unless addressing the complaint effectively requires otherwise. Confidentiality requires that everyone, including the complainant, ensures that information is restricted to those who genuinely need to know. Furthermore, involved parties only be told as much as they need to know for effective resolution.

Steps in the complaint procedure

- 1 – Complaint is received via complaint form (or other avenue) by the Dean of Student & Enrollment Services (DSES) with Vice President of Administrative Services participating as back-up in DSES absence.
- 2 – DSES records complaint in the complaint log and makes calendar entry for follow up regarding the complaint.
- 3 – DSES considers the complaint and determines whether or not a coordinated approach is needed.
- 4 – DSES checks for previous action re the complaint.
- 5 – DSES commences investigation or refers complaint to head of division about which the complaint was made for investigation.
- 6 – DSES follow up until resolution has taken place.
- 7 – Resolution is recorded in complaint log.

Possible outcomes

- providing explanation and reasons if not previously provided
- dismissing the complaint, e.g. if the decision accords with workplace policy or procedure
- concluding that the complaint has been substantially resolved
- reaching a compromise solution
- upholding the complaint and implementing specific action such as overturning a decision, giving an apology or providing a service not previously provided
- addressing or referring the issue for system improvement.

Systems Improvement

Systems improvement is the process of improving a system to prevent future problems. If complaints are recognized as being the result of an issue with a process, then the process in question will be reviewed by the department responsible for the process and/or the Quality Counsel.

Steps in the Systems Improvement Procedure

This procedure applies whether or not the complaint is anonymous. The extent of record keeping can vary according to circumstance. The optional Complaint Form can be used to record details and the Complaint Action Form to record action taken.

Step 1 –Assess if remedy and/or systems improvement is warranted

Step 2 –Immediate remedy

Step 3 –Refer matter to the department responsible for the process

Step 4 –Refer matter to Quality Council

Systems improvement may involve one or more of:

- referral for consideration of policy or procedure change
- policy development or revision
- process improvement (i.e. changes to procedures and workplace practices)
- program review
- expert assistance, staff development or performance improvement
- improved implementation (e.g. issuing updated documentation or reminders)
- monitoring compliance
- other action to ensure that the matter is handled appropriately in future.

Timeframe

Complainants utilizing the online complaint form will receive immediate notification of receipt of complaint. Other avenues of complaints will receive notification either immediately (if face-to-face complaint is made) or within in 48 business hours. The delegate should aim for resolution of the suggestion or complaint within a month of receipt if the above timeframes cannot be met. If the recommend resolution is not satisfactory to the complainant, they may appeal. Students may appeal the decision using the appeal process outlined in the catalog. Employees may appeal decisions using the process outlined in their contracts.

Analysis of process and resolutions

Throughout the year, the DSES will bring to the attention of ET any anomalies or serious concerns that need to be addressed at a level beyond the complaint resolution process.

At the end of each fiscal year data from the complaint log will be reviewed by the DSES, who will summarize complaint types and resolutions, and look for patterns and issues. Recommendations will be shared with QC at the August QC meeting, along with the data. All changes resulting from data analysis will be captured in a year-end summary.

Map of Complaint Process overview

Complaint received



Complaint logged



Complaint forward-
ed on to relevant
parties as outlined
in specific complaint
maps.

Complainant con-
tacted for more
information or/and
to notify that com-
plaint was received .

Within 2 business days

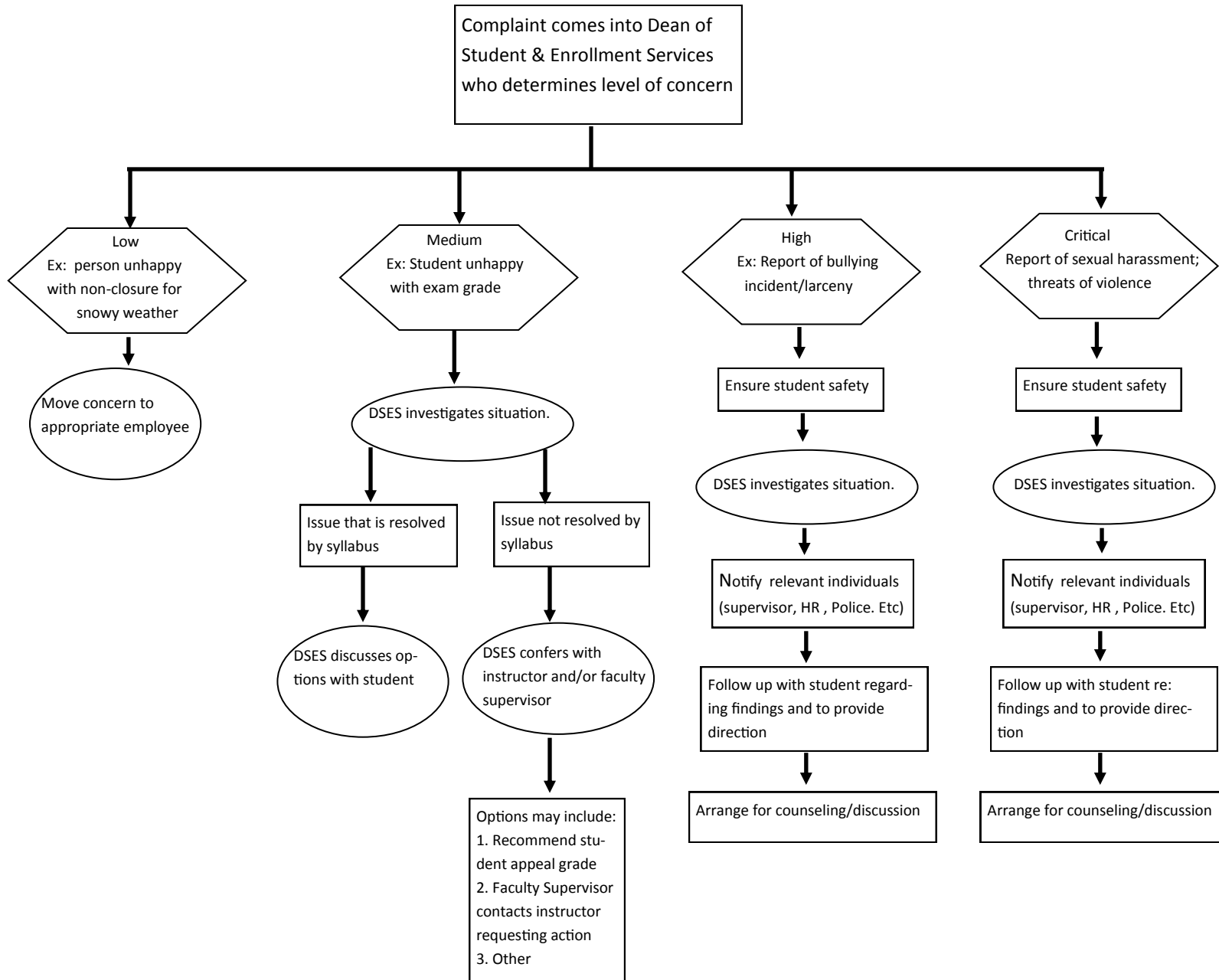


Complaint follow up
until resolution can
be recorded.

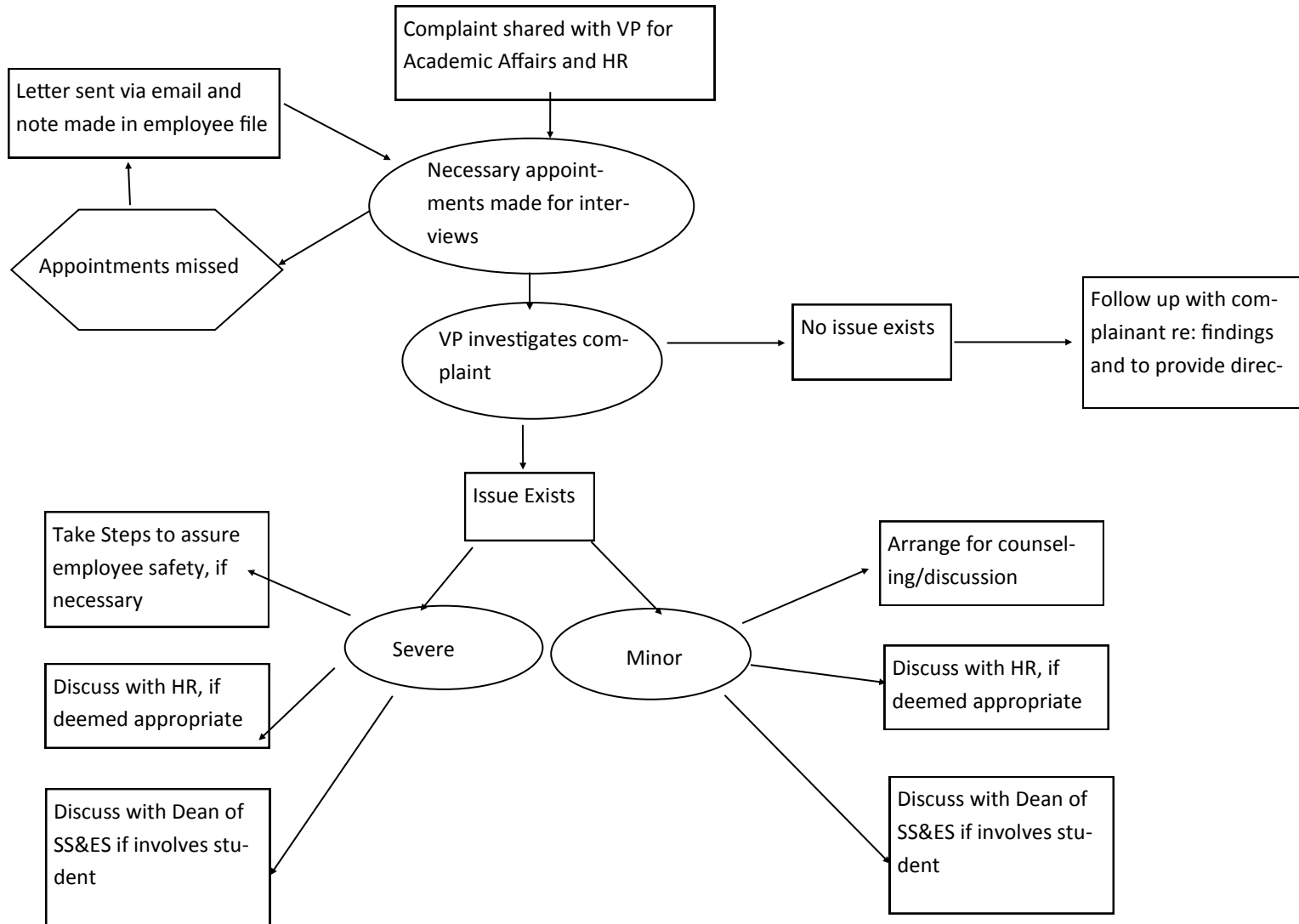
Weekly until resolved

Complaint about student, by another student or by an employee

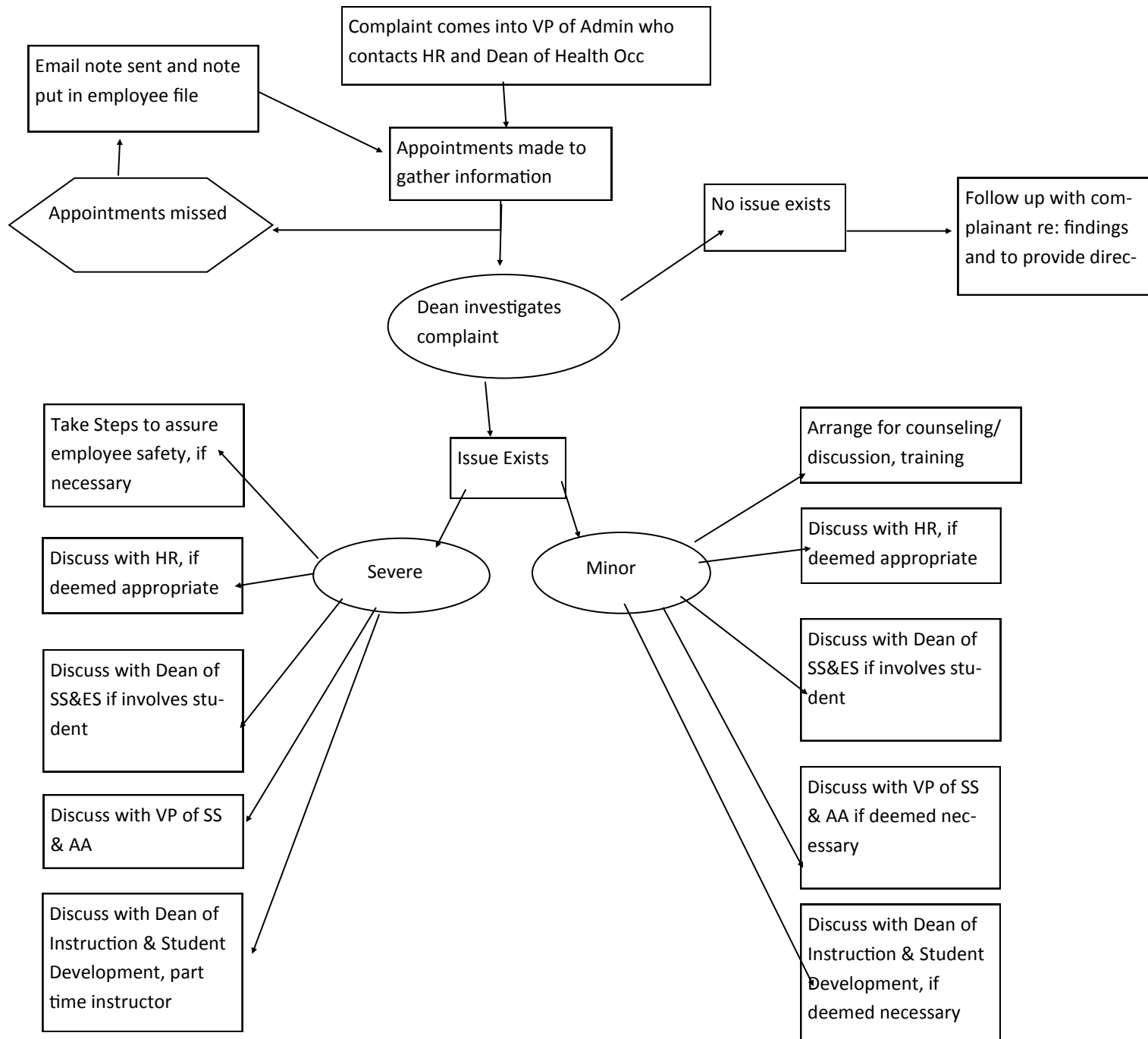
Complaint about employee by student



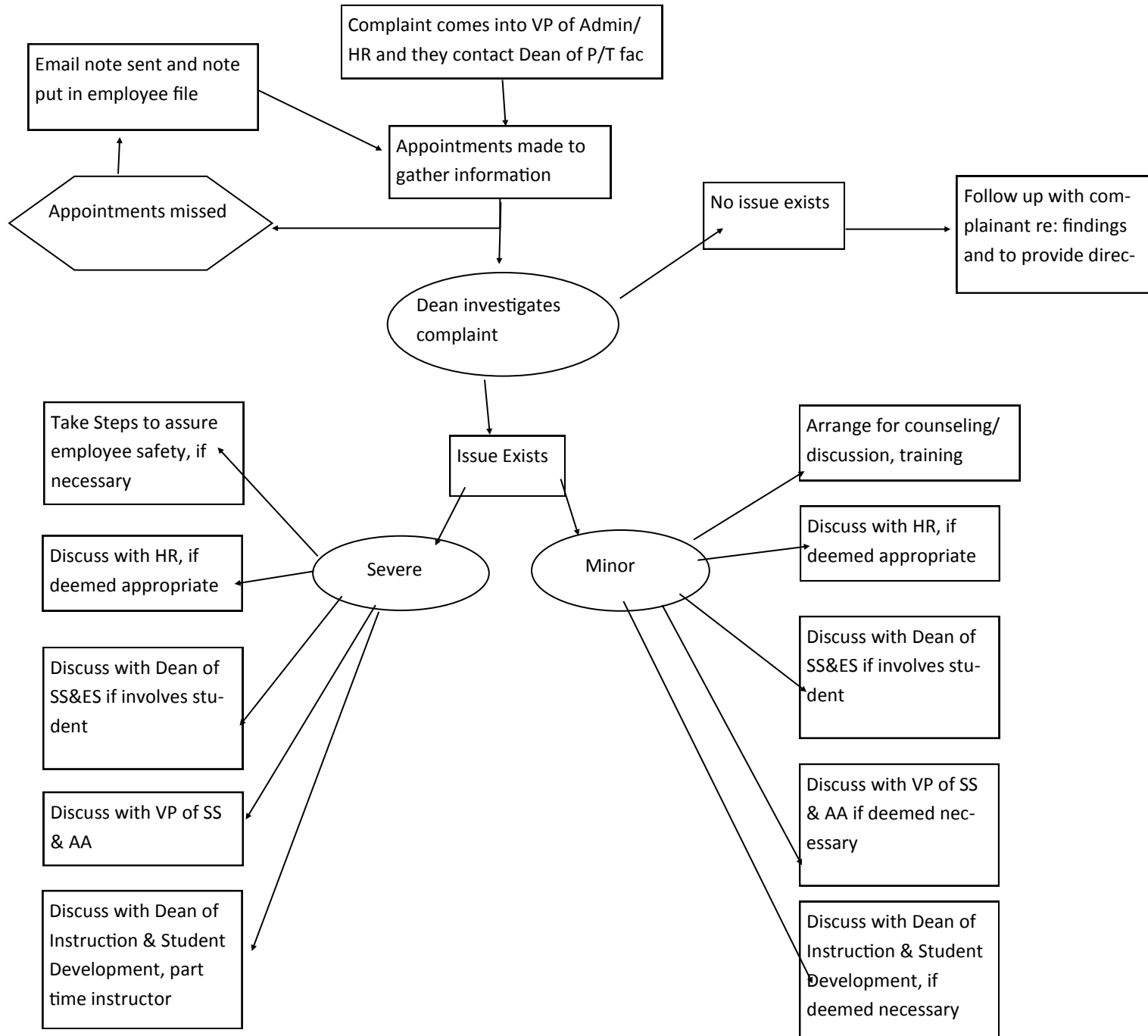
Complaint about F/T non-Health Occ. instructor by another instructor



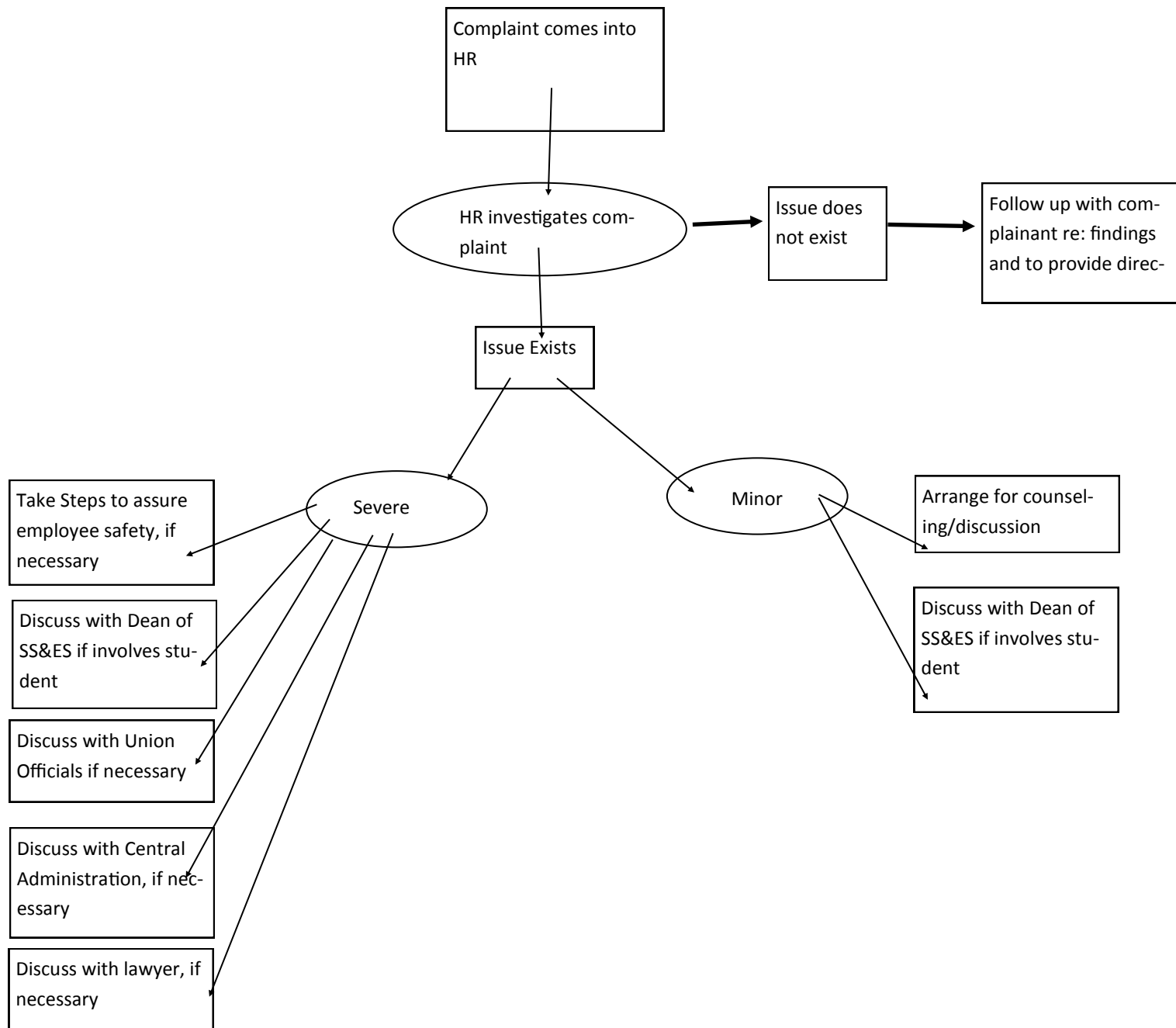
Complaint about F/T health occ instructor by another instructor



Complaint about P/T non-health occ instructor by another instructor



Complaint about employee (non-faculty) by another employee



Complaint from community member

