

STUDENT GRIEVANCES, APPEALS AND APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Principles

This document has been formulated to provide a clear statement of the University's processes for handling student grievances, appeals and applications for review regarding academic and non-academic matters.

Study at the University presents opportunities for interacting with other members of the University community. The University recognises and values the diversity of student experiences and expectations, and is committed to treating Students, both academically and administratively, in a fair and transparent manner.

The University reaffirms its commitment to:

- high academic standards;
- intellectual freedom and social responsibility;
- recognition of the importance of ideas and the pursuit of critical and open inquiry;
- tolerance, honesty and respect as the hallmarks of relationships throughout the University community; and
- high standards of ethical behaviour.

The University will handle all Student grievances, appeals and applications for review in a procedurally fair manner, having regard to the principles of timeliness, confidentiality, and freedom from victimisation.

2. Definitions

In this document:

ESOS Act means the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.

Student means a person enrolled at the University of Sydney:

- (a) in an award course;
- (b) as a non-award Student; or
- (c) as a cross institutional Student.

International Student means a Student who holds a Student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include Students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations.

Grievance means a statement of concern by a Student that:

- (a) has been reported by the Student to a University officer; and
- (b) requires action or a response under the statutes, rules, resolutions or policies of, or governing, the University of Sydney.

General feedback and comment from Students about administration, academic programs and services will not be treated by the University as a grievance unless action or a response is required under the statutes, rules, resolutions or policies of the University.

3. Academic appeals

Coverage

This section applies to all current Students of the University of Sydney, in respect of all grievances relating to academic matters. It must be read in conjunction with the statutes, rules, and resolutions of the University.

Procedure

The University's procedures for Student appeals against academic decisions are set out in the *University of Sydney (Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions) Rule 2006*.

4. Applications for review of Learning Entitlement / Fee-Help decisions

Coverage

This section applies to all current Students seeking internal review of a decision by the University to refuse to:

- (a) re-credit some or all of a Student's learning entitlement for a unit of study; or
- (b) re-credit a Student's fee-help balance.

It must be read in conjunction with the statutes, rules, and resolutions of the University.

Procedure

- 4.1 A Student whose interests are affected by a decision of the University relating to (a) or (b) above may request the University to review the decision.
- 4.2 A Student seeking review of a decision relating to (a) or (b) above must make their application for review in writing within 28 days of the day on which the Student first received notice of the decision.
- 4.3 The written application must set out the reasons for making the application, and be addressed to one of the following Reviewers:
 - the Registrar, The University of Sydney, A14;
 - the Director of the Student Centre, The University of Sydney, F07; or
 - the Director, Corporate Services, A14.
- 4.4 The Reviewer will acknowledge receipt of the application for review in writing within 10 working days, and inform the Student that if the Reviewer has not advised the Student of their decision within 45 days of receipt of the application for review, the Reviewer will be taken to have confirmed the original decision.

- 4.5 After receiving the application, the Reviewer will reconsider the decision and:
- (i) confirm the decision;
 - (ii) vary the decision; or
 - (iii) set the decision aside and substitute a new decision.
- 4.6 The Reviewer will provide reasons for their decision to confirm, vary or set aside the decision in writing to the Student.
- 4.7 The Reviewer's decision to confirm, vary or set aside the decision takes affect:
- (i) on the day specified in the reasons for the decision; or
 - (ii) if a day is not specified, on the day on which the decision to confirm, vary or set aside the decision was made.
- 4.8 The Reviewer will advise the Student of the Student's right to apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for a review of the decision of the Reviewer.
- 4.9 The Reviewer will provide contact details for the closest Administrative Appeals Tribunal Registry, and the approximate cost of lodging an appeal with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

5. Non-academic grievances

Coverage

This section applies to all current and prospective Students of the University of Sydney, in respect of all grievances relating to non-academic matters. It must be read in conjunction with the statutes, rules, and resolutions of the University. It does not apply to complaints of harassment and discrimination, which are handled under the University's *Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy and Resolution Procedure*.

Procedure

- 5.1 A Student who is concerned about a non-academic decision made or action taken by the University should, in the first instance, discuss their grievance with the relevant University officer. The relevant University officer will notify the Student of any action taken or any decision made by them in relation to the grievance.
- 5.2 If, following discussion with the relevant University officer, a Student's grievance is not resolved to their satisfaction, the Student must address their grievance in writing to the relevant Head of School or Head of Administrative Unit. The relevant Head of School or Administrative Unit will acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing within 10 working days and will subsequently notify the Student of any action taken and provide reasons for any decision made by them in relation to the grievance.
- 5.3 If, following communication with the relevant Head of School or Administrative Unit, a Student's grievance is not resolved to their satisfaction, the Student must address their grievance in writing to the Dean of their Faculty (where the grievance relates to a non-academic decision or action taken by a University officer within the Faculty) or the relevant Principal Officer (where the grievance

relates to a non-academic decision or action taken by a University officer outside the Faculty). The Dean of the Faculty or the Principal Officer will acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing within 10 working days and will subsequently notify the Student in writing of any action taken and provide reasons for any decision made by them in relation to the grievance.

6. International Students

If an International Student is not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal grievance and appeals processes set out above, they will be advised of their right to complain to the NSW Ombudsman.

7. Authority

This document was approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 5 January 2005.
Amendments to this document were approved by the Registrar on 30 June 2007.