

International Students Complaints/Grievances and Appeals Information

Australian Learning Group (ALG) acknowledges that students may need assistance with their study program or have other concerns. The initial step in any complaint is to discuss the issue with the person involved. If this has been done and the matter is still not resolved or if it is inappropriate to discuss the issues with the person involved then ALG follows the below Complaints/Grievance Procedure.

A student grievance in writing from an International Student can be viewed and action can be taken by either the General Manager and/or the International Student (IS) Advisor. It is the policy of ALG to deal with student complaints, grievances and appeals in a constructive and timely manner to achieve positive outcomes for the Student and ALG.

ALG maintains full records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes, including a record on the students file. ALG ensures that privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout the complaint handling process for all parties concerned.

Complaints/Grievance Procedure

If the grievance cannot be solved informally or is considered serious in nature, the following steps must be taken:

1. The complaint/grievance must be submitted in writing to the General Manager or IS Advisor and must not be anonymous. Use attached *Submission Form* to submit your formal complaint.
2. The General Manager or IS Advisor will acknowledge receipt of the letter and contact the you within 7 days of receiving the written complaint/ grievance.
3. If staff are involved, relevant staff will be informed and given the opportunity to address the complaint/grievance through discussion and negotiation. A written statement may be submitted if required.
4. Appropriate outcomes will be determined by the General Manager in consultation with relevant staff and the student. These outcomes will then be implemented.
5. If necessary, consultation with independent external agencies regarding issues raised will occur and necessary actions to resolving the issues will be taken.
6. In the event of serious breaches to policy, practice or professional conduct, legal advice may be sought by you, at your own expense (unless third party mediation is accessed and in this case the mediator must be agreed upon by all parties involved and all direct costs are shared as outlined in writing).

All information gathered during the complaints/ grievance processes will be used to review the complaints/ grievance policy and procedure where necessary.

Appeals Procedure

1. Appeal Against a Course Result

You may appeal against a subject or course result within 30 days of the issue of results. Results will be reviewed by the relevant teacher and the General Manager or IS Advisor, and written notification of the outcome will be provided within 14 days of the appeal. You must remain enrolled at the College until the appeal is resolved.

2. Appeal Against a Decision to Report to DIAC

You may appeal a decision to report you to DIAC via PRISMS for:

- Non-attendance
- Non-payment of tuition fees
- Not meeting course progress requirements
- Student misbehaviour

If you disagree with a decision made by ALG to report you, you have 20 working days to access the appeals procedure and state your case. The case will be reviewed by the General Manager or IS Advisor you must remain enrolled at ALG until the appeal is resolved. Please use the *Submission Form* to submit your case.

Resolution Of Appeal

If you feel that the appeal is not adequately resolved, you will be provided with an opportunity to formally present their case to a panel or third party mediator. This may consist of internal or external parties as agreed by you and ALG. If you wish to address the panel, the request must be submitted in writing to the General Manager or IS Advisor. Once the panel has come to a decision, written notice of the outcome including reasons for the decision, will be provided to you within 14 days of the panel hearing your case.

Third Party Mediation

Whereby a situation requires external counselling or mediation or judgement, then you and ALG must both agree in writing on who this third party mediator will be, which will ensure fairness and independence. This third party will make the final judgement that will be binding to both ALG and you.

Overseas Students Ombudsman

If you wish to lodge an external appeal or complain about a decision, you can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education or training provider. See the Overseas Students Ombudsman website www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.

Other Services

Some examples of other suitable counsellors or mediators ALG can provide to students include:

- Sydney Counselling Centre - PO Box 5260, West Chatswood -Ph +612 9415 2223.
- Department Fair Trade – for issues involving monies, service or product agreements.
- Industry Associations e.g ATMS – for judgement on course content and learning outcomes.
- Third Party Lawyers – general issues not covered by the above.

If there are direct costs associated to the third party mediator e.g. an external counsellor may charge an hourly fee rate to mediate, then the costs of this mediation process will be shared equally by both ALG and you. Any expected costs of third party mediation and the agreement to share these costs must also be outlined and agreed upon in writing.

Copy of Standard 8 of the National Code 2007

Registered providers' complaints and appeals processes are independent, easily and immediately accessible and inexpensive for the parties involved.

- 8.1 The registered provider must have an appropriate internal complaints handling and appeals process that satisfies the following requirements, or can use its existing internal complaints and appeals processes as long as it meets these requirements:
 - a. a process is in place for lodging a formal complaint or appeal if the matter cannot be resolved informally, which requires a written record of the complaint or appeal to be kept
 - b. each complainant or appellant has an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost to him or herself
 - c. each party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings
 - d. the complainant or appellant is given a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome, and
 - e. the process commences within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and supporting information and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- 8.2 The registered provider must have arrangements in place for a person or body independent of and external to the registered provider to hear complaints or appeals arising from the registered provider's internal complaints and appeals process or refer students to an existing body where that body is appropriate for the complaint or appeal.
- 8.3 If the student is not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal complaint handling and appeals process, the registered provider must advise the student of his or her right to access the external appeals process at minimal or no cost.
- 8.4 If the student chooses to access the registered provider's complaints and appeals processes as per this standard, the registered provider must maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.
- 8.5 If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, the registered provider must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

Section C: Evidence Provided

Please attach to the back of this Submission Form any additional evidence that should be submitted with your appeal. This may include such evidence as Doctor's Certificates, Copy of Flight Itinerary, or any other evidence that may support your appeal. Please list evidence provided:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section D: Support Services Provided

1. Are you appealing against a decision that may affect your enrolment at the College and in turn your student visa, i.e.:

- Yes No

If NO, please proceed to Question 3. If YES, please indicate what your appeal is against:

- Non-attendance
- Non-payment of tuition fees
- Not meeting course progress requirements
- Student misbehaviour

2. Did you receive any of the following notifications (please tick if yes):

- First Warning Letter
- Second Warning Letter
- Final Warning Letter and Intention to Report (first page of this package)

3. Do you feel you received adequate support from IS Advisors in regards to the matter you are appealing against?

- Yes No

Why/Why not?

4. Any additional comments about Support Services?

You will be given a written statement on the outcome, including reasons for outcome within 14 days. This will be stored on your student record.

The College must maintain your enrolment during an appeals process. In turn, the ALG requests you maintain your enrolment to a satisfactory level until further notification of the outcome of your appeal.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section E: External Appeals (if applicable)

If an Internal Appeal is rejected, or if for any other reason you wish to access the External Appeals Process, then you and ALG must both agree in writing on who this third party mediator will be, which will ensure fairness and independence. Please indicate below that you understand the responsibilities of accessing Third Party Mediation:

- I have been informed of the Third Party Mediation Services (External Appeals) available to me and my rights to access it.
- I have been given the contact information for the Third Party Mediator to lodge my Appeal
- I accept and understand the costs that may be associated with Third Party Mediation
- I have 10 days to lodge my External Appeals otherwise the Australian Learning Group will consider the Appeal withdrawn.

Signature: _____ Date: _____