STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

English Unlimited (the College) aims to provide an effective and acceptable procedure for students to bring complaints and appeals to the attention of the College.

It is the policy of the College to ensure students study in a friendly environment, free from any forms of coercion, unfair treatment, discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying (see also Harassment, Victimisation & Bullying Policy).

All complaints and appeals by a student will be handled professionally and confidentially, with the aim of achieving a satisfactory resolution as soon as practicable.

In accordance with access and equity principles this policy is available to all clients and stakeholders.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF AND MANAGERS

Managers and other designated staff are responsible for responding to student complaints in an appropriate manner. They also have the responsibility for ensuring that students involved in the complaint and appeals process understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to this policy.

The officer charged with conducting the Complaints and Appeals process must ensure that all determinations are actioned and outcomes properly documented in a Complaints and Appeals Report.

THE COLLEGE’S INTERNAL COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS

The College has a 2 step internal complaints and appeals process as follows:

- **Step 1** involves an *informal internal approach* to resolve complaints or appeals.
- **Step 2** involves a *formal internal approach*, which requires a complaint or appeal to be made in writing and formally lodged with the College. The College will undertake an investigation of the complaint or review the decision subject to appeal and a written report of the outcome of the investigation or appeal will be prepared.

Steps 1 to 2 are discussed in detail below.

The College’s internal complaints and appeals process are provided at no cost to the student.
**STEP 1 – INTERNAL INFORMAL APPROACH**

Students are encouraged to attempt informal resolution of any complaint or appeal they may have by directly engaging the staff member or student to whom the complaint or appeal relates.

For **academic matters**, that is, matters concerning teaching, learning, or assessment issues in your course, please discuss the matter with the relevant teacher. If you believe that the matter cannot be resolved by discussion with the teacher, please see the Academic Manager or the Principal Administrator.

For **administrative matters**, that is, matters concerning the management of the College including the administration of your enrolment, please see the Principal Administrator.

For **personal or welfare matters**, that is, matters concerning your security, safety and general well being please see Academic Manager or the Principal Administrator. **In cases concerning your immediate safety and security, please see any staff member or security guard.**

**SERIOUS COMPLAINTS**

If you have a serious complaint regarding inappropriate conduct or behavior of any teacher or staff please arrange to see the Principal Administrator immediately.

If your complaint or appeal cannot be resolved informally then you should make use of the formal Complaints and Appeals Process set out in Step 2 below.

**STEP 2 – INTERNAL FORMAL APPROACH**

The procedure in Step 2 should only be used after you have, where possible, attempted to resolve your matter informally and may be used where you have a complaint regarding any matter concerning the College, teacher or staff or where you are appealing a decision of the College.

If it is not possible to resolve complaints informally proceed to Step 2 immediately.

**Complaints or appeals must be in writing**

All complaints and appeals must be submitted in writing on the college **Complaints and Appeals Form**, which is available on the College website and from reception.
When completing the college Complaints and Appeals Form, you should provide a detailed report of your complaint or appeal and if necessary attach any documentation you believe to be relevant.

Your completed Complaints and Appeals Form must be submitted to the Academic Manager or Principal Administrator.

**Investigation of your complaint or appeal**

The College will commence an investigation of your complaint or appeal no later than 10 days of receipt of your completed Complaints and Appeals Form.

As part of the College’s investigation, you will be given an opportunity to present your complaint or appeal at a formal meeting. You may invite a support person to accompany and assist you to the meeting. You may also be asked to provide relevant supporting documentation. The College may require you to provide additional documentation and may take steps to verify the authenticity of the documents you provide (including medical certificates, if relevant).

Where a complaint concerns another person, that person will be given the opportunity to provide a formal response to your complaint.

**Finalisation of complaints and appeals**

The College will finalise the complaint and appeals process as soon as practicable.

The College will communicate the outcome of the investigation of your compliant or appeal and a written report of the outcome, including the reasons for the outcome will be provided to you.

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**EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS**

Students who are not satisfied with the result or conduct of the College’s internal complaints and appeals process may access an external and independent body to hear the complaint or appeal.

The Overseas Students Ombudsman investigates complaints about problems that overseas students or intending overseas students may have with private education and training in Australia. The Overseas Students Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service. The Ombudsman does not represent either overseas students or private education providers and can make recommendations arising out of investigations.
Students who access the external appeal process should be aware that the College may be requested to disclose information that is private and personal to the student and, by accessing the external appeal process, the student consents to the disclosure of such private and personal information by the College.

Students may also take action under Australia’s consumer protection laws and, where a student does so, the student is deemed to have accessed the College’s Complaints and Appeals Process. This can be done through the Department of Fair Trading of Education and Training.

DECISSIONS

Where any internal or external complaint or appeals process results in a decision that supports the student, the College will immediately implement the decision and/or corrective and/or preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome.

UNSATISFACTORY COURSE PROGRESS / ATTENDANCE

The College is in some cases required to report a student to the relevant Australian government authorities for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory attendance. Reporting a student for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory attendance has serious consequences as it may result in automatic cancellation of the student’s visa.

In the case where the College intends to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory attendance, the student will be notified and given 20 working days to access the College’s internal complaints and appeals process (Step 1 and Step 2). The 20 working day period will commence from the date the student receives notification of the College’s intention to report the student. If the student does not access the College’s internal complaints and appeals process within the 20 working days then the College will report the student without further notice.

Where the student accesses the complaints and appeals process, the College will maintain the student’s enrolment and not report the student, until the College’s internal complaints and appeals process and, if accessed, the external complaints process is complete and a decision has been made to support the action of reporting the student.

CANCELLATION OR SUSPENSION OF STUDENT’S ENROLMENT

The College is entitled to suspend or cancel a student’s enrolment at the College in certain circumstances, including, but not limited to, where the student fails to pay fees or other monies due and payable.
In the case where the College intends to suspend or cancel the student’s enrolment at the College, the student will be notified and given **20 working days** to access the College’s internal complaints and appeals process (Step 1 and Step 2). The 20 working days will commence from the date the student receives notification of the College’s intention to suspend or cancel the student’s enrolment. If the student does not access the College’s internal complaints and appeals process within the 20 working days then the College will suspend or cancel the student’s enrolment without further notice.

Failure to comply with the time limit above will result in the suspension or cancellation of the student’s enrolment, which may affect the student’s visa.

If the student accesses the College’s internal complaints and appeals process, the College will maintain the student’s enrolment until the internal complaints and appeals process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply, in which case the College may immediately suspend or cancel the student’s enrolment prior to the completion of the internal complaints and appeals process.

‘Extenuating circumstances’ relating to the welfare of the student include, but are not limited to circumstances where the student:

- refuses to maintain approved care arrangements (only for students under 18 years of age);
- is missing;
- has medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead the provider to fear for the student’s wellbeing;
- has engaged or threatens to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others; or
- is at risk of committing a criminal offence.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information please contact:

Student Care

Tel: 07 3003 0088
Fax: 07 3003 1138
Email: info@englishunlimited.qld.edu.au

The College’s website also contains links to important legal sites in Australia.
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

The complaints and appeals processes as made known to staff, students under 18, parents, suitable nominated relatives and/or homestay parents

Step 1 and Step 2: School-based

**Step 1**

Informal Internal

- **Satisfactory Outcome**

**Step 2**

Formal Internal

- **Satisfactory Outcome**

**Final decision advised in writing**

**Parents** (in the case of students under 18 years of age)

**Students**

**Complaint/Appeal** taken to the person involved, i.e., teacher/staff member

- **No satisfactory outcome**

**Manager**

- **No satisfactory outcome**

**Go to external agencies**

- **Reviewed by external agencies**

**Satisfactory Outcome**

**External agencies include:**

- **Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)**
  - GPO BOX 442 Canberra ACT2601
  - Phone: 1300 362 072 (local call free only – higher rate from mobile phones)
  - Email: ombudsman@ombusman.gov.au

- **Office of Fair Trading (OFT)**
  - Upper Plaza Terrace, 33 Charlotte Street, BRISBANE QLD 4001
  - Phone: 131304

- **Overseas Students Ombudsman**
  - GPO BOX 442 Canberra ACT2601
  - Phone: 1300 362 072 (local call free only – higher rate from mobile phones)
  - Email: ombudsman@ombusman.gov.au

**NOTE:** Students may be accompanied and assisted by a support person for any complaints and appeals meetings

*External agencies include:

**Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)**
- 9th Floor, 215 Adelaide St, BRISBANE QLD 4000
- Phone: 1300 363 079

**Office of Fair Trading (OFT)**
- Upper Plaza Terrace, 33 Charlotte Street, BRISBANE QLD 4001
- Phone: 131304

**Overseas Students Ombudsman**
- GPO BOX 442 Canberra ACT2601
- Phone: 1300 362 072 (local call free only – higher rate from mobile phones)
- Email: ombudsman@ombusman.gov.au

*For example:
- if it is too serious; or
- if you feel too emotional; or
- if it is not appropriate for you to discuss it with that person

**NOTE:**

Unless there are reasons why it should not be taken directly to the person

Students may be accompanied and assisted by a support person for any complaints and appeals meetings.
COMPLAINTS & APPEALS FORM

Student Name: ___________________________  Student Number: _____________

Did you receive a notice of intention to report from the college?  □ No  □ Yes → Please attach copy

Details of Grievance
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Student’s Signature: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

A grievance is a problem you might experience with the College, about something that has happened which you believe is unfair. Generally, the first person to see about this problem is your trainer/teacher or Student Services. If the problem cannot be resolved through speaking with your trainer or Student Services, you should discuss it with the Campus Coordinator. If the grievance involves a personal or welfare matter, you can approach the Counselor.

You may also put your concerns in writing. If grievances are not resolved after discussion with the College, you may wish to refer to an external agency, e.g. The Anti-Discrimination Commission 1300 130 670 or the Department of Fair Trading 131304. Further information may be obtained from the Department’s website: www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

All grievances will be taken seriously and a written statement will be given, outlining the complaint or grievance, how it has been handled on appeal, the outcome and reasons for any decisions made. Also refer to the College website which has links to important legal sites in Australia →

The college’s grievance procedure does not limit the rights of students to take action under Australia’s consumer protection laws.

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Form received on: ___________________________  Received by: ___________________________

Follow Up Action
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ___________________________  Position: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________
Complaints and Appeals Report

Student Number: ____________________________________________

Student Name: ______________________________________________

Other interested parties: ________________________________________

Date received: _______________________________________________

DETAILS

Grievance:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Investigation:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Resolution:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Follow up Action:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________ Position: __________________________ Date: __________