

Grievance

Policy and Procedure

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Australasian College of Health and Wellness (ACHW) aims to provide a fair, equitable and productive learning environment for all its learners. This policy seeks to support the achievement of this goal by providing a transparent and consistent process for resolving academic and non- academic complaints.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all campuses and all student, staff and any other stakeholders of ACHW.

SECTION 2 – POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PRINCIPLES

ACHW welcomes all forms of feedback and students, staff and any other stakeholders are openly invited to offer feedback on any matter at any time. In the interests of providing high quality services the following principles apply:

- ï grievance and review procedures will be readily available to ensure that all stakeholders understand their rights and responsibilities;
- ï ACHW will respond to any grievance or appeal raised by students, staff and any other stakeholders, quickly and objectively in order to reach satisfactory outcomes for all parties;
- ï where students raise an issue, concern or grievance, an appropriate staff member will respond to the matter immediately;
- ï the ACHW Grievance Procedure will be followed when a grievance or appeal is being raised by any ACHW stakeholder;
- ï in the event that a grievance or appeal cannot be resolved informally, the aggrieved party will be encouraged to formally advise the Head of School of their issues and expected outcomes utilising the ACHW Grievance Form;
- ï in the event that a grievance or appeal cannot be resolved by ACHW, the aggrieved party will be encouraged to seek assistance from the relevant external agencies as outlined in the Grievance Procedure;
- ï parties to the grievance resolution process will not be disadvantaged as a result of lodging the grievance, investigation of the grievance or responding to the grievance; and
- ï at all times, ACHW will respect the rights of all students to use any avenue available to them to address their grievance and/or appeal

The Grievance Policy and Procedure is communicated:

- ï to academic and support staff via the Facilitator Handbook; and
- ï to students via the Unit Guide and the ACHW website

OVERVIEW

All stakeholders are entitled to access an efficient mechanism to raise and settle grievances. ACHW is committed to identifying and responding to any issue or grievance considering any aspect of its business operations. ACHW has established a complaint and grievance resolution system to resolve:

- ï academic appeals and grievances relating to student progress, assessment, facilitators, plagiarism, course materials, curriculum or awards in a course of study;
- ï non-academic appeals and grievances relating to personal information held and any other administrative matters; and
- ï grievances between staff and students, between staff members, between students and between ACHW and other stakeholders

To achieve this, ACHW will respond to any grievance raised by students, staff and any other stakeholders promptly and objectively regardless of the location of the teaching site, the place of residence of the complainant or the mode of study.

ACHW welcomes all forms of feedback, and students, staff and other stakeholders are openly invited to offer feedback on any matter at any time.

At all times, ACHW will respect and reserve the rights of all students, staff and other stakeholders to use any



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avenue available to them to address their grievances and/or appeals.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records of grievances and their outcomes and the Grievances Register will be kept for 7 years in strictly confidential files. Parties to the grievance will be allowed supervised access to these records on request.

Management of and access to any grievance records (including the Grievances Register) will be restricted to the Head of Quality Assurance, Head of School and Director ACHW.

All parties, subject to the grievance process, shall at all times treat grievance as confidential and shall not reveal the names of complainants making a grievance or where applicable those referred to in the grievance to any third party without the express permission of those concerned.

Each stage of the internal grievance procedure is free of charge.

The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against at any stage of this procedure.

The complainant and respondent have the right to be represented by a third party (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person).

SECTION 3 – PROCEDURE

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

In the first instance, where the complainant is comfortable, grievances should be discussed with the person/s involved and an informal resolution sought. However, if this is impracticable, complainants should communicate with their facilitator or Student Services.

LOGGING A COMPLAINT

If a complainant cannot resolve the issue informally and they wish to lodge a formal grievance, they should:

- ï Complete the Grievance form by providing your name, contact details and details of the grievance;
- ï The Grievance form can be requested by emailing support@achw.edu.au.
- ï detail the steps taken so far;
- ï understand that it is a serious procedure and it will be investigated;
- ï understand that it is a formal grievance as opposed to comments, feedback or suggestion; and
- ï be aware that the parties concerned will be informed that a grievance has been made against them or in relation to a decision they have made

The Head of School will:

- ï acknowledge the receipt of the grievance in writing within 5 business days. The acknowledgement will:
 - ï Outline the investigation process and advise that a decision will normally be made within 14 business days of receiving the grievance in writing; and
 - ï Identify any foreseeable delays
- ï record the grievance/appeal in the Grievances register which is maintained by the Head of Quality Assurance

THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS

The Head of School will:

- ï arrange a meeting with the complainant and listen to the complainant without prejudice giving them ample opportunity to air their grievance;
- ï arrange a meeting with the respondent to gather information on their actions and listen to their response to the grievance without prejudice;
- ï record minutes of any meetings as a formal record;
- ï make every effort to advise the outcome of the investigation to the complainant and the respondent in writing within 14 business days, outlining the reasons for the decision and the actions to be taken;
- ï enter formal resolutions, reasons for decisions and actions to be taken onto the Grievances register;
- ï make a note that a complaint has been made by the student in their student file (all details are to be entered in the Grievance register only); and
- ï advise the complainant in writing that the decision may be appealed if they are unsatisfied with the process or outcome. Appeals may be made in writing to the Director ACHW

FORMAL RESOLUTION

After investigation the resolution could be:

- ï that further investigation is required;
- ï providing more information to the student about the situation or reasons the decision was made e.g. explain the rules;
- ï to remedy a mistake;
- ï to revoke a decision;
- ï change a policy or procedure;
- ï recompense grievance;
- ï retrain/discipline student; and/or
- ï retrain/discipline staff member

If the resolution is in favour of ACHW, the reasons may be:

- ï a lack of data or evidence was provided by the complainant;
- ï insufficient grounds for grievance;
- ï resolution is not practical;
- ï grievance is without substance; and/or
- ï student wishes to withdraw grievance as not serious – more a comment or feedback.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution and lodges an appeal to the Director ACHW, the Director ACHW will:

- ï acknowledge the request in writing within 5 business days;
- ï conduct an independent investigation as per the investigation procedure that is fair and impartial;
- ï make every effort to advise the outcome of the investigation to the complainant and the respondent in writing within 14 business days, outlining the reasons for the decision and the actions to be taken; and
- ï provide the complainant with information on our external grievance procedure together with the appeal outcome; and
- ï advise the complainant that they should notify them in writing within 20 days if they wish to pursue the external grievances procedure

EXTERNAL APPEALS PROCEDURE

If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the proposed outcome, they may seek assistance from an external agency such as:

- i independent mediator which may be selected using the Australian Mediation Register at www.amr.asn.au; and
- ii where the independent mediator is unable to mediate a satisfactory outcome for all parties, the Community Justice Centre can be contacted via 1800 990 777.

Recommendations by the appropriate external agencies in relation to a grievance will be implemented within 14 business days of written notification.

All complainants shall be referred to appropriate external support groups for assistance as needed to help them cope with their studies or work commitments.

SECTION 4 – REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Grievance	An official statement of a complaint or appeal over something believed to be wrong or unfair
Complaint	Is a formal statement made in writing that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
Appeal	Is a formal application in writing to a higher authoritative figure or court to have a decision reversed
Mediation	Is the intervention of a third party in a dispute in order to resolve it in a fair and equitable manner
ACHW Stakeholder	A stakeholder of ACHW includes our students, academic staff, non-academic staff and contractors

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document name	Document type	Location
Grievance Form	Form	<i>G:\Compliance\Policies & Procedures</i>
Grievance Register	Register	<i>G:\Compliance\Policies & Procedures</i>

SECTION 5 – DOCUMENT DETAILS

POLICY OWNER

Name:	Grievance Policy and Procedure
Endorsed by:	Director ACHW
Approved by:	Head of Compliance
Date Approved:	10/07/2017
Implementation Owner	Head of Quality Assurance
Maintenance Owner	Head of Quality Assurance
Review Date	15.01.2021

CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Approval date	Approved by	Approved by	Change
V1.0	10.07.2017	Head of Compliance	Director ACHW	Initial document review after purchase of MHMHE
V2.0		Approved by Academic Board on 10.03.2020		General review