



# Fact Sheet: How to make a complaint or appeal

Alderdice & Associates

www.alderdiceandassociates.com.au

## HELP US TO DO A BETTER JOB

We hope that you never need to complain, but if you do have a grievance, we want to know about it.

Alderdice & Associates is committed to providing quality services, and we are always looking for opportunities to improve what we do. Letting us know of a problem or grievance helps us to fix it for you and improve our process to make sure we learn from any mistakes.

Contact us to discuss any concerns or have the complaints process explained to you in more detail.



## ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE HANDLING PROCEDURE

Alderdice & Associates is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system which is easily accessible to all complainants.

Alderdice & Associates aims to:

- Develop a culture that views grievances as an opportunity to improve the organisation;
- Set in place a grievance handling system that is client focused and helps Alderdice & Associates to prevent grievances from recurring;
- Ensure that any grievances are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality;
- Ensure that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a grievance is not discriminated against nor victimised;
- Ensure that there is a consistent response to grievances.

A grievance can be defined as a person's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of Alderdice & Associates' services and activities, including both academic and non-academic matters, such as:

- the enrolment, induction/orientation process;
- the quality of education provided;
- academic issues, including student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study;
- handling of personal information and access to personal records;
- the way someone has been treated.

These grievance procedures are designed to ensure that Alderdice & Associates responds effectively to individual cases of dissatisfaction.

## Definitions

**Complainant** refers to the person(s) who formally instigates a grievance.

**Respondent** refers to the person(s) or institution against whom the grievance is lodged.

**Informal Grievance** refers to a range of processes, such as a discussion, a request or a query lodged with a staff member.

**Formal Grievance** refers to the formal lodging of a written grievance.

## Who is Covered?

This policy is designed to cover all complainants including:

- Individuals who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance (Australian citizens or permanent humanitarian visa holders who are resident in Australia for the duration of a VET unit of study);
- Individuals who are not eligible for VET FEE-HELP assistance (permanent residents who are not permanent humanitarian visa holders and New Zealand citizens).

In relation to non-academic grievances, the term "complainant" applies to both current students of Alderdice & Associates and persons seeking to enroll with Alderdice & Associates.

These grievance procedures will be made available to complainants regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the mode in which they study or their place of residence.

## What could I do if I have an issue and not a formal grievance?

Complainants are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties informally with the person(s) concerned. Staff are available to assist in the resolution of issues at this level. Complainants may raise an informal grievance by contacting Alderdice & Associates in person or by phoning 02 9785 1425, and asking to speak to the Vet Fee Help Manager.



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## ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE HANDLING PROCEDURE

This procedure can be utilised by complainants to submit a grievance of an academic or non-academic nature.

Grievances of an academic nature include issues related to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study. Grievances of a nonacademic nature cover all other matters including grievances in relation to personal information that Alderdice & Associates holds in relation to an individual.

During all stages of this procedure Alderdice & Associates will take all steps to ensure that:

- the complainant and any respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against;
- 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;
- 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;
- where the internal or external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, Alderdice & Associates will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome;
- there is no cost to the complainant to utilise this grievance procedure.

### Stage one – Formal grievance:

Formal grievances must be submitted in writing marked to the attention of the Vet Fee Help Manager as follows:

Alderdice & Associates  
Vet Fee Help Manager  
P.O. Box 162  
Panania, 2213 NSW

Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged in writing. The grievance handling process will commence within ten working days of receipt of the formal grievance and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

### Stage two – Internal appeal:

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance they may lodge an appeal within 20 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of their formal grievance.

The Managing Director will appoint a senior authorized officer or a committee to consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within ten working days.

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.

Following the consultation, the senior authorized officer, or the committee, will provide a written report to the complainant advising the further steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within ten working days.

### Stage three – External appeal:

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal then an independent mediator will be sourced by Alderdice & Associates through LEADR, the Association of Dispute Resolvers.

Costs of such mediation will be shared equally by Alderdice & Associates and the Complainant.

Alderdice & Associates agrees to be bound by the External Reviewer's recommendations and the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within 30 days of receipt of the report from the External Reviewer.

### Further action

If a grievance still remains unresolved after the external appeal, the complainant may decide to refer the matter to the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73.

Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws. These procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.