



RTO Code: 40921

South Coast Academy

SCA VSL STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES (ACADEMIC & NON-ACADEMIC)

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- Student/s refers to all persons enrolled with South Coast Academy (SCA) including persons enrolled in an approved course under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016*. For the purposes of non-academic grievances, the term Student also refers to a person seeking to enrol with SCA
- Complainant refers to Students (as defined above) who have lodged a grievance with SCA
- Grievance refers to an official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong, which has resulted in what is believed to be by the Complainant, unfair treatment

1. Overview

SCA is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling procedure for all Students. This policy covers both academic and non-academic grievances and appeals.

In accordance with the *VET Student Loans Act 2016* and the associated VET guidelines, as an approved course provider, the following policy and procedural document has been created to provide clarity around the processes and procedures for student grievance (*Subsection 88, VET Student Loan Rules 2016*).

This policy has also been developed to support *Standard 6 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) 2015*.

Academic matters relate to VET student progression, assessment, course content and awards for an approved course.

Non-academic matters do NOT relate to VET student progression, assessment, course content or awards for an approved course, but can include those matters relating to enrolment in a course and personal information held by the provider. Non-academic matters may also include, but are not limited to, operational, administrative, discrimination and harassment issues.

This policy does not replace or modify policies or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Also, the dispute resolution procedures outlined below in this document do not restrict an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

If a Student chooses to access this grievance handling procedure, SCA will maintain the Student's enrolment while the grievance and appeals process is ongoing.

2. Responsibility

The Academy Director is responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation during staff induction, and Students and Complainants are made aware of its availability through student orientation, student handbook and our website.

3. General Principles

These principles, which will be adhered to by SCA, apply to all stages of this grievance procedure:

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- SCA will ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the grievance and appeals process.
- The Complainant and any respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the grievance and appeals procedure.
- The Complainant and any respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) at their own cost if they so desire.
- The Complainant and any respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or any respondent if requested.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of at least five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored at SCA, Level 2 Lamerton House, 211 Lake Entrance Rd, Shellharbour NSW 2529. Access to these records may be requested by parties who have used this procedure by writing to the Training & Compliance Manager at the aforementioned address.
- A Complainant shall have access to these grievance procedures at no cost.
- SCA will analyse all grievances and appeals to determine any underlying causes and take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.
- SCA will ensure that all decisions arising from the grievance procedure are fully implemented.

4. Informal Grievance Procedure

Students are encouraged initially to attempt to resolve a grievance informally by talking directly with the person concerned to resolve the problem. This step is not mandatory and a Student may proceed directly to the Formal Grievance Procedure.

5. Formal Grievance Procedure

5.1 Stage one

Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to;
Administration Manager
South Coast Academy
Level 2 Family Services House
Lamerton Crescent, Shellharbour City Centre NSW 2529

The Administration Manager will notify the Complainant of receipt of the grievance within 5 working days.

The Administration Manager will forward the grievance to the Training & Compliance Manager who will then assess the grievance together with the Academy Director to determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision, including reasons for the decision within 10 working days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One. There is nil cost for the Complainant to submit a grievance.

5.2 Stage two

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with to;
Academy Director
South Coast Academy

Level 2 Lamerton House
211 Lake Entrance Rd, Shellharbour NSW 2529

The Academy Director will notify the Complainant of receipt of the appeal within 5 working days.

The Complainant's appeal will be determined by the SCA Academy Director who will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 10 working days. There is nil cost for the Complainant to submit an appeal.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

5.3 Stage three

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal then an external and independent person or body can be requested to review the decision through the Mediation and/or Dispute Resolution services. Complainants can contact the Mediation Services and/or Dispute Resolution Services directly as follows:

WOLLONGONG
Illawarra Mediation Services
Tel: 0418 670 20
Website: www.illawarramediation.com.au

SYDNEY
Association of Dispute Resolvers (LEADR)
Level 1,
13-15 Bridge Street
Sydney, NSW, 2500
Tel: 1800 651 650
Website: <http://www.leadr.info>
Email: admin@leadr.info

Costs of such mediation will be borne by SCA.

The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of the external review, including the reasons for the decision on review within 10 working days.

SCA will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review of the grievance within 30 days of receipt of the recommendations and the SCA Academy Director will ensure that they are fully implemented.

5.4 Further action

If the Complainant has been through all stages of this grievance handling process and remains unsatisfied with the outcome of their grievance, then they may:

- contact the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73 (Monday–Friday, 8am to 6pm nationally) or by email: skilling@education.gov.au

- contact the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). For contact details and information please see: www.asqa.gov.au or www.asqaconnect.asqa.gov.au
- Commonwealth VET Student Loans Ombudsman. For more information, visit; <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/vet-student-loans-ombudsman/information-for-students>

6. Publication

This *Student Grievance Policy and Procedures (Academic and Non-academic)* will be made available to students and those seeking to enrol with SCA through publication on the academy website: www.scahairandbeautyacademy.com and in the SCA Student Handbook.