

STUDENT GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS

Policy

DEFINITIONS

Terms in this document, for which definitions are not provided in the text or may not be self-evident or for which usage at ACC may differ to that in other higher education institutions are as follows:

Appeal: A formal communication of objection to an academic outcome or decision.

Grievance: Informal (usually verbal) or formal (usually in writing) communication of dissatisfaction with an academic or other student matter which is not an Appeal (as defined above).

Independent External Review or Appeal: Avenues of Appeal that are external to, and independent of the College.

Internal Processes: Refers to those processes (in this instance Appeal processes) conducted by the ACC staff and/or the Student Academic Appeals Committee and, where relevant the Academic Board.

Natural Justice – Natural justice refers to a due process that displays fairness to all parties. It includes the right to be heard, the right of reply, the right to be treated fairly and the right to be informed of allegation(s) being made.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to document ACC's approach to the handling of student grievances and appeals. This Policy also outlines the informal and formal sections of the process and the escalation of grievances and appeals through internal processes and to independent external review.

Student grievances and appeals include all manner of student issues including appeals under the *Assessment of Coursework Policy and Procedures*, *Grades and Results Policy and Procedures*, *Academic Progress Policies and Procedures* and *Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures*, *Attendance Policy and Procedures* and any other matter of student dissatisfaction.

The associated *Student Grievance and Appeals Procedures* provide clear disclosure of the appropriate processes that are to take place to ensure that all students are treated in a fair equitable and confidential manner.

SCOPE

This policy and related procedures apply to all students (domestic and international), both already enrolled and who have applied for admission to studies at the ACC, who may have a grievance or wish to pursue an academic appeal.

They also apply to staff of the College, including local and international agents engaged by the ACC to provide recruitment and admission services.

POLICY

ACC is committed to the following principles in the management of grievances and appeals:

- Procedural Fairness and objectivity
- Natural justice
- Transparency
- Confidentiality
- Timeliness
- Without prejudice.

The management of all student grievances and appeals is at no cost to the student.

Students are able to have an advocate/support person with them at any meetings or hearings in relation to a grievance or appeal. An advocate/support person is nominated by the student to provide support and/or representation.

Students are able to raise a complaint with the National Student Ombudsman (NSO) at www.nso.gov.au at any time. The National Student Ombudsman works with students and higher education providers to resolve student complaints. The NSO is a free and independent service available to former, current, and prospective higher education students, including both domestic and international.

Students are able to independently engage professional advice in relation to grievances and appeals. Any independent professional engaged by the student to provide advice to the individual students is at the students own cost.

Outlined below are the Academic and Non-Academic student grievance and appeals processes:

Non-Academic

- Informal consideration
- Formal consideration
 - Stage 1 – Appeal to Marketing and Student Engagement Manager. If the grievance or appeal involves the Marketing and Student Engagement Manager, the Stage 1 appeal can be made to the Academic Operations Manager
 - Stage 2 – Appeal to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). If the grievance or appeal involves the CEO, the Stage 2 appeal can be made to the President
 - Stage 3 – Independent External Review or Appeal to the National Student Ombudsman

Academic

- Informal consideration
- Formal consideration
 - Stage 1 – Appeal to the Academic Dean.
 - Stage 2 – Appeal to the Student Academic Appeals Committee (SAAC).
 - Stage 3 – Independent External Review or Appeal to the National Student Ombudsman.

To maintain full accountability, fairness and academic transparency, the ACC has established a Student Academic Appeals Committee (SAAC) of the Academic Board. This Committee is available as the second stage of formal escalation of an academic grievance or appeal. A full outline of the SAAC functions, responsibilities and membership can be found within the Student Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference within the ACC *Governance Framework*.

IMPLEMENTATION and MONITORING

The implementation of this Policy is the responsibility of the CEO.

REVIEW

The ACC's *Student Grievance Appeals Policy* is normally reviewed every three years.

It is a policy of the ACC that any Policy or Procedure may be reviewed earlier as indicated by internal or external factors (including but not limited to such factors as changes in the guidelines of regulatory authorities, accreditation/registration requirements of the profession, or relevant legislation at state or federal level) as determined the Board of Directors and/or Academic Board.

RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS

- Student Grievance and Appeals Procedures
- Governance Framework
- Recruitment and Admissions Policies and Procedures
- Academic Progress Policy and Procedures
- Student Support Policy and Procedures
- Assessment of Coursework Policy and Procedures
- Grades and Results Policy and Procedures
- Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures: Students
- Attendance Policy and Procedures.

VERSION CONTROL

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| Document: T005 Student Grievance and Appeals Policy | | |
| Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer | | |
| Initially reviewed by: Academic Board/ Finance, Audit and Risk Committee | | Date: February/March 2023 |
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| Reviewed and approved by: Board of Directors | | Date: 27 May 2025 |
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| HESF | 2.4 Student Grievances and Complaints 7.3 Information Management | 2.4 7.3.3c |
| Nature of Change | Initial policy combining academic and non-academic grievances and appeals. May 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of stage of appeal for Academic and Non-Academic Grievances • Inclusion of information in relation to the National Student Ombudsman | |