

Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Student Grievance Procedure

Document Reference Number	HEP18/31
Superseded Version	Student Grievance Procedure v2.2
NSWIOP Document Number	IOP16/5024[v2]
TRIM Document Classification	Governance
Framework Part	Part 2 – Course Support Standards
Approval date	1 July 2020
Publication date	02 July2020
Summary	Student grievance procedures
Keywords	Grievance; complaint; formal and informal grievance resolution
Authoring Portfolio	Mental Health
Contact	Executive Director
Consultation	as per Document History
Distribution	Students and staff at HETI Higher Education
Applies to	Higher Education
Related documents	HETI Higher Education: Admissions Policy; Advance Standing; Articulation Pathways; Assessment Policy; Enrolment; Progression and Unsatisfactory Academic Progress; Review of Grades; Special Consideration; Student Fees; Complaints; Grievances/ Complaints Register; Tuition Assurance Policy and Statement.
Review date	July 2023
Risk Assessment	As per Attachment 1 to this document.

**Issued under the authority of the Health Education and Training Institute Higher
Education Governing Council**

Please note printed copies of this document are uncontrolled, to ensure you are viewing the latest version of this document, please refer to our website <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>

Health Education and Training Institute Student Grievance Procedure

Objectives

1. The objective of this procedure is to ensure:
 - a. Students have ready access to effective and fair grievance processes;
 - b. Students are encouraged to provide feedback about any aspect of Health Education Training Institute (HETI) Higher Education's operations without fear of reprisal;
 - c. All grievances will be treated with sensitivity and with due regard to confidentiality and procedural fairness including review by an appropriate independent third party if internal processes fail to resolve a grievance;
 - d. All views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a grievance is not discriminated against nor victimised;
 - e. The complainant has an opportunity to formally present their case and each party to a grievance may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings at that party's own cost;
 - f. A full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided if so requested by the complainant or a respondent;
 - g. Where the internal or external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, HETI will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome;
 - h. A complainant shall have access to the internal stages of this grievance procedure at no cost. Costs for an external appeal will be shared equally by HETI and the complainant (refer to section 21).

Overview

2. The Health Education and Training Institute is committed to providing a safe and rewarding student experience. Feedback is welcomed as a mechanism for continuous improvement. Students have access to academic appeals and grievance processes that are conducted with the aim of speedy and effective resolution.
3. In relation to non-academic grievances, the term "complainant" applies to both current students of HETI Higher Education and prospective persons seeking to enroll with

HETI Higher Education. Complainants are entitled to access the grievance procedures set out in this procedure regardless of the location of the campus of HETI Higher Education at which the grievance has arisen or the mode in which they study.

Definitions

4. A grievance is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction from students with any aspect of their experience. Grievances can be:
 - a. Minor – those issues that are suitable to be addressed internally and resolved easily.
 - b. Major – those issues that require a formal process for resolution and would typically be classified as a complaint.
5. A complainant is person who expresses a grievance of any type.

Student Complaints Procedure

6. HETI Higher Education promotes a culture of collaboration, openness, and respect and encourages wherever possible complaint resolution by a process of discussion and mediation. Students are welcome to raise grievances about any aspects of HETI Higher Education's operations or in regard to any of its staff regardless of their designation or employment type. These may be raised and dealt with through either informal or formal approaches as appropriate.

Informal approach

7. Informally raising a concern often (but not always) indicates that the grievance is not serious or complex in nature. This grievance should be directed to the staff member closest to the source of the issue in question. In most cases for students, this will be the Cohort Convenor or an academic lead. For those seeking to become students an initial point of contact could be the administration staff, contactable on (02) 9840 3833. The complaint should be made as soon as possible after the issue in question has arisen to pursue effective and timely resolution. Even though it is not mandatory for complainants to raise a grievance formally it is highly recommended.
8. A resolution to the grievance may be sought as quickly as possible. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their direct attempts at informal resolution further resolution may be sought using the formal approach outlined in the following section.
9. The staff member may use discretion to determine if any informal grievance should be

logged in the HETI Higher Education Complaints Register. However, it is recommended all complaints should be logged. The purpose of the register is to ensure a record of significant grievance or complaint for review and future improvement opportunity. This register will importantly also be used to record finalisation of registered matters.

Formal Approach

10. This is a formal process for more serious or complex grievances, or for matters unresolved or inappropriate to deal with informally. All formal complaints will be submitted in writing by email or through using the complaints/grievances form available from the Cohort Convenor or from Administration. These will be entered in the HETI Higher Education Complaints Register.
11. Student grievances can fall into two categories: academic and non-academic.

Academic Grievances

12. Academic grievances or complaints deal directly with the student's learning experience and might be general in nature or relate to matters covered in the HETI Higher Education Academic Policies. These latter issues would be matters concerning grievances in relation to: course admission; the granting of advanced standing; progression in a course; applications for the review of grades achieved; special consideration requests; and the investigation of allegations of academic misconduct.
13. Where these issues are in dispute, the academic policies concerned provide guidance on dispute resolution. These policies are:
 - *Admissions Policy* for all matters associated with admission to higher education courses (available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>)
 - *Advanced Standing Policy* for all matters associated with the granting of credit for previous studies and/or professional experience (available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>)
 - *Progression and Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Policy* for all matters associated with course progression (available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>)
 - *Assessment Policy – Criteria and Standards-Based Assessment* for all matters associated with disputes concerning the grading of assessment tasks (available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>)
 - *Review of Grades Policy* for all matters associated with disputes concerning

the award of grades (available at available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>)

- *Special Consideration Policy* for all matters associated with provisions for students who experience serious misadventure, accident or extenuating circumstances (available at available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>)
- *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* for all matters associated with breaches of academic integrity (available at available at <http://www.heti.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>).

14. If an academic grievance cannot be resolved informally, a formal academic complaint may be made in accordance with the Stages of Formal Grievance Management stipulated in this policy.

Non-Academic Grievances

15. All grievances deemed non-academic are likely to deal with other aspects of the student experience and could cover a range of corporate or procedural matters. These should be dealt with initially with the staff member concerned. If the grievance is about the staff member with whom the student is dealing, it may be directed to the staff member's supervising officer for resolution. If a non-academic grievance cannot be resolved informally, a formal academic grievance may be made in accordance with the Stages of Formal Grievance Management stipulated in this policy.

Stages of Formal Grievance Management

Stage One Internal Appeals

16. Formal grievances (complaints) must be submitted in writing to the Student Liaison Officer or Officer specified in the policy in reference to which the complaint has been made and sent to: complaints@heti.edu.au.
17. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in writing within five working days and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the grievance handling process as soon as practicable.
18. The Officer specified in the policy in reference to which the complaint has been made will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve.
19. Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face interview with the complainant. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview

the complainant or respondent may ask another person to accompany them.

20. The Officer specified in the policy in reference to which the complaint has been made will then endeavour to resolve the complaint and will provide a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within twenty working days of receipt of the grievance. The report will further advise the complainant of their right to access the internal appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance. The Officer may, in accordance with the procedures stipulated in the policy in reference to which the complaint was made, refer an unresolved grievance to the committee specified in the relevant policy. Grievances that remain unresolved at Stage 1 level may proceed to Stage 2 as specified below.

Stage Two – Appeals to the Executive Director:

21. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance they may lodge an appeal with the Executive Director (who is senior to the original decision maker) within twenty working days of receiving notification of the outcome of their formal grievance. The Executive Director will appoint an appropriate person or committee to consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within ten working days.
22. Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these interviews.
23. Following the consultation, the Executive Director, or their nominee, will provide a written report to the complainant advising the further steps taken to address the complaint, including the reasons for the decision, within twenty working days of receipt of the appeal. The report will further advise the complainant of their right to access the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal. Grievances that remain unresolved at Stage 2 level may proceed to Stage 3 as specified below.

Stage Three – External appeal grievances

24. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal then an independent mediator can be requested through the Resolution Institute. Complainants can contact the Resolution Institute directly as follows:

Address: Level 1 & 2
13-15 Bridge Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: 02 9251 3366

Free call: 1800 651 650

Fax: 02 9251 3733

Email: infoaus@resolution.institute

Costs of such mediation will be shared by HETI and the complainant as per Clause 1(h). As a guide mediator's costs would be \$440 (as at August 2018) for the first four hours (or part thereof). Subsequent hours would be \$165 per hour. It is common for most disputes to be resolved within the initial four hour allocation.

25. HETI will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review of the complaint and the Executive Director will ensure that they are fully implemented within 30 days of receipt of the recommendations.

Further action

26. If a complaint still remains unresolved after the external dispute resolution process, the complainant may decide to refer the matter to an external agency such as The Anti-Discrimination Board or The Office of Fair Trading.
27. The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws. Also, these procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

Enrolment status

28. Where a current student chooses to access this policy and procedure, HETI Higher Education will maintain that person's enrolment while the grievance handling process is ongoing.

Record keeping & confidentiality

29. A written record of all grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes

shall be maintained for a period of at least five years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the Executive Director HETI Higher Education. These records will be maintained at:

HETI Higher Education
North Parramatta Campus 5
Fleet Street
North Parramatta, NSW 2151, Australia

30. All records relating to grievances will be treated as confidential and will be covered by HETI's Higher Education Privacy and Personal Information Policy.

Other responsibilities

31. Students may withdraw a complaint at any time during the complaint resolution process, and the complaint will be deemed to be resolved.
32. Students having complaint concerning the application of Chapter 3 – Assistance to Students – FEE-HELP of the Higher Education Support Act 2003, may have a right to apply to the Commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal (see Student Fees Policy for information on such appeals) for a review in relation to decisions concerning grievances about their FEE-HELP support, including when decisions are delayed.
33. The Teaching and Learning Committee will review academic issues in the grievances/Complaints Register on a regular basis to ensure appropriate outcomes and identify improvement opportunities as possible. All grievances or complaints related to non-academic matters will be reviewed by the HETI Higher Education Executive Group for determination of quality improvement measures to reduce the likelihood of raised grievances.

Related Documents

- HETI Higher Education Admissions Policy
- HETI Higher Education Advance Standing
- HETI Higher Education Articulation Pathways
- HETI Higher Education Assessment Policy
- HETI Higher Education Enrolment
- HETI Higher Education Progression and Unsatisfactory Academic Progress
- HETI Higher Education Review of Grades
- HETI Higher Education Special Consideration
- HETI Higher Education Student Fees
- HETI Higher Education Complaints Form
- HETI Higher Education Grievances/ Complaints Register
- HETI Higher Education Tuition Assurance Policy and Statement

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Issued	Status	Author	Reason for Change
v1.0	24 February 2016	Final	Rod West	Approved Higher Education Governing Council
v2.0	13 June 2017	Final	Rhonda Loftus	Governing Council Out of Session Approval
v2.1	20 November 2017	Final	Rhonda Loftus	Minor amendment
v3.0	27 August 2018	Final	Rhonda Loftus	Approved for publication Fee HELP approval and fees
v1.0	27 August 2018	Final	Valerie Rhodes	Updated logos, template and new TRIM Reference
v1.1	January 2019	Draft	David Baxter	Policy review, major amendments and draft.
v1.1	4 February 2019	Draft	Silke O'Callaghan	Endorsed at the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Committee
v1.1	28 February 2019	Draft	Rhonda Loftus	Approved by the Higher Education Academic Board
v2.0	26 March 2019	Final	Jana Chadid	New TRIM reference, minor format amendments, published version
v2.1	03 February 2020	Noted	Susan Grimes	Organisational changes; new position title, and responsibilities and new definitions.
v2.1	18 February 2020	Final	-	Published
v2.2	30 June 2020	Draft	Susan Grimes	Minor edits regarding clarity between complaints and grievances.
v2.2	30 June 2020	Final	-	Published Approved by the DET.
v2.3	1 July 2020	Draft	Rhonda Loftus	Edits to clarify definitions of grievances (point #3)

v2.3	02 July 2020	Final	-	Published Approved by the DET
------	--------------	-------	---	----------------------------------

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST – COMPLIANCE SELF ASSESSMENT

Assessed by:	Date of Assessment:		
IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS	Not commenced	Partial compliance	Full compliance
1.			
	Notes:		
2.			
	Notes: Relevant Director		
3.			
	Notes: TRIM reference number -		
4.			
	Notes:		
5.			
6.			
	Notes:		

RISK ASSESSMENT

<Document Title>

1.	Policy/Process being assessed	Notes	
	Student Grievance Procedure v1.0		
	Document Number		
	Publication date		
	Scheduled review date		1 June 2019
	Date of this risk assessment		
	Name & position of assessing officer		
2.	Summary of policy purpose (from PD Cover Page)		
	Student grievance procedures		
3.	Agency (HETI) key roles & responsibilities as per PD		
4.	Risk Assessment		
4.1	<u>Identification of risks</u> – what might happen & how?		
	1.		
	2.		
4.2	<u>Analysis of risks</u> – combined estimate of the consequence & likelihood of the risk, using NSW Health Risk Matrix (attached)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequence: • Likelihood: • Risk rating: 		
4.3	<u>Evaluation of risks</u> – comparison of the level of risk as determined against a predetermined criteria to determine whether a level of risk is acceptable or needs to be treated.		
	Risk level assessed after implementing treatment:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequence: • Likelihood: • Risk rating: 		
	Evaluation –		

Risk Assessment Approval

Name & position of approving T2 Officer:	
Date:	