



OZFORD COLLEGE OF BUSINESS (RTO No. 21442)

Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures (Academic and Non-Academic matters)

1. Rationale

A fair and transparent means of making formal complaints and appealing academic and related decisions is an integral part of all training and assessment, and a requirement to meet the standards under the Australian Quality Training Framework 2007 and the requirements set out in Chapter 6 of the VET Provider Guidelines and Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

This policy describes how Oxford College of Business (the College) recognizes the rights of complainants and fosters and develops an atmosphere conducive to the early resolution of grievances in a timely, efficient and effective manner and does not victimize or discriminate against the complainant or respondent.

This policy is also publicly available on the College's website and provided to all prospective students before enrolment process is finalized and explained to all staff during staff induction process verbally and in writing.

Definitions

unless the contrary intention appears:

Oxford College of Business is the trading name for Oxford Business College Pty Ltd.

The College means Oxford College of Business.

Act refers to Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Department means the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

2. Aim

To provide "complainant" of the College, with guidelines on grounds for complaints and appeals and processes for appealing academic matters and non-academic matters.

For the purpose of this document, the term 'complainant' applies to:

For Academic Matters:

- The College students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.

For Non- Academic Matters:

- The College students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act; and
- 'Persons seeking to enrol with the College in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements under subclass 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act and who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act; and

All complainants are entitled to access the grievance procedures as set out, regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the complainant's place of residence or mode in which they study.

3. General Policy

- 3.1 Complainants who are concerned about the conduct of the College are encouraged to attempt to resolve their concerns using this procedure for both academic and non-academic matters.

- 3.2 The procedure will be implemented at no cost for internal complaints and appeals or minimal cost for external appeal to the student.
- 3.3 All prospective complainants will be provided with information about the grievances, complaints and appeals procedure before making an agreement to enrol.
- 3.4 All complaints and appeals will be handled timely, professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution that is fair and equitable to all parties.
- 3.5 Complainants will be provided with details of external appeal authorities they may approach, if required.
- 3.6 At any stage in the internal complaint or appeal process complainants are entitled to be accompanied and assisted by their own nominee included to accompany and support them, these nominees exclude legal representatives.
- 3.7 **Definitions:**
- i. **“Academic matter”** in this instance refers to those matters that relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study
 - ii. **“Non-Academic matter”** in this instance refers to matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment and awards in a VET course of study. Non-academic grievances may arise at the College or from decisions made by the College and could include issues such as harassment (any form), vilification, discrimination, financial matters, fines & payments application procedures, exclusions from events and facilities and the use or misuse of personal information that the College holds in relation to students such as for the purpose of VET FEE-HELP assistance to students.
- 3.8 Complainants may raise any matters of concern relating to any academic or non-academic matter or other issues that may arise.
- 3.9 For internal complaints and appeals:
- The complainant will have an opportunity to formally present their case, in writing or in person at no cost to the student
 - The complainant may be accompanied and assisted by a support person excluding legal representatives at any relevant meetings.
 - At the conclusion of the complaint or appeal the complainant will be given a written statement of the outcome, including the details of the reasons and full explanation for the outcome and the record of the complaint and outcome will be placed in the complainant file.
- 3.10 A complainant’s enrolment must be maintained whilst an internal complaint or appeal is in progress and the outcome has not been determined if the internal complaint or appeal is initiated by the complainant. Where the suspension or cancellation is not initiated by the complainant and if the complainant accesses the complaints and appeal process, the suspension or cancellation of the complainant’s enrolment cannot take effect until the internal process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the complainant apply as stated in the Refusal, Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation of Student Enrolment Policy & Procedures.
- 3.11 The College will encourage the parties to approach a complaint or appeal with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation. Where a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, we acknowledge the need for an appropriate external and independent body to review the process implemented by the College.
- 3.12 If there is any matter arising from a student complaint or appeal that is a systemic issue which requires improvement action, this will be reported to the College management meeting as part of the continuous improvement process.
- 3.13 Nothing in this procedure inhibits complainant’s rights to pursue other legal remedies. Complainants are entitled to resolve any dispute by exercising their rights to other legal remedies. Complainants wishing to take this course of action are advised to:-
- Contact a solicitor, or
 - Contact the Law Institute of Victoria, 470 Bourke St Melbourne 3000, Tel: 9602 5000 for a referral to a solicitor.
- 3.14 The College will keep confidential and accurate records of all informal and formal discussions conducted under this policy and procedure and their outcome on complainant files. These confidential and accurate records will be kept by the College for a minimum of 5 years.
- 3.15 The College will allow parties to the complaint appropriate access to the grievance records.

4. Complaint Procedure

Informal Complaint Process

- 4.1 Any complainant with a question or complaint may raise the matter with staff of the College and attempt an informal resolution of the question or complaint.
- 4.2 Questions or complaints dealt with in this way do not become part of the formal complaint process and will not be documented, recorded or reported on unless the College staff member involved determines that the issue question or complaint was relevant to the wider operation of the College.
- 4.3 Complainants who are not satisfied with the outcome of the question or complaint are encouraged to register a formal complaint.

Formal Complaint Process

- 4.4 Complainants who are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, or, who want to register a formal complaint may do so. To register a formal complaint a complainant must complete the student complaint/appeal application form and contact the Head of Student Services to arrange a meeting. At this meeting the complaint can be raised and a resolution attempted.

Contact details for the Student Services Manager:

Christine Chua

cchua@ozford.edu.au

Direct Tel: 03 8663 7123

Level 7, 310 King Street, Melbourne. VIC 3000

- 4.5 At this stage of the complaint meeting, the complaint must be recorded in writing and signed and dated by the complainant and the Student Services Coordinator. The complaint is recorded in writing by completing the student complaint form prior to the meeting or a new document can be prepared and signed during the meeting if required.
- 4.6 The Head of Student Services will then complete an internal investigation of the complaint, then attempt to resolve the complaint with the student and any other parties who may be involved. The resolution phase must commence within 5 working days of the complaint being lodged in writing.
- 4.7 A time of no more than 10 working days from the commencement of the resolution phase will be allowed for the resolution unless all parties agree in writing to extend this time. This period is called the resolution phase.
- 4.8 At the end of the resolution phase the Head of Student Services will report and explain the College's decision to the complainant in writing. The College's decision and reasons for the decision will be documented by the Head of Student Services and placed in the Complainant's file.
- 4.9 Following the resolution phase the College will implement the decision as conveyed to the complainant and thus will undertake any improvement actions arising from the complaint.
- 4.10 If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal internal complaint process then they may institute an internal appeals process by completing the appeals form.

5. Appeal Procedure

5.1 Internal Appeals

- 5.1.1 Internal appeals may arise from a number of sources including appeals against assessment, appeals against discipline actions and appeals against decisions arising from complaints. The essential nature of an appeal is that it is a request by a complainant to reconsider a decision made by the College.
- 5.1.2 Complainants appealing an assessment or course credit outcome will need to have a meeting with the Head of College. Complainants will be given the opportunity for reassessment by a different assessor selected by the College. Costs of reassessment will be met by the College. The recorded outcome of the assessment appeal will be the most favourable result for the complainant from either the original assessment or the reassessment.
- 5.1.3 A complainant's enrolment must be maintained whilst an internal complaint or appeal is in progress and the outcome has not been determined if the internal complaint or appeal is initiated by the complainant.

Where the suspension or cancellation is not initiated by the complainant and if the complainant accesses the Complaints and appeal process, the suspension or cancellation of the complainant's enrolment cannot take effect until the internal process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the complainant apply as stated in the Refusal, Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation of Student Enrolment Policy & Procedures.

- 5.1.4 If the appeal is initiated by complainants, complainants are advised to complete a Complaint/Appeal Application Form at available at Student Services Desk.
- 5.1.5 The appeal resolution phase must commence within 5 working days of the internal appeal being lodged in writing.
- 5.1.6 An Appeal Panel comprising two senior staff members not directly involved in the matter will be convened by the Head of Student Services within 5 working days of the appeal application being received.
- 5.1.7 The outcome of the internal appeal and reasons for the outcome will be recorded in writing and signed and dated by the Appeal Panel and placed in the student file
- 5.1.8 The decision of the Appeal Panel will be communicated to the complainant in writing within 5 working days, unless the Appeal Panel decides that additional investigation, information or monitoring is required. In this case the complainant will be advised of the decision within 5 working days of the Appeal Panel reaching a decision.
- 5.1.9 Following the internal appeals phase, the College will implement the decision as conveyed to the complainant and implement any improvement actions arising from the complaint.
- 5.1.10 There are no further avenues within the College for complaints or appeals after the internal appeals process has been completed, however an external appeals process is available.

5.2 External Appeals

VET students who wish to lodge a complaint can contact the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). For contact details and information please see: <http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints>

6. Associated documents

- Complaint/ Appeal Application Form
- Outcome of Complaint/ Appeal Letter (unsuccessful)
- Outcome of Complaint/ Appeal Letter (successful)
- Appeal Record Form