

Non-Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The Heath Arts College is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential academic grievance handling procedure for all Students.

Non-Academic matters include enrolment in a course, personal information held by the provider.

Scope and Application

This policy is applicable to all complainants of the College, irrespective of their place of residence, campus (within Australia) or mode of study. Complainants with the College who transfer their studies to an institution outside Australia, will have their registration with the College terminated and are required to adhere to the guidelines, policies and procedures outlined by the legal entity to whom they have transferred their registration, unless their grievance relates specifically to an instance when their registration with the College in Australia was current and is to be upheld by all staff and students.

Outlined below is both the policy relevant to Non-Academic Grievances and the process for logging the complaint. This policy will be made available to students via the follow communication avenues; website, student handbook and accessible to staff via staff handbook at the induction stage of employment.

All parties will be advised of modification to this policy as the need for modification arises through the continuous improvement process and or the direction of the regulatory authorities.

Policy Principles

1. Principles for Lodging a Non-Academic Grievance.

1. All Non-Academic Grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider.
2. Are grievance that are not related to assessment decisions, and can be made by staff, students and clients.

2. The Principles that Underpin these Grievance Procedures.

- 2.1 The guiding principles of these procedures are that grievances shall be:
 - a. Treated seriously and with fairness;
 - b. Dealt with in a timely manner;
 - c. Treated consistently across the College;
 - d. Subject to the principles of natural justice;
 - e. Progressed through informal and formal stages;
 - f. Allow web video conferencing or other similar means where complainants cannot attend in person;
 - g. Dealt with and resolved wherever possible without recourse to the formal stage, and shall be without prejudice to a complainant's right to pursue legal remedies outside the College having exhausted Colleges' grievance procedures;

- h. The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

3. Obligations of the College in managing a non-academic grievance:

- 3.1** The complainant will be given the opportunity to present their case;
 - a. All matters arising shall be accurately documented and recorded. Records shall be maintained for a minimum period of five years and treated as confidential in accordance with Personal Information -Privacy Policy
 - b. A written statement of the outcomes will be issued at each stage of the process giving due reasons for decisions reached;
 - c. The complainant will have the right to have a representative present during any negotiations with The College or its appointed representatives;
 - d. The complainant will not be required to meet any costs associated with lodging a grievance, provided the procedures contained herein are adhered to;
 - e. The complainant shall not be subject to discrimination, victimisation or any other form of harassment as a result of actions taken under these guidelines.
- 3.2** The College allows all parties that have used the policy and procedure relating to the complaint appropriate access to any records.

4. Informal Non Academic Grievance

- 4.1** Where the student presents with an informal non-academic grievance the following actions are suggested to prevent the progress to a formal grievance.
 - a. Students are encouraged to first discuss issues with the Academic Student Support Officer.
 - b. Where the student feel more comfortable the student can make an appointment to speak with the Compliance Manager informally.
 - c. Where the student is dissatisfied with the outcome from the informal non-academic grievance, they may proceed to the Formal Grievance procedure.
 - d. The engaging officer of the college will document the informal non-academic grievance in the event that the non-academic grievance is escalated to a formal grievance.
 - e. The time frame assigned to addressing an informal non-academic grievance is 14 days.
 - f. The engaging is to check in with the student after 14 days to see if the issue has been rectified.

5. Formal Non-AcademicGrievance

- 5.1** General principles that apply to all stages of this grievance procedure will be adhered to by The College, are:
 - a. The Complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
 - b. The Complainant and/or the respondent have the option of being

accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire.

- c. The Complainant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- d. At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or respondent if requested.
- e. Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored in a secure office of The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd. 1/94 Foster Street, Dandenong, VIC 3175.
- f. A Complainant shall have access to this entire grievance procedure (internal and external) at no cost.
- g. Should THA consider longer than 60 calendar days to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, THA will inform the complainant or appellant in writing and include reasoning and regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following applies:

The Act refers to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

Student/s refers to all persons enrolled or seeking to enrol in an approved course or part of the course.

Complainant/s refers to students (as defined above) who have lodged a non-academic complaint with

The Health Arts College Pty Ltd

Appellant refers to students (as defined above) who have lodged a non-academic appeal with

The Health Arts College Pty Ltd

The College refers to The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd

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Stage 1 – Logging a complaint

No.	Who	Actions
1.1	Complainant	<p>Student completes a Grievance Form together with any supporting documentation to the Compliance Manager of The Health Arts College via email on compliance@thacollege.edu.au or mail 1/94 Foster Street, Dandenong, VIC 3175.</p> <p>If the grievance involves the Compliance Manager themselves they will then delegate to another senior staff member of the College (Authorised Delegate).</p>
1.2	Compliance Manager/ Authorised officer	<p>The Compliance will provide the Complainant with acknowledged in writing of the complaint within 5 days of receipt. The Complainant is advised of their right to be accompanied or assisted by another person, at that third party cost.</p>
1.3	Compliance Manager/ Authorised officer	<p>Upon receiving the complaint, the Compliance Manager may request further details from the complainant. This may be sought by written or verbal request or by face-to-face interview with the complainant and/or respondent(s).</p> <p>When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview, the persons being interviewed may have another person accompany them.</p> <p>Investigation into the matter will take place to ensure THA has accurate, complete and relevant information.</p> <p>The Compliance Manager will review the information and decide on the appropriate actions to be taken.</p> <p>During the investigation process, Should THA consider longer than 60 calendar days to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, THA will inform the complainant or appellant in writing and include reasoning and regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter</p>
1.4	Compliance Manager/ Complainant	<p>The Compliance Manager will endeavour to resolve the complaint. Within ten working days, a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the complaints and will include their recommendations and reasons for their decision.</p> <p>The report will further advise the complainant of their right to access the internal appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint.</p>
1.5	Compliance Manager/ Complainant	<p>The Compliance Manager or Authorised officer will check in with the Complainant no later than 14 days after the outcome has been advised of to ensure that the student is satisfied with the provided resolution and that implementation has been taken effect.</p>
1.6	Complainant	<p>The Complainant will be provided with an outcome letter using the prescribed outcome letter format which will advise the complainant of the outcome and their right to appeal the outcome decision and on how to proceed to stage two of this process where they are dissatisfied with the outcome.</p>

Stage 2 – Right to an appeal

No.	Who	Actions
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2.1	Complainant	<p>Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome from the initial investigation, and choose to proceed with stage two of the academic grievance procedure, they will need to lodge an appeal to the CEO of The Health Arts College via email on ceo@thacollege.edu.au or mail 1/94 Foster Street, Dandenong, VIC 3175</p> <p>If the grievance involves the CEO themselves they will then delegate to another senior staff member of the College (Authorised Delegate).</p>
2.2	CEO	The CEO will provide the appellant with acknowledgment in writing of the appeal within 5 days of receipt. The appellant is advised of their right to be accompanied or assisted by another person, at that third party cost.
2.3	CEO/Independent Reviewer	The appellant appeal will be determined by the CEO of the College or an independent and impartial officer of The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd, referred herein as the Reviewer.
2.4	Complainant	<p>The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the appellant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 10 working days.</p> <p>Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these interviews.</p> <p>Following the consultation, the CEO will provide a written response to the complainant within 20 working days, advising the further steps taken to address the complaint, including the reasons for the decision.</p> <p>The report will further advise the complainant of their right to access the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal</p>
2.5	CEO/ Complainant	The CEO or Reviewer will check in with the appellant no later than 14 days after the outcome has been advised of to ensure that the student is satisfied with the provided resolution and that implementation has been taken effect.
2.6	CEO	The appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome including on how to have the decision reviewed further and which will include progressing to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved. Stage three is referral for external mediation.

STEP 3 – External mediation

No.	Who	Actions
3.1	Complainant	If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they may make a written request to the CEO to the CEO of The Health Arts College via email on ceo@thacollege.edu.au or mail 1/94 Foster Street, Dandenong, VIC 3175. For the matter to be resolved through an external dispute resolution scheme operator called the VET Student Loan Ombudsman, the complainant can contact them directly.

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3.2	CEO	The CEO will provide the appellant with acknowledgment in writing of the external mediation within 5 days of receipt. The complainant is advised of their right to be accompanied or assisted by another person, at that third party cost.
3.3	CEO	The purpose of an external appeals process is to consider whether the College has followed its policies and procedures and review the decision made by The College. The College will give due consideration to any recommendation made as a result of the external review.
3.4	CEO/Complainant/ External Mediator	Complainants may refer their appeal to the VET Student Loan Ombudsman (external dispute resolution) for complaints related to VET Student Loan. The Health Arts College will cover associated costs for lodging appeals. The Ombudsman will investigate the case, make an assessment and advise the Complainant and College CEO of the outcome of the external appeal.
3.5	CEO/ External Mediator	Where recommendations have been made in relation to a grievance or appeal the Ombudsman, will forward those recommendations to the College CEO who will ensure that the recommendations are implemented to comply with the Ombudsman's requirements.
3.6	CEO/Complainant/ External Mediator	A written notice of the decision on review, will be provided to each party including the reasons for the decision.
3.7	Compliance Manager	Following the complaint, appropriate actions will be taken by THA to prevent the problem from recurring through its Continuous Improvement policy. A grievance and appeals outcome form will be completed The complaint details and outcomes will be added to THA's Complaints and Appeals Register for review by Management
3.8	Compliance Manager	Allows parties who have used the procedure to access the records of that use, but otherwise keep the records confidential.