

Academic and Non Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

1. to ensure that Monash College (MC), Monash University English Language Centre (MUELC) and Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) have processes to enable student academic and non academic complaints and grievances to be resolved as effectively, fairly, quickly and inexpensively as possible;
2. to ensure that the resolution of student academic and non academic complaints and grievance follows standard procedures across MC, MUELC and MUFY; and
3. to codify, collate and publish internal student complaints and grievances procedures in accordance with Commonwealth Government requirements.

Hard copies of this policy are also available by contacting Dr Greg Cusack on (03) 9905 5507 or by email: Greg.Cusack@mcpl.monash.edu.au.

Scope

This policy applies to complaints and grievances that are lodged by:

1. a person or persons currently enrolled in studies at MC, MUELC or MUFY (current students);
2. a person or persons who has completed studies at MC, MUELC or MUFY within the last six months (past students); and
3. a person or persons seeking to enrol in a course of study at MC, MUELC or MUFY (prospective students).
4. This policy and procedure covers complaints and grievances of an academic and non academic nature. A different range of people may be involved in different complaints.

Current and past students may lodge academic or non academic grievances. Prospective students may only lodge non academic grievances relating to the admissions process.

Current, past and prospective students are entitled to utilise this grievance procedure within the parameters set out above, regardless of the location of the MC, MUELC or MUFY campus, the student's place of residence, or the mode in which they study (or propose to study).

Policy Statement

MC, MUELC and MUFY providers will ensure that student complaints and grievances are resolved in an objective, equitable and timely manner.

Definitions

Complaint – an expression of dissatisfaction from a student with a process, decision or service offered or provided by MC, MUELC or MUFY

Completion of studies – when a student's final results are ratified

Course of study – an award, non-award or enabling award at MC, MUELC or MUFY

Grievance – a written notice expressed by a MC, MUELC or MUFY student following an unresolved complaint which initiates the Student Academic and Non Academic Complaints and Grievances Procedures

MC, MUELC and MUFY providers – either Monash College Pty Ltd or any partner organisation licensed to administer MC, MUELC or MUFY courses

Monash College Pty Ltd – the Company which administers MC, MUELC and MUFY

Student – a prospective, current or past individual enrolled or seeking to be enrolled with MC, MUELC or MUFY providers

Studies – academic activities undertaken to fulfil the requirements of an MC, MUELC or MUFY course of study

Working days – all days other than Saturdays, Sundays, university holidays, (and religious or secular holidays in the relevant country outside Australia, if the grievance relates to an offshore partnership)

Principles of the Student Academic and Non Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy

MC, MUELC and MUFY are committed to the effective and efficient resolution of student complaints and grievances. The principles of this policy are outlined below:

1. All students will be advised during MC, MUELC and MUFY orientation programs of complaint and grievance policies and procedures and student support services.
 2. All student complaints and grievances will be handled in a serious, sensitive, confidential and timely manner and discussed only with those persons relevant to the case or who can provide specialist advice.
 3. It is desirable that student complaint and grievance procedures are kept as informal as possible, based on principles of mediation and negotiation.
 4. Students who lodge a complaint in accordance with this policy or appeal at any level in accordance with this policy will not be victimised or discriminated against.
 5. Staff involved in resolving student complaints or grievances will act fairly at all times and ensure that decisions will be based on a thorough and unbiased consideration of the facts and the views expressed by all parties.
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6. No action will be taken or suggested to a student without consultation with the relevant staff member.
7. Outcomes or decisions reached through application of complaints and grievances must be achievable within MC's, MUELC's and MUFY's lawful powers and policies, and relevant legislative requirements.
8. This policy will be communicated to academic and support staff through the Monash College Pty Ltd intranet site and the MC, MUELC and MUFY websites. The Executive Principal, MC, and the Principal, MUELC, and the Director, MUFY will be responsible for the training of academic staff in the application of this policy. Support Unit Managers are responsible for the training of support staff. Offshore provider heads will be responsible for training offshore staff.
9. Students will not be charged for making a complaint or lodging a grievance.
10. Students' enrolment status will not be affected by the lodging of a complaint or grievance.

Procedural Matters

1. Students are encouraged to raise their complaints directly with the person concerned in the first instance. If effectively handled, most complaints will not escalate to the level of a grievance.
 2. Students may only make a complaint or give notice of a grievance according to this policy.
 3. Students making complaints or lodging grievances will be made aware of relevant support services.
 4. Students and staff members may be accompanied by one support person at any mediation, consultation or hearing. This person may be a student advisor, staff or student member of MC, MUELC or MUFY, a family member or any other person approved by the leader of the mediation or consultation (although the accompanying person is not to act as an advocate or a lawyer for the student or staff member).
 5. Students may withdraw a grievance at any stage by giving written notice to the officer currently handling the grievance.
 6. Where it is determined to be frivolous or vexatious, a student's complaint or grievance may be dismissed. In this case the student will be notified in writing of their right of appeal, the appeal process and support available.
 7. Records of all grievances, applications for the review of decisions, and the outcomes of the grievance process will be retained for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and filed separately to the student or staff file. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records.
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