

Grievance Procedures Relating to Academic Matters

1 Preamble

- 1.1 This policy provides for grievances of an academic nature, that is, grievances which pertain to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course of study. This policy specifies Deakin College's commitment to an harmonious, fair and just learning environment by ensuring that students have access to processes which allow for grievances, disputes, problems and complaints of an academic nature to be resolved in a timely manner. Deakin College also has in place a grievance policy for all non-academic related matters.
- 1.2 This policy is underpinned by the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, and emphasises the need to resolve the grievance as early and as close to the source as possible.
- 1.3 Deakin College reaffirms its commitment to the provision of a high quality education with the provision of an appropriately resourced learning environment and an assessment process which is objective, appropriate, fair and timely.
- 1.4 This policy does not prevent a student's right to access Australia's consumer protection laws or to pursue other legal remedies. However, students are encouraged in the first instance to access Deakin College's complaints and appeals process.
- 1.5 These grievances relate to academic matters. Deakin College also has in place a non-academic grievance policy and procedures for all non-academic related matters. Deakin College is committed to the principle that every student has the right to register a complaint or grievance about matters or issues relating to their study. A grievance is a concern or complaint about any act, behaviour, omission, situation or decision which a student thinks is unfair or unjustified. The grievance will be considered with courtesy, in a timely, fair and consistent manner without fear of prejudicial treatment.
- 1.6 All complaints will be dealt with in a supportive environment without victimisation or intimidation of anyone connected with the complaint either during, or subsequent to, a complaint resolution process. The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against in any of the four stages set out in this policy.
- 1.7 The procedures set out in this document do not replace any responsibilities which may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all students of Deakin College regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study.

3 Definitions

Key Term or Acronym	Definition
Academic matters	Matters which pertain to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course of study.
APDC	<i>Academic Progress and Discipline Committee</i> . A committee whose functions include the consideration of allegations of any act of academic misconduct and the review of course progress of students who have not met, or are at risk of not meeting the academic requirements of Deakin College.
Appeal	A submission by a student for a review of a decision made by Deakin College of an academic or non-academic nature.
Appellant	A student who submits an appeal.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction with any process, outcome or service provided by Deakin College.
Complainant	A person who formally makes a complaint.
Course	A program of instruction that leads to an award of the institution.
Grievance	A wrong, actual or perceived, considered as grounds for complaint.
Deakin College Appeals	The final appeals body at Deakin College that considers appeals from students against any decision by Deakin College or DCi of an academic or non-academic nature.
DCi	Deakin College Indonesia Campus.
Non-academic matters	Matters which do not pertain to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course of study but encompass such matters as perceived discrimination, effrontery to person or conscience,

	harassment, breach of privacy or vilification.
Overseas Student	A student on an overseas student visa.
Respondent	A person against whom an action or grievance is brought.
Student Portal	Intranet providing academic and administrative information and internal communication.
Victimise	To act or omit to act towards a person in a way which is unfair or intended to cause disadvantage to that person.
Working Day	Excludes Victorian and Australian public holidays and weekends.

4 General Procedures

- 4.1 This policy provides a complainant with up to four avenues at which a complaint may be addressed. There is no cost to the complainant in accessing any of the internal avenues set out in this policy however, an external agency may choose to charge the complainant a fee for service.
- 4.2 An explanation of all decisions, outcomes and actions taken as part of the grievance procedure will be given to the complainant in writing.
- 4.3 A complainant and/or respondent have the right to be accompanied and/or represented at any stage by a support person.
- 4.4 Unless the complainant requests otherwise, all correspondence will be posted to the trimester address recorded on the official Deakin College student database.

5 Stage One - Informal Resolution

- 5.1 In the first instance, Deakin College encourages informal resolution as close to the source as possible. Therefore, complaints should be discussed as soon as possible with the person(s) involved.

6 Stage Two - Formal Grievance Procedures

- 6.1 If informal resolution is impractical, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with its outcome, the complainant may make a written complaint to the Director Academic Governance and Integrity. There are no fees associated with submitting a complaint.
- 6.2 The Director Academic Governance and Integrity will address the complaint within 10 working days of its lodgment. At a minimum, this will consist of a written acknowledgement of the complaint.
- 6.3 Under the tenet of natural justice, where a grievance or complaint includes allegations concerning the conduct or actions of another student or a staff member

(respondent), and the substance of those allegations is not minor in nature, the respondent will be immediately notified by the Director Academic Governance and Integrity and given an opportunity to respond to any allegations.

- 6.4 The complainant will be advised of the outcome of the formal grievance in writing, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- 6.5 Where consideration at the formal level does not lead to a resolution, or the complainant is not satisfied with the decision by the Director Academic Governance and Integrity, the complainant may proceed with the lodgment of an internal appeal.

7 Stage Three –Internal Appeal

- 7.1 The appellant may make a written appeal to the Quality and Compliance Manager. There are no fees associated with submitting an internal appeal.
- 7.2 The authority responsible for considering and deciding on the internal appeal is Deakin College Appeals. Deakin College Appeals will proceed with an appeal within 10 working days of its lodgment. At a minimum, this will consist of a written acknowledgement of the complaint.
- 7.3 In addition to the preceding two sections and subsection 4.3 of this policy, the appellant may request to present his or her case in person to the Appeals Committee. The appellant can call any persons as witnesses.
- 7.4 An outcome of the appeal will be advised by Deakin College Appeals in writing. Where the decision has been other than to uphold the appeal, Deakin College Appeals will advise the appellant of the reasons for the outcome and of his or her right to access the external appeals process at minimal or no cost, as per section 8 of this policy.
- 7.5 For overseas students, if the appeal is against Deakin College’s decision to report a student to the relevant Australian Government higher education and immigration agencies for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory attendance, Deakin College will maintain the student’s enrolment until the external appeal process (if accessed) is complete and has supported Deakin College’s decision to report.
- 7.6 For overseas students, if the appeal is against Deakin College’s decision to defer, suspend or cancel a student’s enrolment, Deakin College will maintain the student’s enrolment until the internal appeal (if accessed) is complete and has supported Deakin College’s decision.
- 7.7 To ‘maintain a student’s enrolment’ applies to overseas students and affirms that Deakin College will not notify the relevant Australian Government higher education and immigration agencies whilst the appeal is in progress.
- 7.8 Deakin College’s appeals process allows for the outcome of only one external appeal. For overseas students, where section 7.5 applies and where the external appeal (if accessed) supports Deakin College’s decision, Deakin College will proceed

and report the student to the relevant Australian Government higher education and immigration agencies.

8 Stage Four - External Agency for Grievances

- 8.1 If an appellant has exhausted each of the preceding three avenues and is still not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant may pursue the matter through an independent external appeals body at minimal or no cost. Examples of external agencies include:

Overseas Students Ombudsman

GPO Box 442

Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

<http://www.oso.gov.au/making-a-complaint/>

Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria

4/456 Lonsdale Street

Melbourne VIC 3000

Tel: 9603 8370 or 1800 658 528 (toll free for regional callers)

Email: dscv@justice.vic.gov.au

Web: www.disputes.vic.gov.au

- 8.2 The external appeals body, if accessed, will determine whether Deakin College has acted reasonably, fairly, and accordance with law.
- 8.3 If the external appeals body makes any recommendation in relation to an appeal, Deakin College will ensure that the recommendations are implemented immediately and advise the student of the outcome.

9 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- 9.1 Deakin College will take all reasonable steps to ensure that information regarding any grievance will be disclosed only to those persons who have a right to the information by virtue of their role in the appeals process.
- 9.2 Deakin College will keep records of a complaint for five (5) years after the complainant ceases to be an accepted student.
- 9.3 Once formal grievance procedures are invoked, details of allegations and investigatory notes will be kept in confidential files. These shall be kept separately from either the student or the staff member's personal file.

- 9.4 Where an allegation is proven, the outcome may be placed on a student's or staff member's personal file.

Policy Title	Grievance Procedures Relating to Academic Matters	
Policy Owners	Quality and Compliance Manager	
Contact Persons	Mr Stase Kaintatsis (stasek@deakin.edu.au)	
Key Stakeholders	All Students at Deakin College	
Approval Body	Deakin College Academic Board of Studies	Agenda item and meeting date approved Item 5.2, Meeting 02-2013
Relevant Legislation	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000. Higher Education Support Act 2003. The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (the National Code 2007). Privacy Act.	
Related Policies	Academic Integrity Policy. Access, Equity and Equal Educational Opportunity Policy. Assessment Policy. Attendance Policy. Grievance Procedures Relating to Non-Academic Matters. Deakin College Appeals Terms of Reference Satisfactory Course Progress Policy.	
Related Guidelines	Administrative Information for Higher Education Providers: Student Support; Higher Education Provider Guidelines (HEP Guidelines).	
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