

AD14 POLICY DOCUMENT



POLICY AREA: ADMINISTRATION

**RELATIONSHIP TO
AQTF 2007
NATIONAL
STANDARDS:**

2.6

TITLE: Non-Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure

SCOPE: This document applies to persons seeking to enrol in a VET course of study at ACA as well as all ACA students. This includes current and prospective students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA). Students and those seeking to enrol in a VET course of study are entitled to access the grievance procedure regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the student's or persons place of residence or the mode in which they study

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair and equitable procedure for all ACA students, including students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA), as well as all persons seeking to enrol, to submit and process a non-academic grievance.

ACA aims to:

- Provide access to grievance procedures for students as well as persons seeking to enrol
- Prevent student grievances by ensuring that students are satisfied with their course and outcomes;
- develop a culture that views student complaints as an opportunity to improve the organisation;
- maintain a complaints handling system that helps prevent complaints from recurring;
- ensure consistency when handling complaints.
- ensure that any student complaints are treated seriously and with fairness and that they are resolved promptly, objectively, with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality

DESCRIPTION:

A non-academic grievance can be a complaint about a situation, a process, a person or people, a facility or a service provided by ACA. A non-academic grievance is not about an academic result.

ACA staff are trained in handling non-academic grievances and are trained in the Non-Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure as part of their induction training.

GENERAL STIPULATIONS

In the event of a non-academic grievance:

- The complainant will be given the opportunity to present their case;
- 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 the ACA's policies on Confidentiality, Privacy and Data Protection;
- The complainant will be allowed appropriate access to their records;
- A written statement of the outcomes will issued at each stage of the process giving due reasons for decisions reached;
- The complainant will have the right to have a representative present during any negotiations with the Institute or its appointed representatives;
- The complainant will not be required to meet any costs associated with lodging a grievance;
- The complainant shall not be subject to discrimination, victimisation or any other form of harassment as a result of actions taken under these guidelines.
- Students and those seeking to enrol will have access to non-academic grievance procedures regardless of campus location, mode of study or place of residence

PROCEDURE:

1. In the first instance all complaints are handled informally by the Course Co-ordinator Inneke Taalman. If the student and Course Co-ordinator cannot resolve the issue the student may submit a formal complaint in writing to the **Course Director**.

Complainants with a non-academic grievance are encouraged to initially contact the Course Co-ordinator (Inneke Taalman) to see if the issue can be resolved informally. In the case that the issue cannot be resolved, the complainant may submit a formal complaint in writing to the Course Director. Alternatively, complainants can make a formal written complaint to the Course Director without first attempting an informal resolution.

2. The **Course Director** will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days.
3. The **Course Director**, or their nominee, will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview with the complainant, they may ask another person to accompany them. The **Course Director**, or their nominee, will then endeavour to resolve the complaint, providing a written report to the complainant on the steps that will be taken to address the complaint within ten working days of the complaint being received. The **Course Director** oversees action to address complaint.

4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision from step 3, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing to the **Creative Director**. The complainant shall submit the appeal in writing within ten working days of receiving the written notification from Step 3. The **Creative Director** will acknowledge receipt of appeals within seven working days and will appoint a person who was not involved in the original decision to consult with the complainant and other relevant parties. Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews so that the complainant has an opportunity to formally present their case. The complainant may ask another person to accompany them to interviews.
5. Once the **Creative Director** receives a report of the consultation outcomes, they will provide a written report to the complainant on the further steps taken to address the complaint, clearly stating the reasons for the decision. This report shall be sent within ten working days.
6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they may make a written request to the **General Manager** that they wish the matter be dealt with through an external dispute resolution process facilitated by the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET). The **General Manager** will then advise ACPET in writing of the request within five working days. ACPET will arrange for a Round Table Discussion (RTD) to be held between the Institute and the complainant within ten working days of the written notification from the Institute. ACPET do not charge a fee for this service.
7. If the matter remains unresolved after the RTD then ACPET will appoint an independent mediator within fourteen working days of the RTD. ACPET plays no role in the actual mediation. It is then up to the mediator, the complainant and the Institute to resolve the grievance. The Institute will bear any costs associated with the mediation.

The complainant or any respondent to the grievance may ask another person to accompany them to meetings with ACPET or the mediator. The mediator will report to the **General Manager** the outcome of the mediation, including any recommendations arising, within fourteen days of the completion of the review. Once the **General Manager** receives the report of the outcomes from the RTD or independent mediation, they will provide a written report to the complainant within ten working days on the recommended actions to resolve the grievance.

The Institute agrees to be bound by the independent mediator's recommendations and the **General Manager** will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within thirty days of receipt of the mediator's report.

If a grievance still remains unresolved after the external dispute resolution process, the complainant may decide to refer the matter to an external agency such as The Anti-Discrimination Board or The Office of Fair Trading.

8. Any areas for improvement which arise or where a complaint is found to be substantiated, are documented for action and rectification.

CONTACT DETAILS

Contact Details for Course Co-ordinator

Name: Inneke Taalman

Address: 241 Devonshire St. Surry Hills NSW 2010

Ph: 02 9310 4077 Fax: 02 9310 2891

Email: inneket@actorscentre.com.au

Contact Details for Course Director

Name: Simon Hunt
Address: 241 Devonshire St. Surry Hills NSW 2010
Ph: 02 9310 4077 Fax: 02 9310 2891
Email: simonh@actorscentre.com.au

Contact Details for Creative Director

Name: Dean Carey
Address: 241 Devonshire St. Surry Hills NSW 2010
Ph: 02 9310 4077 Fax: 02 9310 2891
Email: deanc@actorscentre.com.au

Contact Details for General Manager

Name: Craig Hughes-Cashmore
Address: 241 Devonshire St. Surry Hills NSW 2010
Ph: 02 9310 4077 Fax: 02 9310 2891
Email: craigh@actorscentre.com.au

Contact Details for ACPET:

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)
PO Box Q1076, QVB Post Office, Sydney NSW 1230
Ph: 1800 657 644 Fax: 02 9264 4550
Email: acpet@acpet.edu.au

PUBLICATION:

This document will be published on the ACA website (<http://www.actorscentre.com.au/>) to make it available to all current and prospective students.

DATE ENDORSED BY THE GOVERNING BODY: By the board of review on Friday 29th October, 2010.

REVIEW DATE:

- ◆ Annual January

CONTROL

- ◆ General Manager