

Student Grievance and Review Policy and Procedures (Non-Academic Matters)



Policy Preamble

The essential standards for registration under the Australian Quality Training Framework require the Australian College of Sport [ACS] to address complaints and appeals efficiently and effectively. For the purpose of this document, the term 'complainant' applies to both students and 'persons seeking or exploring to enrol' that are, or would be, entitled to FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.

In addition to these requirements or any other responsibilities which may arise under the Australian Quality Training Framework, or under statute or any other law, ACS meets the requirements relating to the grievance and review procedures for complainants seeking entitlement to FEE-HELP assistance.

Policy Statements

This policy describes how ACS recognises the rights of complainants and fosters and develops an atmosphere conducive to the early resolution of grievances in a prompt, fair and equitable manner and does not victimise or discriminate against the complainant or respondent. Additionally, these policy statements include a set of procedures noted Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Three for investigations of such complaints.

Complainants may raise a grievance if they feel they have been unfairly treated by management, lecturers or students enrolled in ACS courses and they wish some action to be taken to remedy the situation.

This policy applies to all persons enrolled with, or seeking or exploring enrolment with ACS for the delivery of education, training and assessment services, including persons who are, or would be, entitled to FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act. The associated procedure describes the process by which complainants may have grievances of a non-academic nature addressed effectively, efficiently, professionally and confidentially.

Non-Academic grievances include matters that do not relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course. However, these provisions do extend to complaints about breaches of personal information by ACS (including its officers, employees and those who perform services by or on behalf of ACS) relating to information obtained by ACS for the purposes of FEE-HELP assistance and repayment of HELP loans.

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Procedure Preamble

All complainants are entitled to access the grievance procedures as set out, regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the complainant's place of residence or mode in which they study. The associated policy and procedures are published and made publicly available. For grievances specifically related to re-crediting a FEE-HELP balance, please refer to ACS's policies for Withdrawal and Refund Policy (FEE-HELP) and Special Circumstances.

This policy and its application are communicated to ACS staff (including its officers, employees and those who perform services by or on behalf of ACS) via training. Learning outcomes from this training are reviewed with each of these employee groups on a periodic basis to ensure compliance is always maintained.

Students or people seeking to enrol in an accredited education course with ACS have three stages at which a grievance may be addressed. Each stage is levied at no fee by ACS or LEADR, ACS's appointed independent review body.

A complainant may, at any stage, be accompanied and assisted by a third party (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person). All of the stages in ACS's grievance procedures will not victimise or discriminate against any of the parties involved.

ACS procedures ensure that grievances are handled in a timely fashion and with professionalism. At all stages of the process, reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken are noted. These are given to the complainant and/or respondent.

Records of grievances and their outcomes will be kept strictly confidential and filed in a separate file (not kept on the student or staff file) and stored at ACS for a period of no less than five [5] years. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records upon request.

ACS's Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the control and issue of this procedure, to ensure that grievance procedures are complete and unambiguous.

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Complaints Procedure

Stage One (Formal Grievance)

At Stage One, the student may address grievances relating to student progress, assessment and curriculum directly with ACS's General Manager, prior to the end of a student's enrolment. Grievances pertaining to unit results and statement of attainment must be lodged within 14 days from the date of issue. All grievances must be lodged in writing using the Student Grievance Form. To request a Student Grievance Form please email admin@collegeofsport.edu.au. A file is established by the General Manager, where all correspondence and evidence is kept in ACS's control. This review component of the procedure requires the General Manager to fully investigate the complaint, seeking supporting evidence from interview or in writing from all parties relevant to this stage of the complaint. The evidence will be reviewed by the General Manager and further clarification via a request for further information from relevant parties may be sought. This may be in writing, or verbally. All evidence and review comments are noted by the General Manager on file, as part of the review of evidence. The review and subsequent decision of the General Manager based on all evidence provided will be forwarded in writing to the complainant; with details of the options available to the complainant, should they be unsatisfied with the decision that has been made. The complaint will be reviewed by the General Manager within a reasonable time frame, but no later than 14 days after lodgement of the complaint. It follows that the option for further action by the complainant comprises Stage Two of this procedure.

Stage Two (Internal Appeal)

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the response to the grievance received upon completion of Stage One, complainants have recourse to Stage Two procedures.

Complainants can lodge in writing a "Request to Review" letter [addressed to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ACS]. The CEO will consider the complaint and if necessary will contact the student by phone and conduct interviews with appropriate staff to clarify the CEO's understanding of the complaint. The complaint will be dealt with within a reasonable time frame, and normally within 14 days of the CEO's receipt of the Request to Review letter. The CEO will inform the student in writing of the decision, and include details of what recourse the student has available, should the student still be unsatisfied with the outcome. It follows that the option for further action by the complainant comprises Stage Three of this procedure.

Stage Three (External Appeal)

If not satisfied with the decision made by the Chief Executive Officer; students can be referred to our external review body LEADR (www.leadr.info). Please note that external appeal is not an available option for students who's grievance is not lodged within 30 days post their cessation of enrolment, or who have been issued their qualification.