

## **Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures**

Headmasters Academy Pty Ltd has established a fair, objective and accessible dispute resolution procedure that attempts to resolve grievances effectively, locally and with a spirit of conciliation.

### **Principles**

- The complaints procedure is based on the principles of Natural Justice. Consequently, anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
- Grievances will be resolved as swiftly as possible at no cost to the student.
- Students are entitled to have a support person with them during the complaints and appeals process.
  - The aim of the Headmasters complaints process is to prevent unnecessary delay, whilst ensuring a full and fair assessment of the circumstances of any individual complaint.
  - Grievances provide an important source of feedback on Headmasters' performance. As such, Headmasters will monitor the registration of complaints and the progress made towards resolution. Complaints and Appeals are also reviewed annually to identify any trends or issues that can be resolved at institutional level.
- All complaints are treated confidentially and privacy will be maintained as required by the law.
  - Students have a right to complain to relevant external bodies at any point during Headmasters' complaints and appeals process, however students are encouraged to exhaust internal processes before seeking external recourse.

### **Lodging a complaint**

- Any student who feels they have been treated unfairly or unhappy with a Headmasters service can lodge a grievance.
- The following steps should be taken:
  - In the first instance, the student should have an informal discussion with the party involved, where possible. If the student is uncomfortable or unable to do so, they are encouraged to informally raise the matter with the head of the particular department or the Campus Director. Where the matter is of an academic nature, students are encouraged to speak to the relevant Program Manager.
  - If the issue raised by the student cannot be resolved informally, the student is invited to put in a written complaint addressed to the Campus Director.
  - The complaint should be comprehensively documented including the following details:
    - ✓ the learner's name and contact details,
    - ✓ any relevant documentation, and dates, locations, and witnesses as appropriate,
    - ✓ any previous efforts to resolve the matter.
  - A written complaint is deemed to be a formal complaint and must be submitted to Headmasters for consideration and processing.
  - Once Headmasters receives a formal complaint, it will be reviewed by the Campus Director within seven days of receipt. The Campus Director must also record details of the Complaint in Headmasters' Complaints and Appeals Register.
  - The student may be invited to provide further information or discuss the matter with the reviewer.
  - Generally a decision will be made and conveyed to the student within 10 days of the formal complaint being acknowledged. Where resolution takes longer than the 10 days the student will be informed of the complaint's progress in the complaints process.
  - Once the matter is resolved all parties will be notified of the resolution and outcomes of the complaint in writing. The letter will also outline avenues of appeal in the event the student is dissatisfied with the outcome.
  - The complaint and outcome will be added into Headmasters' Complaints and Appeals Register and documentation filed in the students' file.

### **Lodging an appeal**

- If a student disagrees with a decision made by Headmasters following the complaints process, they can submit a notice of appeal for a review of the decision.

### **Grounds of appeal**

An appeal of a decision may be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- that new evidence of a relevant nature is available
- that the decision was made without due consideration of relevant facts, evidence or circumstances
- that there was bias, prejudice or a conflict of interest by the investigative or hearing body, or
- that some significant policy/procedural irregularity occurred in the investigative or hearing process.

### **Students may *not* Appeal against Academic Results based on:**

- the course structure and assessment methods;
- student workload or the amount of work the student has done;
- financial implications of not passing the course;
- grades received by the student in other courses;
- the need for additional marks to enable a pass/better grade.

Where an appeal does not meet the abovementioned grounds, this may lead to the appeal being summarily dismissed.

- All notices of appeal must be submitted in writing and must be made within 10 working days of the initial decision being made.
- The appeal must set out the grounds of appeal and provide evidence supporting the grounds of appeal or any new information not previously provided in support of the complaint. It should also specify the outcome sought. There is no cost incurred for the appellant during the appeals process and parties will not be discriminated or victimised during the complaint process.
  - Upon receiving a notice of appeal Headmasters will acknowledge the student's appeal and record details of the Appeal in the Complaints and Appeals Register.
- Every attempt will be made to resolve the dispute within 10 working days of the date of the notice of appeal. Where there are delays to this timeframe, the student will be kept informed as to the progress of the matter.
- All appeals are reviewed by the Board of Directors or their delegate.
- No member of the appeal process will have been previously associated with the complaint.
- Once a decision is made on the appeal, the student will be provided with a written statement outlining the outcome of the appeal and giving reasons for the decision. The student will also be that they can access external complaints and appeals processes for review of the decision should they see it fit.
- If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal s/he may lodge an external appeal or complaint with third party. International students may appeal to the overseas student ombudsman [www.oso.gov.au](http://www.oso.gov.au) or phone 1300 362 072. Domestic students may appeal to Leadr by email to [leadr@leadr.com.au](mailto:leadr@leadr.com.au) or by telephone on 1800 651 650.