

Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals

Procedure

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Procedure owner:	Manager Quality Assurance and Risk
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Related policies and documents:	Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy Student Code of Conduct Privacy Policy

Purpose

To ensure that all William Angliss Institute (WAI) students have access to a complaints and grievances process that ensures:

- Complaints and grievances are resolved quickly in a conciliatory manner.
- Confidentiality is maintained.
- Both the complainant (the person making the complaint) and the respondent (the person against whom the complaint is made) are protected.
- There is no recurrence of any inappropriate behaviour or any unfair treatment, act or process that may have occurred.
- That the process is not used for frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- That there are no reprisals for those registering a complaint.
- That a safe, healthy and non-discriminatory learning environment is maintained and that the WAI complies with legislative requirements.

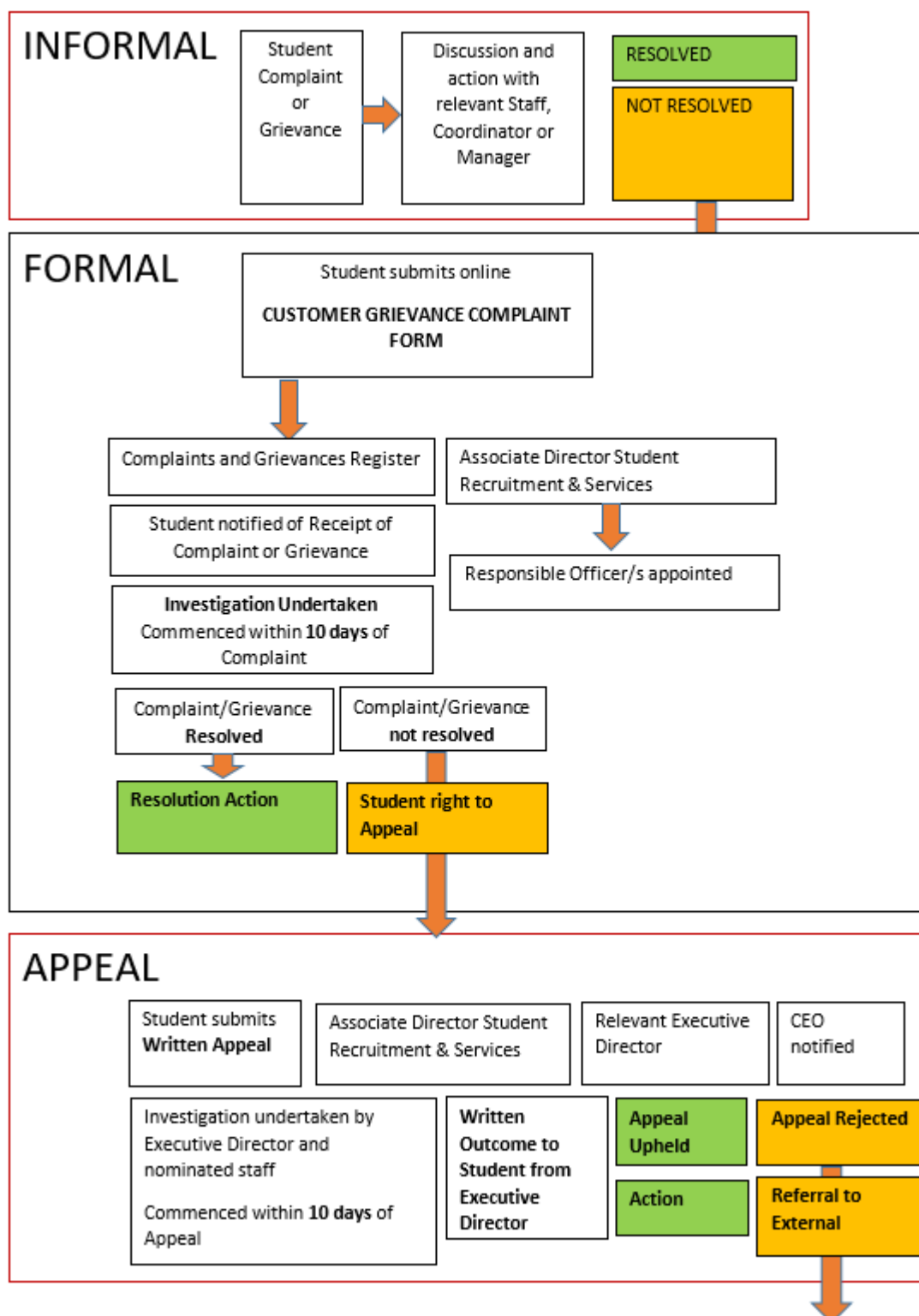
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- WAI will respond to any complaint, grievance or appeal a student may make regarding their dealings with WAI or any third party that WAI has an arrangement with for the delivery of services. For international students, third parties may include WAI's approved education representatives (agents).
- All complaints or grievances, including bullying, racial and religious vilification, sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination made by students are viewed with the utmost seriousness and treated confidentially.
- To ensure confidentiality the complaint or grievance must be handled by as few people as possible. Employees should advise the complainant and respondent not to discuss the complaint with others and that there is to be no victimisation of the other party/parties.
- The complainant(s) maintains the right to determine the initial avenue for advice and complaint. It is in the best interest of all parties that such complaints are resolved justly and promptly. It is the intention of WAI that no one will suffer reprisal for submitting a complaint, grievance or appeal. The complainant(s) and respondent(s) are to be informed of WAI's policy and procedure and offered the

option of having a support person present, or accessing counselling prior to the commencement of, and during, WAI's investigation of the complaint.

- Complaints and grievances may be informal or formal. The difference between the two is that an informal complaint is unwritten and often unofficial and a formal complaint is in writing.
- A complaint is resolved if the respondent undertakes to cease the behaviour, or if the complainant requests that no further action will be taken.
- All grievance documentation is to be accessible electronically on the student portal.

Complaints and Appeals Process Flowchart



Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct

- In the event that a complaint is of a sexual nature, either by an employee or student/s, it is the right of WAI to notify the relevant authorities including Victoria police or NSW police.
- The WAI Senior Counsellor is assigned to the complainant as a support person. The complainant can engage with other support persons at any stage of the process.
- WAI will endeavour to ensure strict confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process.

Resolving a Grievance

WAI has a staged framework for the management of student grievances. These stages include informal, formal and appeal, however complainants may choose to go direct to the formal stage if they prefer.

No.	Task	Responsibility	Notes
Step 1	Informal Grievance Process		
1.1	<p>Where the complaint is made directly to an employee. Every effort should be made by that employee and student/s to resolve the matter within a reasonable time frame to be discussed with the complainant(s).</p> <p>If the complaint is assessment based then during the informal process, the employee may take such action deemed appropriate to resolve the matter. This may include but shall not necessarily require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing attendance (where required) and submission records. • Checking the marks for work submitted. • Discussing the marking criteria with the complainant. <p>Allowing the complainant to submit or resubmit documentation or a section of an assignment where the employee is of the opinion that the student has valid grounds for misinterpreting what was required, and this misinterpretation has led to a lower mark than may have been expected. In the case of a dissatisfied assessment result students have up to (10) ten working days to initiate an informal review of an assessment result from that the date on which the assessment work is made available for collection.</p>	Student(s) / Employee	<p>It is expected that many concerns will be resolved at this point.</p> <p>WAI student counsellors can give students support and advice.</p>

No.	Task	Responsibility	Notes
Step 2	Formal Process		
2.1	The complainant(s) submits the Student Complaint Form via the WAI website www.angliss.edu.au/current-students/administration-essentials/policies/complaints-appeals/	Student(s)	
2.2	<p>The Grievance/ Complaint is automatically forwarded to the Manager Quality Assurance and Risk</p> <p>An automated response is sent to the student acknowledging receipt of the complaint.</p> <p>The Manager Quality Assurance and Risk will allocate a Nominated Officer and advise the complainant.</p> <p>The Nominated Officer responds to the requests for resolution of a grievance formally and will investigate the complaint further within a reasonable time frame to be discussed with the complainant(s).</p> <p>If the Nominated Officer has already been involved in the process, or has a conflict of interest, an alternate employee will be appointed to investigate the formal grievance.</p> <p>The Nominated Officer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Grievance/Complaints form and the outcomes of the informal resolution process (if relevant). Inform, in confidence, the respondent(s) of the nature of the complaint made and clarify any explanation given. Provide feedback to the complainant(s) of the respondent's explanation. Meet with all parties concerned (with a support person if desired) and/or may require that either or both parties or witnesses provide written comments. A record of the discussion and agreed actions will be captured by the Nominated Officer and shared with the complainant for accuracy. Seek additional information from appropriate parties concerning the subject of the grievance (which may include an independent review of an assessment). Provide information, where relevant, to the parties about what may constitute bullying, racial vilification, sexual harassment etc. and their right to refer matters to the authorities identified under any relevant legislation. If the item remains unresolved the complainant / appellant is kept informed and is given a written response detailing the reasons why their complaint may take over 60 days to resolve. 	<p>Manager Quality Assurance and Risk</p> <p>Nominated Officer</p>	<p>It is the duty of the Nominated Officer to keep accurate records of the complaint or grievance so as a detailed report can be provided to all parties as required.</p> <p>It is the duty of the Nominated Officer to notify the complainant of the receipt of their complaint within 10 days of it being submitted and also the outcome of their submissions.</p> <p>It is the duty the Nominated Officer to ensure that the relevant information is saved on the Complaints Register for quality and auditing purposes.</p>

No.	Task	Responsibility	Notes
2.3	<p>The Nominated Officer will inform the complainant of the outcome of the investigation in writing.</p> <p>In the event that the outcome of the investigation is not in favour of the complainant, they must be informed in writing of their right to appeal.</p> <p>A written report of the reasons and a full explanation of the decisions and actions taken arising from this stage of the grievance resolution process will be made available to the complainant(s) or the respondent(s) upon request.</p>	Nominated Officer	
2.4	<p>If the matter is unresolved in the agreed upon time frame, or the student(s) is unsatisfied with the outcome, the student(s) may again access the WAI Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure and Student Complaint Form and make an Appeal.</p>	Student(s)	
Step 3	Appeal		
3.1	<p>If the parties are still not satisfied that the grievance has been resolved, then they may write to the Nominated Officer within ten (10) days of the formal grievance resolution decision.</p>	Student(s)	
3.2	<p>The Nominated Officer is required to advise the relevant Executive Director that a formal complaint has been received.</p> <p>The relevant Executive Director will then investigate the appeal.</p> <p>The relevant Executive Director may nominate employees to assist in the investigation and will liaise with the International Office with issues relating to international students.</p> <p>The relevant Executive Director will inform the CEO of the Appeal and notify them of progress and outcomes.</p>	Nominated Officer/CEO/Director/	The Appeals process must commence within 10 days of the submission of an Appeal
3.3	<p>The relevant Executive Director and nominated employee shall conduct an inquiry and have access to all relevant information.</p> <p>The complainant(s) and respondent(s) shall be entitled to present written or verbal evidence.</p> <p>The complainant(s) and respondent(s) shall have the right to be accompanied by a support person during this process.</p> <p>The outcome of an appeal will be communicated in writing by the relevant Executive Director. The Appellant will be informed of the appellant's rights to seeking external investigation.</p>		

No.	Task	Responsibility	Notes
3.4	If the formal internal or external Grievance /Complaints or Appeals process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the student, WAI will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventative or corrective action required by the decision. The student will be notified in writing of the actions taken.	Nominated Officer/Executive Director/ relevant employee Student(s)	
3.5	If the complainant(s) feels the grievance remains unresolved after the internal appeal process, WAI will assist in referral of the student to an external agency such as the Ombudsman, Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, or Consumer Affairs Victoria. The Student will be notified of this option in writing.	Nominated Officer	

Record Keeping and other duties

All outcomes, decisions and dealings associated with a grievance / complaint under this procedure, and any appeals arising there from, are confidential and are to be managed in accordance with WAI's policy on confidentiality of student records.

Confidentiality will be strictly observed throughout the grievance /complaint process.

Records are to be dated, signed and stored for a period of at least five years.

A de-identified summary of grievances / complaints is saved by the Nominated Officer on the Complaints Register within 10 days of the complaint being resolved or appealed.

The Manager Quality and Compliance is responsible for providing the Executive Group with regular reports as per the reporting schedule regarding complaints and grievances so as to ensure that WAI has a focus on continuous improvement.

Other Information

For the purpose of ensuring effective implementation of the Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure, this procedure will be included in employee inductions and will be published electronically in WAI's Policy and Procedure folder.

Reference to the Policy and Procedure will be included in Student Orientation documents.

Links to the Policy and Procedure will be available on the WAI Website and the Student portal, MyWAI and included in the Student Code of Conduct.