

## GRIEVANCE POLICY (NON-ACADEMIC)

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References and Legislation	National Codes of Practice for International Students (NCPIS) Standard(s): Standard 8

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## 1 Context

This policy describes the principles and procedures that enable students to pursue non-academic grievances.

## 2 Scope

### 2.1 Rationale

UBSS is required to establish protocols and procedures for the handling of Non-Academic Grievances. This policy specifies UBSS's commitment to ensuring that students have access to processes that allow for grievances, disputes, problems and complaints of a non-academic nature to be resolved in a fair, efficient and effective manner.

The procedure set out in this document does not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities that may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

### 2.2 Legislative Context

- The *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA)
- The *Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (the ESOS Act)
- The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training for Overseas Students (the National Code)

## 3 Definitions

Item	Definition
<b>Non-Academic Grievance</b>	A Non-Academic Grievance is any grievance that does not relate to academic matters.

## 4 Scope

All students at UBSS or applicants seeking to enrol in a course of study at UBSS are entitled to access the grievance procedures set out in this policy, regardless of the location of the UBSS campus at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study.

This policy applies to any aspect of a student's experience at UBSS that is not specifically covered by another policy (Academic grievances are covered in 3.13 above.)

The policy is underpinned by the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness and emphasises the need to resolve a grievance as early as possible and as close to the source as possible.

#### 4.1 Policy Dissemination and Staff Training

This policy is published in a public area - UBSS's website: [www.ubss.edu.au](http://www.ubss.edu.au) - and is therefore accessible by all staff, students and other stakeholders.

The **Deputy Vice Chancellor** is responsible for training academic staff in the application of the policy and for verbally explaining the policy to students.

The Academic Coordinator is responsible for training of support staff in the application of the policy and for publishing the policy on the UBSS website.

## 5 Procedure

Current or prospective students in any accredited higher education course at UBSS have access to a procedure through which a non-academic complaint may be addressed. Each step in the procedure is free of charge. However any external agency, counsel or consultant engaged by the complainant may choose to charge the complainant a fee for their service.

Before any process is begun, the complainant should liaise with the staff member concerned within 20 working days of the occurrence and discuss/negotiate their concerns with a view to arriving at a mutually agreeable resolution. The staff member must communicate their decision to the complainant within 10 working days of the initial grievance. If the complainant does not wish to use the informal approach, or does use that approach but is not satisfied with either the outcome or the time taken to resolve the issue, they can proceed as follows:

**Official Complaint.** If not using the informal approach, the complainant can lodge an official complaint in writing within 10 working days of the grievance event. If the complainant has used the informal approach but is dissatisfied with the outcome, they can lodge an official complaint within 10 days of the staff member issuing their decision in the informal procedure. Details including their student ID number and documentation to support their claim should be included with the official complaint.

**Evaluation.** Within 10 working days, the **Deputy Vice Chancellor** or delegate must evaluate the official complaint, holding meetings with the complainant if necessary, and notify the complainant of the outcome in writing via their student online account.

**Appeal.** Students dissatisfied with the result of the evaluation may request that the matter be dealt with by an independent, external third party.

International Students can take their appeal to the Commonwealth Ombudsman  
<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

For domestic students please contact the Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA)  
<https://iheau.edu.au/contact/>

UBSS must implement all recommendations arising out of the External Appeal within any timeframe specified. When a timeframe is not specified, recommendations are implemented within 10 working days of receipt of the External Appeal decision.

### 5.1 Victimization or Discrimination

The complainant and respondent must not be victimised or discriminated against in any stage of the procedure set out in this policy.

### 5.2 Representation by Third Party

The complainant and/or respondent have the right to be represented by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person). In such case, the person using a representative should give notice to the other parties involved.

### 5.3 Record of Grievance and Confidentiality

Records of all grievances and applications for review of decisions must be kept and be accessible to all interested parties for a responsible amount of time. Such records must be kept confidential.

## 6 Document Change Control

Version	Change Description	Date	Author
v12	Refreshed format	November 2017	Professor Ian Bofinger
V12.1	Change of review date	June 2018	Jotsana Roopram
V13	Refreshed and new review date embedded	August 2019	Professor Ian Bofinger
V13.1	Internal formal complaint contact added students provided with a 20 day complaint period	January 2020	Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley
V14	Change of review date Commonwealth Ombudsman details updated	March 2021	Anurag Kanwar
V15	Add in IHEA	February 2023	Anurag Kanwar