

POLICY S3.4

STUDENT GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The Australasian College of Health and Wellness (ACHW) aims to provide a fair, equitable and productive learning environment for all its students. This includes ensuring that students have access to processes which effectively resolve grievances and facilitate a seamless appeals process.

1.2 Purpose

This policy provides the principles which guide a consistent process for resolving a transparent and consistent process for resolving academic and non-academic grievances at ACHW.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to academic and non-academic complaints and appeals made by students of ACHW and ACHW's third party partners.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

This process does not apply to staff complaints and grievances. Refer to the Scenia Grievance Policy.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students are responsible to comply with this policy and its procedure when making a complaint or appealing a decision.
2. Staff are responsible to comply with this policy and its procedure in managing complaints and appeals.
3. ACHW's Quality and Compliance Risk Management Committee is responsible for preparing a quarterly report on the Grievances and Complaints Register to be reviewed by ACHW's Academic Board and the Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee reports grievances to the ACHW's Corporate Board.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Principles

1. ACHW welcomes all forms of feedback from students, who are openly invited to offer feedback on any matter at any time.

2. All students are entitled to access an efficient mechanism to raise and settle grievances. ACHW is committed to identifying and responding to any issue or grievance relating to any aspect of its business operations. ACHW has established a complaint and grievance resolution system to resolve:
 - academic appeals and grievances, including in relation to student progress, assessment, facilitators, plagiarism, course materials, curriculum or awards in a course of study;
 - non-academic appeals and grievances, including in relation to personal information held and any other administrative matters including course fees; and
 - grievances between students and staff and between students.
3. Resolution of grievances in accordance with this policy is free of charge.
4. Grievance and review procedures are transparent to ensure that all students understand their rights and responsibilities.
5. 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.
6. ACHW responds to any grievance or appeal raised by students quickly and objectively in order to reach satisfactory outcomes for all parties.
7. Students and respondents involved in the grievance resolution process will not be disadvantaged, victimised or discriminated against as a result of lodging the grievance or at any stage of (or because of) using this policy and its procedure.
8. The student and respondent have the right to be represented by a third party (such as a family member, friend, counsellor, advocate, or support person) at all times.
9. ACHW will provide students with the option for review by an external independent third party if internal appeal processes fail to resolve a grievance.
10. The Grievance Policy and Procedure is communicated
 - to academic and support staff via the Facilitator Handbook; and
 - to students via the Learning Management System, Unit Guide and the ACHW website.

3.2 Registers

1. ACHW and third-parties maintain a Grievances and Complaints Register that records details of all grievances and complaints, actions taken and their resolution (including any appeals). The Grievances and Complaints Register records both academic and non-academic student grievances and complaints.

3.3 Confidentiality and Records

1. The grievances and complaints recorded on the Grievances and Complaints Register are kept for seven (7) years on a strictly confidential basis. Parties to the grievances are allowed supervised access to the Grievances and Complaints Register and the Remissions Register on request.
2. Management of and access to any grievance records (including the Grievances and Complaints Register) is restricted to the Head of School, ACHW, Student Support Team Leaders and Director of Education (as well as the Student Complaints and Grievances Panel, the ACHW Academic Board and the ACHW Quality and Compliance Risk Management Committee).
3. All parties who are involved with grievances and their resolution shall at all times treat the grievance as confidential and shall not reveal the names of any other party who is the subject of or involved in the grievance or its resolution, without express permission.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Grievance** - An official statement of a complaint or appeal over something believed to be wrong or unfair.
- **Complaint** - A formal statement made in writing that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
- **Appeal** - A formal application in writing to a higher authoritative figure or court to have a decision reversed.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Grievance Form
- Grievance and Complaints Register
- Deferral, Withdrawal and Refund Policy
- Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Director of Education
Status	Reviewed in May 2021
Approval Authority	ACHW Academic Board
Date of Approval	June 2021
Effective Date	June 2021
Implementation Owner	Head of School, ACHW
Maintenance Owner	Senior Policy and Compliance Officer
Review Due	May 2024
Content Enquiries	Candice Heskey - Head of School, ACHW Email: cheskey@achw.edu.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
S3.0	10 July 2017	Head of Compliance / Director of Education	Initial document review after purchase of MHMHE
S3.1	10 March 2020	Academic Board	General review
S3.2	18 January 2021	Academic Board	Differentiating between Grievances and Remissions, process for managing complaints and remissions, addition of independent advice at no cost to the student, review process to inform changes and continuous improvement.
S3.3	22 January 2021	Academic Board	Further changes to Grievances and Remissions Procedure. Change of name to Grievances and Complaints.
S3.4	1 June 2021	Head of School, ACHW	Policy and procedure separated. Title Change to Student Grievances and Complaints.