



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* ADELAIDE  
COLLEGE

# Academic Grievance Policy

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## 1.0 Introduction

The University of Adelaide College is committed to resolving any student complaint or grievance promptly, equitably and in a professional manner that respects the privacy of all parties involved.

Students or parents who have a complaint about marks, assessment, late submission, credit transfer or any other academic issue are deemed to have an academic complaint and are required to follow the College process as outlined in this policy.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy is for academic complaints from:

- current College students
- parents or legal guardians of students under 18 years old

It should be noted that this policy generally applies to:

- the General Academic English program (GAE)
- the Foundation Studies program (FSP)
- the Bridging semester of the Degree Transfer program (DTB)
- Language for Study (DT)
- Pre-Master's Program Bridging Semester (PMP)

With the exception of Language for Study, assessment in the Degree Transfer program is the responsibility of the University of Adelaide, and students undertaking the Degree Transfer program wishing to make a complaint about an academic issue should contact the Lecturer in Charge of the course, and/or the Faculty concerned, unless the matter is a direct responsibility of the tutor.

Similarly, with the exception of Academic English B, assessment for the Pre-Master's Program University semesters is the responsibility of the University of Adelaide, and students enrolled in these semesters wishing to make a complaint about an academic issue should contact the Lecturer in charge of the course

Similarly, with the exception of Academic English B, assessment for the Pre-Master's Program University Semester(s) is the responsibility of the University of Adelaide, and students enrolled in these semesters wishing to make a complaint about an academic issue should contact the Lecturer in Charge of the course, and/or the Faculty concerned, unless the matter is a direct responsibility of the tutor, and/or the Faculty concerned, unless the matter is a direct responsibility of the tutor.

## 3.0 Process

All formal complaints and appeals from students or parents are dealt with free of charge. The complainant (i.e. student or parent) and respondent (i.e. staff member concerned) will not be victimised or discriminated against in any manner and all details of the complaint and subsequent investigation will remain strictly confidential.

The complainant is entitled to ask for assistance in the form of a translator/ interpreter at any time during the process. The complainant and respondent may bring one person (such as a friend, family member, counsellor or other professional support person) to represent or support them to any meetings arranged at any stage of the process.

All parties may have recourse to a third party mediator at the informal or formal appeals stage. The College's dispute resolution processes do not prevent a person's right to pursue other legal remedies.

Students will continue to attend their classes as usual whilst the College and the student are attempting to resolve the issue by following this grievance procedure. The only circumstances in which a student would not continue attending classes is if their health or safety is potentially at risk or if they pose a health or safety risk to other students or staff members.

### 3.1 Formal Complaints

The College Director will be responsible for deciding upon the appropriate action to all formal complaints from University of Adelaide College students, after consultation with relevant academic, administrative and student services staff. The Deputy Director, Operations, will provide the response to the complaint.

### 3.1 Appeals

The Vice President, Academic, Kaplan Australia or delegate will be responsible for ruling on all appeals from University of Adelaide College students, and the College Director will respond to the appeal.

## 4.0 Student Counsellors

For the purposes of this policy, *student counsellor* will be deemed to be any of the appropriate staff below:

- the Manager Student Services (Degree Transfer)
- Student Services Coordinators
- Student Services Manager
- the Director of Studies GAE
- the Academic Manager DT
- the Academic Manager FSP
- the Program Coordinator PMP

## 5.0 Informal resolution

In the first instance, students or parents are encouraged to reach an informal resolution by approaching the staff member concerned to discuss the issue at hand.

For academic complaints, this would usually be directed to one of the following staff members:

- teaching staff
- the Manager Student Services (Degree Transfer)
- Student Services Coordinators
- Student Services Manager
- the Academic Manager DT
- the Academic Manager FSP
- the Director of Studies GAE
- the Program Coordinator PMP

Staff members can be contacted via Reception, Level 2, 132 Grenfell St.

An initial complaint is dealt with at a local level (i.e. lecturer/teacher/tutor) in an informal manner. Students are encouraged to raise any academic concerns at any time with the teaching staff.

In some circumstances students may feel uncomfortable speaking with the lecturer/teacher/tutor concerned, for example, if it is a complaint about their style of teaching. In this case it is appropriate that the student contact the Student Counsellor and discuss the issue informally with them.

## 6.0 Re-Marking

If a student feels that the mark they have been given for a piece of work is unfair or unjustified, they may take the following actions in the prescribed order. It should be noted that any requests for re-marking must be made within 10 weeks of the assignment, test or examination results being released:

- The student should approach their teacher/lecturer/tutor informally and ask the teacher to explain the mark they have given the student. The teacher may wish to explain how they arrived at this mark, what the process of marking the paper involved (e.g. if moderation took place), and how the student could improve on their next piece of work.
- If, after speaking to their teacher/lecturer/tutor, the student still feels that their work has not received a fair mark, they should speak to the Student Counsellor who will take the following action:
  - explain to the student that submitting work for remarking is a risk, they may receive a lower mark than their initial one, and this new mark will then be recorded as the student's grade
  - if the student still wishes to proceed, take a copy of the student's assignment, test or exam. If the student is requesting that an assignment be re-marked, then the student will need to provide a clean copy of the assignment.

- organise for the student's work to be re-marked by another teacher of the same subject. At this stage, the student's teacher will be informed that the work is being re-marked. The re-marking teacher will be given a clean copy of the assignment and if it is a test or exam, the student's name and marks will be removed from the paper. The teacher should let the Student Counsellor know the final mark they have given the paper.
  - if the new mark is within 5% of the original mark, the student's mark will not be changed. If the mark is not within 5%, this new mark will be recorded as the student's new grade.
  - the re-marking will be completed within the following timeframes:
    - Assignments & class tests—2 weeks
    - Examinations—1 month
- a meeting will be arranged with the student to discuss the outcome of the remarking and record these details in the student's record on the database. Re-marked assignments and class tests will be kept on file for 12 months. Re-marked examination scripts will be kept on file for five years.
- if the student still feels that the mark they have been given is unfair, they may invoke the formal complaints process.

## 7.0 Lodging a complaint

If a student or parent cannot resolve the issue informally and they wish to lodge a formal complaint, they should:

- provide their name, contact details (must not be anonymous) and details of the complaint in writing to the Deputy Director, The University of Adelaide College, 132 Grenfell Street, Adelaide, 5000. They should also detail the steps that have been taken so far.
- make the complaint themselves, as complaints on behalf of someone else (hearsay) will not be accepted. If the student is under 18 years old then a parent or guardian can lodge a complaint with the student's consent.
- understand that it is a serious procedure and it will be investigated.
- understand that it is a formal complaint as opposed to comments, feedback or suggestion
- be aware that the staff member concerned will be informed that a complaint has been made against them or in relation to a decision they have made.

The Deputy Director will acknowledge receipt in writing within 5 days from receipt of the written complaint.

The acknowledgement will:

- provide their contact details
- outline the complaints process and advise that a decision will be made within 14 business days of receiving the complaint in writing
- identify any foreseeable delays.

## 8.0 Investigation

Investigation stage by the College—the Deputy Director will notify the relevant program manager of the complaint and the relevant program manager (the Academic Manager DT, Academic Manager FSP, Director of Studies GAE, the Program Coordinator PMP) will:

- request a formal meeting with the student or parent where appropriate
- record minutes of any meetings as a formal record. A record will also be made in the database.
- contact the respondent to inform them that a complaint has been made against them or in relation to a piece of work assessed by them. The staff member will be given details of the complaint and an opportunity to respond. Arrange a separate meeting with the respondent, if necessary.
- hear the student or parent's complaint without prejudice giving the student ample opportunity to air their grievance
- listen to the respondent's response to the complaint without prejudice
- notify the complainant and respondent in writing within 14 business days of the result. The written notification will outline the reasons for the decision being made and any action(s) taken by the College.
- advise the complainant in writing that the decision may be appealed if they are not satisfied with the investigation process or outcome. Appeals should be lodged in writing to the College Director, The University of Adelaide College, 132 Grenfell Street, Adelaide, 5000.

## 9.0 Appeal procedures

In case of an appeal the College Director will acknowledge the appeal in writing to both parties within 5 business days and notify the Vice President, Academic, Kaplan Australia or delegate of the appeal.

The Vice President, Academic or delegate will conduct an independent investigation that is fair & impartial which may include:

- contacting the student or parent to arrange a meeting in person or over the telephone
- contacting the respondent to gather information and arrange a separate meeting with the respondent, if necessary.

Once a decision has been made, the Vice President, Academic or delegate will communicate the outcome to the Campus Director who will:

- notify the complainant and respondent in writing, within 30 days, of the appeal outcome outlining reasons for the decision being made and any action(s) taken by the College

## 10.0 Course Progress appeals

International students who fail to make satisfactory course progress in two consecutive semesters in their program can appeal the University of Adelaide College's decision to cancel their enrolment and notify Department of Home Affairs on the following grounds:

- there are verifiable compelling or compassionate circumstances which prevented the student from achieving satisfactory course progress
- after the intervention strategy was implemented, the student demonstrated a strong commitment to their studies and there was a significant improvement in their grades in the second semester. The student must, in the College's opinion, have the potential to successfully complete their program within two semesters and transfer to university.

Students wishing to lodge an appeal regarding a course progress decision will need to do so in writing to the Manager of Student Learning or the Student Counsellor within 20 working days of notification of the decision. The written appeal will need to outline on what grounds the student is making the appeal and any evidence should be attached to the application (i.e. medical certificate for compassionate grounds).

The Manager of Student Services or Student Counsellor will make a decision within 14 business days and will notify the student in writing of the decision. The written notification will outline the reasons why the decision was made.

Any decision overturned on these grounds is made solely at the discretion of the College.

## 11.0 External complaints procedures

If a student is not satisfied with the College's complaints procedure then they can contact the Office of the Training Advocate or the Overseas Student Ombudsman.

### 11.1 Office of the Training Advocate

The Office of the Training Advocate can provide information and advice regarding complaints and will offer prompt attention, confidentiality, respect, fairness, impartiality, recognition of rights, and free consultation.

**Office of the Training Advocate**  
Ground Floor West, 55 Currie Street  
Adelaide SA

GPO Box 320  
Adelaide SA 5001

Freecall: 1800 006 488  
Email: [trainingadvocate@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:trainingadvocate@saugov.sa.gov.au)  
Website: <http://www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au/>

## 11.2 Overseas Student Ombudsman

If you are not satisfied with the decision the College has made regarding your appeal, you have the right to appeal to the Overseas Student Ombudsman. The Overseas Student Ombudsman is free and independent. Brochures for the Overseas Students Ombudsman are available at the Reception counter.

Phone: 1300 362 072

Website: <http://www.oso.gov.au>

## 12.0 Recording complaints

Records of all dealings where a formal complaint has been lodged will be kept for five years and maintained in a secure and confidential location.

## 13.0 Continuous Improvement

Regardless of the findings the College will consider whether the service or process in question could be improved as a result of information received in the complaint or revealed by the investigation, with a view to improving service.

## 14.0 Information on grievance procedures

The University of Adelaide College's grievance procedures are placed in student orientation handbooks and are available for prospective and current students on the College website at:

<http://college.adelaide.edu.au/about/policies-and-procedures/>

For students enrolled in the Pre-Master's Program, this information can be accessed from the student dashboard in MyUni.



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