

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Part A – All Students

Section 7 – Complaints, Grievances and Appeals

ALG ensure that all students have a fair, inexpensive complaints and appeals process that includes access to an independent external body if necessary.

Foreword to International Students on Complaints, Grievances and Appeals

International students should also read the specific information on the complaints and appeals process and how it impacts your visa conditions further in this handbook.

Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure

Informal Resolution as the First Step

ALG acknowledges that students from time to time may need assistance with their study program or have other concerns.

The initial step in *any* complaint or grievance is to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue with the relevant staff/person(s) involved. If this has been done and the matter is still not resolved or if it is inappropriate to discuss the issues with the person involved then the 'Internal Appeal' process will apply.

Internal Appeal

If the grievance cannot be solved informally or is considered serious in nature, the following steps must be taken by way of an internal appeal:

1. Complaints or grievance should be submitted in writing within 20 days of the occurrence or incident taking place e.g. appealing an assessment result should occur 20 days after the result being given to the student. ALG will only review complaints or grievances raised after this 20 day period in exceptional or compelling circumstances.
2. The complaint/grievance must be submitted in writing. It must not be anonymous. It must be delivered to the relevant student advisor team. Students have access to a formal Complaints and Grievance Form available on the website or from a Student Advisor.
3. ALG will acknowledge receipt of your complaint or grievance within 10 working days and an outcome, including the reasons for the outcome will be provided once finalised.
4. If required, relevant staff will be informed and given the opportunity to address the complaint/grievance through discussion and negotiation. A written statement by staff may be submitted if required.
5. Appropriate outcomes will be determined by senior staff of ALG in consultation with relevant staff and the student. These outcomes will then be implemented.
6. If necessary, consultation with independent external agencies regarding issues raised will occur and necessary actions to resolving the issues will be taken.
7. In the event of serious breaches to policy, practice or professional conduct, either party, being ALG or the affected student/client, may wish to seek legal advice at either party's own expense.
8. All information gathered during the complaints/grievance processes will be used to review the complaints / grievance policy and procedure where necessary.

9. The student will be given a written statement on the outcome, including reasons for the outcome. This will be stored on student's record.
10. Any party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at relevant meetings.

External Appeal

If the student feels that the internal appeal is not adequately resolved, they will be provided with an opportunity to formally present their case to a third party mediator.

Whereby a situation requires external counselling or mediation or judgement, then the student and ALG must both agree in writing on who this third party mediator will be, which will ensure fairness and independence. This third party will make the final judgement that will be binding to both ALG and student.

Some examples of suitable mediators ALG can provide to students include:

- Department of Fair Trading – for issues involving monies, service or product agreements.
- Industry Associations e.g. ATMS – for judgement on course content and learning outcomes.

In the case where there may be direct costs associated to the third party mediator e.g. an external counsellor may charge an hourly fee rate to mediate, then the costs of this mediation process will be shared equally by both ALG and the student. Any expected costs of third party mediation and the agreement to share these costs will also be outlined and agreed upon in writing.

The external appeals process needs to be initiated by the student within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of the internal appeals process.

Correspondence to be in Writing

Any initial complaint, grievances or appeal needs to be lodged in writing.

All formal correspondence in the matter between both ALG and the students will be continued to be made in writing for record keeping purposes and clarity.

Records of Complaints, Grievances and Appeals

ALG maintains full records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes.

This information can be stored as notes on the students file, written correspondence between ALG and the students or other documentation as necessary.

ALG ensures that privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout the complaint handling process for all parties concerned.