


POLICY		
<p>Ref. to Legislative Frameworks:</p> <p>HESF2015: Standard 2.4/6.2/6.3</p> <p>SRTO2015: Standard 2.1-2.4 /5.2 /6.1-6.6</p> <p>National Code 2018: Standard 10</p>	Student Complaints and Appeals	
Version: 4.4	Policy Owner: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Issued on: 21/04/2018 Review by: 21/04/2020

Revision History

Current Version	Description of Change	Policy Developer(s)	Effective Date
4.4	Cases that occurred more than 10 working days prior may also be reviewed under the discretion of CEO.	Quality Assurance Support Officer	21/04/2018

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline the Academies Australasia Polytechnic (AAPoly) Complaints and Appeals policy. It is the aim of the policy to guide resolution of complaints or appeals without reprisal to the complainant or appellant and in compliance with the applicable legislative requirements.

POLICY STATEMENT

Complaints or appeals from students and prospective students will be resolved in a constructive and timely manner. Students are provided with access to a transparent, fair and prompt process for resolving complaints or appeals, without fear of reprisal and at minimal or no cost to the students.

SCOPE

The policy applies to complaints or appeals by students and prospective students of all the courses offered by AAPoly, about any aspect of their experience with AAPoly, its agents or other related parties. Matters covered by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Academic complaints and appeals e.g.
 - Outcome of a special consideration application
 - Final grade appeal
 - Actions taken by AAPoly pursuant to academic misconduct such as cheating, collusion and plagiarism
 - Decisions made by the Examinations Chief in relation to the students' conduct during recent examinations
 - Actions taken by AAPoly due to unsatisfactory course progress
 - Outcome of Credit Transfer and RPL applications

- Administrative (non-academic) complaints and appeals e.g.
 - Decisions made on admissions, enrolment, transfer between providers and/or deferment of, suspension of or withdrawal from enrolment
 - Exclusion
 - Appeals regarding procedural and administrative aspects of an assessment
 - Actions taken by AAPoly as a result of non-academic misconduct
 - Misbehaviour by staff or other students including in cases of harassment, discrimination or bullying
 - Tuition and other fees and refunds
 - Privacy matters

DEFINITIONS

Student	Any person enrolled to study any program delivered by AAPoly.
Prospective student	Any person who has expressed an interest in enrolling into study programs offered by AAPoly
Complaint	A written expression of displeasure with the service(s) of AAPoly by a student or prospective student. These may include but are not limited to dissatisfaction with the academic or administrative aspects of AAPoly's services or general grievances such as misbehaviour, discrimination, and sexual harassment and bullying.
Appeal	A written request by the student for a change in decision made by AAPoly. Appeals by existing students can relate to assessment and other decisions. Prospective students may appeal against admissions decisions including Credit Transfer and/or RPL applications.

POLICY GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES

1. Students and prospective students are eligible to file a complaint about AAPoly agents they have interacted with and other related parties. Actions to be taken in response to the complaint about agents will be aligned with the policies and procedures relevant to monitoring of agents.
2. Where possible and appropriate, the complaints or appeals shall be dealt with locally at the level at which the issue of the complaint or appeal occurs. If the complaint or appeal cannot be resolved at the local level, the student will have access to the AAPoly internal appeal process.
3. AAPoly accepts and is committed to fair investigations pursuant to anonymous complaints. AAPoly ensures that the designated AAPoly officer in charge of the investigations have no conflicts of interests with the matter being scrutinized.
4. If the matter cannot be resolved through the AAPoly internal appeal process, the student will have access to a final hearing by an independent external person or organization. Throughout these processes, the student's enrolment at AAPoly will remain active. No student will be disadvantaged for having made a complaint or appeal.
5. AAPoly students have the right to put forward complaints and appeals in writing, and to have them responded constructively and within a reasonable timeframe. The resolution of complaints or appeals is carried out in compliance with the requirements of the accreditation authorities as well as the applicable standards (and their subsequent replacements) including the:
 - Higher Education Standards Framework 2015
 - Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015
 - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.
6. From the first occurrence of a relevant matter, each student has 10 working days to notify AAPoly of his/her complaint or appeal in writing to activate the Complaints and

Appeals Process. The student must fill in a Complaints and Appeals Form then lodge it by email, postal mail or in person. AAPoly will respond in writing to the Complaints and Appeals within 10 working days from the day of receipt. Under the CEO's discretion, cases that occurred more than 10 working days prior may also be reviewed.

7. Formal complaints or appeals against academic and administrative decisions will be resolved without charge or at minimal cost to students. AAPoly's complaints-handling and appeals process include provision for confidentiality, independent professional advice, advocacy and support for the complainant or appellant.
8. If the complaints or appeals eventuate in recommendations or decisions in favour of the students, AAPoly will carry out the recommendation or decision immediately in order to mitigate or eliminate the likelihood of reoccurrence. The relevant students will be formally informed of the resolutions and the implementation of the preventative or corrective actions.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- The CEO is responsible for developing and maintaining this policy. He/she or the nominee disseminates the policy to all Heads of Departments, including to the Academic Dean, and ensures their understanding.

Academic Dean

- The Academic Dean is responsible for confirming that all academic staff members receive, understand and are prepared to implement the policy and the pursuant procedure.
- Together with the Designated Head of Student Services (DH-SS), the Academic Dean ascertains that the new and existing students are aware and understand this policy, the pursuant procedure and the Complaints and Appeals Process.

Designated Head of Student Services

- Students have access to the Complaints and Appeals policy and process.
- All complaints or appeals lodged are appropriately addressed and outcomes are communicated in writing to the students within realistic and reasonable timelines.
- All complaints or appeals and their resolutions are recorded securely in AAPoly's Complaints or Appeals Register.

Designated Heads of Departments

- New staff and students are aware of the Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure.
- Heads of Departments hold the responsibility to investigate and resolve the complaint or appeal and inform the DH-SS in writing of the outcome, within realistic and reasonable timelines.

FEEDBACK

Any question or feedback about this policy is to be emailed to the CEO at suggestionstotheceo@aapoly.edu.au. The CEO will respond to the question or feedback within two (2) weeks, unless it requires an immediate response. The query or feedback and response(s) will be documented in the Continuous Improvement or Corrective Action register for quality assurance purposes.

Related Documents

Source	Document Title	Version/Date
Internal	AAPoly Complaints and Appeals Procedure	v. 4.3/05042018
External References	ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations	2015
	Higher Education Standards Framework	2015
	National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students	2018
	TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Governance	N/A (accessed 29 April 2016)