

Definitions

For the purposes of this set of policies and procedures, the term **Grievance** may refer to **Academic Appeals** or non-academic **Complaints** in accordance with the Standards for NVR RTOs (SNR). This policy is in accordance with Schedule 1A to the HESA (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00003>); the VET Guideline (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L02124>); the VSL Act (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016A00098>) and the VSL Rules (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2016L02030>)

Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff and clients of Unity College Australia (UCA) including:

- those who are, or are seeking to be, enrolled with UCA
- those who are, or would be, eligible for VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans
- those who are not eligible for VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans

UCA is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling procedure for all students and staff related to both academic and non-academic matters.

Complainants are entitled to access this grievance procedure regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the complainant's place of residence or mode of study.

Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course of study.

Non-academic matters include complaints in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the student or staff member, enrolment, acceptance, employment, support for staff or students, and any other matters that arise. Non-academic grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a campus or from decisions made by the provider.

Responsibility

The Dean / Principal will be responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation.

This policy, is given to staff at time of engagement and students at the time of enrolment, and outlines UCAs procedures for the resolution of grievances, complaints and academic appeals.

Informal Grievance Procedure

Any issues or concerns related to academic and non-academic matters, which are unable to be resolved firstly with the trainer/supervisor (where relevant), may be raised with the Dean or Principal (preferably verbally in the first instance) who will endeavour to resolve them informally in a timely manner. If the issue is unable to be resolved informally, the **Formal Grievance** procedure must be followed.

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This *Informal Grievance* procedure is not mandatory for non-academic grievances and complainants may access the *Formal Grievance* procedure at any time.

Academic Grievances/Appeals either informal or formal should include:

- particulars of the assessment that is appealed against
- details of who made the assessment and the date it was returned to the client
- a copy of the Resubmission and Re-Marking application and the outcome/s (where relevant)

Formal Grievance Procedure

General principles applying to all stages of this grievance procedure which will be adhered to by Unity College Australia are:

- The complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case in person at each stage of the procedure
- The complainant and the respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire
- The complainant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. This will be a fair summary of the evidence provided and/or gathered and will show the manner in which the enquiry was conducted. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the complainant and/or the respondent if requested
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored in the office of the Dean/ Principal/ Director
- A complainant shall have access to the UCA grievance procedure at no cost, however where they choose to access an external mediator (Stage Three) UCA has no control over costs.

Stage One

Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to the Dean.

The Dean of UCA will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the complainant in writing of their decision within ten working days.

The complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

Stage Two

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the Principal.

The complainant's appeal will be determined by a Reviewer, not previously involved in the grievance procedure, who will be appointed by the Principal. The Reviewer will be an independent and impartial senior officer of UCA.

The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The complainant will be advised in

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writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision, within 10 working days of the submission of the appeal.

The complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

Stage Three

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may request that the matter be referred to an external dispute resolution process by an agency independent of UCA.

UCA are members of LEADR - Association of Dispute Resolvers (for Domestic and International students) who can be engaged to offer the complainant referral to a suitable mediator to facilitate resolution of the dispute. Complainants should be aware that there are costs associated with the use of this service. Current indicative costs are available upon request from UCA.

Contact details:

LEADR

Level 1, 13-15 Bridge Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: 1800 651 650

www.leadr.com.au

Unity College Australia will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external mediator within ten working days.

International students

International students will have their enrolment retained on PRISMs for the duration of the complaints process unless enrolment would have ceased for a reason unrelated to the complaint. International students are also entitled to access the Overseas Students Ombudsman (www.oso.gov.au) should they wish to take any matter further.

Publication

This *Grievance Policy & Procedure* is also noted in the following Unity College Australia documents:

- Handbook (publically available at www.unity.edu.au)
- Staff Handbook
- Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Record
- RPL Policy & Procedure
- Expectations Statement For Trainers and Other Staff
- Refunds Policy and Procedure

The original *Grievance Policy and Procedure* was originally agreed to and ratified by the Unity College Board on 9 May 2013 and updated April 2017.

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