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1. Overview

Campion College is committed to an equitable and enriching environment for students which fosters academic achievement and where the interactions amongst students and staff are based on mutual respect, fairness and fulfilment of obligations. The College's Student Code of Conduct expresses the expectations which students may have of the College and which the College has of its students. The Student Code of Conduct, together with the rules and policies of the College, provide the framework for the interaction between the College, its staff and students.

The Academic Grievance Procedures is for concerns which relate to academic matters such as student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course of study. Where the issue is non-academic or administrative in nature, the procedures outlined in the Non-Academic Grievance Procedures should be followed.

Where a student has a concern regarding an academic decision or situation, the student has the right to raise and to have that grievance or appeal considered with courtesy, in a timely fashion, and without fear of prejudicial treatment. The student and respondent (if applicable) will not be victimised or discriminated against as a result of a grievance being raised.

The student and/or the respondent have the right to be accompanied and assisted by a third person such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person if they so desire. The support person is not permitted to be a legal representative of the student or the respondent. All Campion College students, regardless of the location where the matter has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study, can use the procedures outlined below. At all stages of the process, reasons and a full explanation for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures will be provided if requested by a student and/or respondent.

2. Definitions

Academic decisions means decisions requiring the exercise of academic judgment.

Administrative decisions means decisions on administrative matters, the quality of administrative service or the provision of facilities

Appeal means:

- a formal written request for reconsideration of a decision made by the College or any person or agent acting on behalf of the College and that is submitted to a person or body with authority to undertake that reconsideration within or on behalf of the College; or
- a formal written request for a ruling on the legitimacy of a decision made by the College or any person or agent acting on behalf of the College and that is submitted to an external body that has powers or authority to investigate and determine the legitimacy of the decision

Advocate means a person other than a legal practitioner or a member of staff identified by a student to represent, accompany or assist in any meetings, hearings or interviews related to a student's formal complaint or appeal

College Mediator means an independent external person appointed from time to time to investigate and/or mediate grievances.

External appeal means a formal written request for a ruling on the legitimacy of a decision made by the College or any person or agent acting on behalf of the College and that is submitted to an external body that has powers or authority to investigate and determine the legitimacy of the decision

Formal process means a process for addressing a student's grievance, dispute or appeal other than by "informal processes" (as defined later) and involving investigations and decisions being made in relation to the matter by an impartial and independent person or group of persons or body

Formal complaint means a complaint made or lodged by a student in relation to:

- any matter in the control of the College that affects the student in his/her capacity as a student or as a general member of the College community; or
- a decision made by the College or any person or body acting for, or on behalf of, the College that affects the student in his/her capacity as a student

Grievance means a problem or concern raised by a student in relation to an action, decision or omission within the control or responsibility of the College

Independent advocate means a person from the Campion College Students Association who can provide assistance to students regarding these grievance procedures and potential consequences or outcomes in the form of independent advocacy, provision of advice and/or seeking information on their behalf.

Informal process means a process which involves direct discussion between a student and a member of staff of the College, or internal mediation of a dispute, in relation to a student's grievance with a view to reaching a settlement that is acceptable to the student and the College – the process cannot be followed where a student makes a written grievance

International student means a student or intending student who is not an Australian or New Zealand citizen and does not have Australian Permanent Residency status and who has entered into a current written agreement with the College to undertake a course or program of studies with the College

Investigating Officer means a member of staff appointed by the President to investigate a formal complaint.

Mediation means processes that are designed to resolve a dispute by bringing together the people involved in the dispute to talk over their differences to try to reach a mutually acceptable resolution or settlement of the dispute; the processes are organised and facilitated by persons who are trained and experienced in dispute resolution and independent of the people involved in the dispute

"Notification" means the official notice provided to a student or provisional student (defined later) of the outcome of the student's grievance or appeal, including any related decisions and the date from which the decisions take effect

Preventative action means action, resulting from decisions reached in favour of, or in support of, a student through grievance or appeal processes, that needs to be taken by the College in future to ensure quality or compliance in relation to specific matters

Respondent means a person or persons or body concerning whose actions or omissions or decisions a student has a grievance

Responsible Officer means a person identified by the College as having authority to attempt to resolve a student's grievance through informal processes

Student means, for the purposes of these procedures, a person who is currently enrolled at the College; or an intending student of the College.

3. Grievances and Appeals Process

A student has the option of pursuing a grievance through four levels internally, as well as an external review avenue:

1. Informal discussion

2. Re-mark of assessment item (*optional*)
3. Formal written complaint or appeal to the Dean of Studies
4. Formal written complaint or appeal to an Investigating Officer or the College Mediator
5. Written request for External Review to the Council of Private Higher Education.

In relation to all levels of the process, students are encouraged to contact the Campion College Students Association who can provide an independent advocacy service.

3.1. First Level - Informal Discussion

Students should first attempt to resolve any problem by discussion and/or correspondence with the lecturer or tutor directly involved in, or close to, the situation which is the source of the grievance, as this is likely to lead to a resolution in the most straightforward way. Where a student has a concern about the mark or grade received for an assessment item or a subject, they must discuss the grievance with the lecturer, tutor or Subject Co-ordinator before considering a request for remark or a formal appeal.

Where this does not lead to a resolution, or is not occurring in a timely manner, the student may choose to proceed to a remark of an assessment item or a formal complaint or appeal. There is a fee to have an assessment item remarked (currently \$55).

3.2. Second Level – Request for a Re-mark of an Assessment Item (*Optional*)

If the matter pertains to the result received for a particular assessment item, the student can decide to submit a request to have that assessment item re-marked by another academic. This is an optional step and there is a fee for the service provided, currently \$55. To request a re-mark, a clean copy of the assessment item (if available) must be attached to the request form and submitted to Student Administration with the applicable fee.

3.3. Third Level – Formal written complaint or appeal to the Dean of Studies

If students want to pursue a formal process, they should take their complaint or appeal to the Dean of Studies. The Dean of Studies will deal with the matter within 10 working days of receipt of the formal written complaint or appeal.

Note that where a student experiences illness or misadventure during the teaching period or during an examination, these are not normally grounds for a complaint or an appeal. Provision for these circumstances is made through a Request for Special Consideration, which must be lodged prior to the end of the examination period.

Where a student complaint or appeal includes allegations concerning the conduct or actions of a staff member, the staff member (the respondent) will be immediately notified of the particulars of the matter. The staff member must be given an adequate opportunity to respond to the allegations.

3.4. Fourth Level – Formal written complaint or appeal to an Investigating Officer

If dissatisfied with the response that has been received from the Dean of Studies, or the time taken under the Third Level to respond, the student may submit the complaint or appeal in writing to be considered by an Investigating Officer who may be

- an member of the academic staff, or
- the Registrar, or
- the College Mediator,

at the choice of the complainant. The Investigating Officer so chosen must declare an conflict of interest in writing to the President.

The submission must set out the grounds for the complaint or appeal and should include supporting material, such as previous correspondence and a description of the actions taken to date to resolve the matter.

The appeal should be lodged with the Registrar (unless the Registrar is part of the complaint, in which case the Deputy Registrar) and explicitly seek the involvement of the Investigating Officer.

The Investigating Officer will respond to the student within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint or appeal to advise the action taken in respect of the appeal (see 3.4.2 below)..

3.4.1. Consideration of Complaint or Appeal

On receipt of a student complaint or appeal, the Investigating Officer considers the complaint or appeal, and may take the following action:

- (a) Dismiss the complaint or appeal because the academic action involved is appropriate and the student has not presented sufficient argument to justify further consideration of the matter. The student is advised of the outcome with supporting reasons.
- (b) Refer the student and the complaint or appeal to the appropriate academic staff member because, in the opinion of the Investigating Officer or College Mediator, the initial consideration of the matter has not been fully undertaken. If, after this consideration, the student is still dissatisfied, the student can request that the Investigating Officer or College Mediator reconsider the matter.
- (c) Uphold the appeal and recommend change to the academic decision or matter.
- (d) Find that the appeal presented by the student constitutes sufficient justification to require the Dean of Studies to take certain actions in order to review the original academic decision or matter (for example, appoint an independent examiner, set another assessment task).
- (e) Take such other reasonable action which, in the opinion of the Investigating Officer or College Mediator, will assist the resolution of the complaint or appeal. If meetings, interviews or hearings are held, both the student and the staff member have the right for an advocate to attend if desired.

3.4.2. Appeals Report

The outcome of the Investigative Officer or College Mediator's deliberations will be a report setting out the decision, the modifications to the original academic decision or matter where appropriate, and the reasons for the decision. The report is provided to the student and to the Dean of Studies. A summary report outlining the number of academic complaints or appeals lodged and outcomes (without providing specific appeal details) will be provided to the Academic Board each semester.

3.5. Fifth Level - External Review

In the event that the decision at Stage 2 does not resolve the issue, the student may decide to proceed to the third stage of the process. This stage is to seek an external review by the independent External Reviewer appointed by Campion College for this purpose.

- The College has an agreement with the Council of Private Higher Education (COPHE) to provide an independent External Reviewer to review decisions made by the College.
- The contact person is the Chief Executive Officer.
- The contact details for COPHE are: Suite 59, Level 5, 47 Neridah Street, Chatswood, NSW 2067; Phone 02 8021 0841; www.cophe.edu.au.

Students considering this stage must initiate the final stage process within four weeks of the decision from the second stage being communicated in writing.

The task of the External Reviewer is to review the consistency of the College's decisions with the published policies of the College. The decision of the Academic Complaints and Appeals Committee meeting(s) at which the decision was originally made and all tabled documents dealing with the complaint or appeal must be forwarded to the External Reviewer.

The External Reviewer must address a complaint requiring his or her consideration within 15 working days of the receipt of the written request. The External Reviewer must give reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures if requested by the student or respondent. If the External Reviewer makes recommendations in relation to a grievance they have reviewed, the External Reviewer will forward those recommendations to the President within 15 working days of the receipt of the written request. The President will ensure that the recommendations are implemented as soon as practicable, and within a maximum period of six months.

4. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Records of all formal grievances and appeals, applications for review of decisions and outcomes of the process will be kept for a period of five (5) years. These records are strictly confidential. Parties to the complaint or appeal will be allowed supervised access to these records.

5. Timing

Students will be advised of specific deadlines to submit a grievance or appeal regarding certain academic decisions of the College, such as appealing against final assessment grades. Where a

deadline has been specified in writing to students, Stage 1 grievances or appeals after that date will not be accepted.

For all other academic matters, the normal time limit for lodging a formal complaint or appeal is three months from the date of the original decision or event which is the subject of the complaint or appeal. Students are encouraged to lodge complaints or appeals promptly to avoid problems which may arise through the unavailability of documentation or staff.

Students should understand that delays in lodging complaints or appeals may result in critical deadlines passing and should also be aware of the consequences of these deadlines. For example, an appeal against an academic decision not to grant recognition of prior learning for a subject may be successful, however it may be too late to withdraw from that subject.

6. Approval and Distribution

The student has the right to be assisted or accompanied by a support person as stipulated in Section 1 of this document. Minutes will be taken and include

- time and date,
- names and positions of those in attendance,
- decision, including reasons for the decision.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on 4 February 2014. It is published on the College web site (www.campion.edu.au) and in the Student Handbook.

- The Dean of Studies is responsible for the training of academic staff in the application of the policy.
- The Registrar is responsible for the preparation of professional staff in its application when required.

This policy is in place without prejudice to the exercise of civil rights by a student to appeal as appropriate to the

- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA): <http://www.teqsa.gov.au/complaints/>, and/or
- Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO): <http://www.oso.gov.au/making-a-complaint/> in the case of International Students.