

Student Complaints and Appeals

Issue No: 2.2

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Purpose:

This policy and procedure covers the requirements of the AQTF standard 2.6 and the National Code of Practice 2007 standard 8.

Academia International will address each Student complaint or appeal in a confidential, punctual and efficient manner, in order to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction.

Students unsatisfied with the result or conduct of Academia International's internal appeals handling processes may access an external appeals process which is independent, impartial and provided at minimal cost.

Scope:

This procedure will cover all complaints and appeals submitted by students undertaking training for all courses on Academia International's scope of registration. All disputes will be handled professionally in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Privacy:

Academia International acknowledges and respects the privacy of students. It is required under the Privacy Act 1988 to comply with the National Privacy Principles in respect of the collection, use and disclosure of personal information from individuals.

Definitions:

Appeal: dissatisfaction with a decision made by Academia International, requiring further consideration to reach a resolution.

Complaint: dissatisfaction with an aspect of services received from Academia International, requiring action is taken to reach a resolution.

Procedure:

1. It is in the student's best interests for a dispute to be resolved amicably and at an early stage. A difficulty or concern should initially be discussed with the staff member concerned and a satisfactory outcome might be achieved through discussion. If the issue is not resolved then the student should proceed to Step 2 and commence the formal complaints and appeals process
2. Lodgement; The Student should lodge a written complaint using the approved Academia International *Client Complaint Form QA-CCF-2**.

**This form is available from the Student Services office or www.academia21.com*

The Student should complete this form and attach all the information they have to support the complaint or appeal. Then submit to the Student Welfare Officer in person, or:

email: swo@academia21.com

Post:

Student Welfare Officer
Academia International
Level 4, 152 Elizabeth St
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

3. **Internal Complaint/Appeal;** after receipt of a formal Student complaint or appeal the following process takes place.

3.1. In the case of an International Student, maintaining the enrolment means not reporting to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

While the Internal and External (if required) Complaint or Appeal is on-going the Student's enrolment will be maintained – except for the reasons described at 3.7.

The access to Training and Assessment services will solely be at the discretion of Academia International, depending on the nature of the Complaint or Appeal.

3.2. The Complaint or Appeal is received and may be heard by the Student Welfare Officer. In most cases, the Student Welfare Officer will refer the complaint or appeal to an appropriate staff member within Academia International, depending on the nature of the Complaint or Appeal.

A meeting will then be arranged with the Student, allowing them to formally present their case to Academia International.

The Student is welcomed and encouraged to bring a support person with them to this meeting, or any other related meetings.

3.3. Meeting day; If the Student has further supporting documents other than those supplied with the Client Complaint form, they should bring those to the meeting.

At the meeting, the Student Welfare Officer and another member of staff will be present to hear the student's case. Where possible, Academia International will appoint staff independent to the reason for the complaint or appeal.

The Student's support person may present or assist with the case for appeal.

3.4. Investigation and outcome; after hearing the Student formally present their case; Academia International will investigate and make a decision on the outcome of the complaint or appeal.

Academia International will advise the Student of the outcome in writing within five [5] working days from the date of the meeting.

3.5. If the outcome does not favour the Student, Academia International will also advise in writing of the student's right to engage the External Appeals process as outlined at step four [4].

3.6. If the appeal is against Academia International's decision to report a Student to DIAC for:

- *Unsatisfactory course progress (Vocational and ELICOS Students) ;or*
- *Unsatisfactory attendance (ELICOS Students only)*

the college must maintain the Student's enrolment, not report to DIAC and wait for the completion of the External Appeals process outline at step four [4] before reporting to DIAC.

The Student will have 10 working days from the date of receiving the Complaint or Appeal outcome letter to begin this process.

3.7. If the appeal is against Academia International's decision to report a Student to DIAC to:

- *Defer or Suspend a Student's enrolment due to misbehaviour; or*
- *Cancel a Student's enrolment*

the college will wait for the completion of the Internal Appeals process only before reporting to DIAC. The Student may continue with the External Appeals process.

4. **External Appeal;** If a Student is not satisfied with the result or conduct of the Internal Complaints and Appeals process, the Student may lodge an *ACPET External Review Form** to the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET).

* *This form is available from the Student Services office or www.academia21.com*

ACPET's role is to review the complaint or appeal by appointing a Review Panel that is independent to both Academia International and ACPET.

The Student completes the External Appeal Form and attaches all supporting information from the Internal Appeal along with Academia International's complaints and appeals outcome letter. Payment must also be made at the time of submission to ACPET.

Students must lodge the form to ACPET via eMail student.appeals@acpet.edu.au, and not phone or come into ACPET's offices.

Once a student has applied for external review, Academia International will be informed of the application. Academia International must maintain the student's enrolment in the course (except for items at 3.7).

Both the Student and Academia International will receive an acknowledgment letter from ACPET advising of the deadline to provide supporting information for the mediation process.

- An independent External Reviewer will be assigned to the application and contacted for review.
- All documentation from the Student and Academia International will be forwarded to the allocated External Reviewer.
- External Reviewer will examine and review the submissions and documentation.
- External Reviewer will outline determination and forward decision to ACPET.
- ACPET will forward decision to all parties.

If Academia International receives advice from External Appeals that supports the Student, the following takes place.

4.1. The decision and/or corrective and preventative action will immediately be implemented. The Student will be informed in writing by Academia International and the outcome recorded on file.

If Academia International receives advice from the External Appeal that supports the college,;

4.2. Academia International will follow through with any actions relating to the complaint or appeal.

The Student will be advised of all outcomes in writing.

This process does not remove the right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

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