

# English Language Centre (ELC) Complaints and Appeals Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To ensure students know how to make a complaint against or appeal any Macquarie University English Language Centre (ELC) process or policy or any individual linked directly to the ELC.

(2) In compliance with Standard 10 of the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) the ELC has documented procedures for handling complaints, grievances or appeals.

### Background

(3) The [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) requires the complaints and appeals process to be independent, easily and immediately accessible and inexpensive for the parties involved.

### Scope

(4) This Policy applies to any complaint or appeal made by a student enrolled at the ELC.

(5) The policy also applies to all staff involved in the recruitment, admission, academic delivery, management or administration of students and education agents acting on behalf of the ELC.

## Section 2 - Policy

(6) The ELC aims to deal with student problems quickly and fairly. Students are able and encouraged to bring a support person any time they speak to a teacher or other member of staff about their complaint or during their appeal.

(7) The Complaints and Appeals Process requires a written record if the complaint cannot be resolved informally, and the process allows the student to formally present their case at minimal or no cost.

(8) The ELC will begin the process within 10 working days from receiving formal written record of the complaint or appeal, and will take all reasonable measures to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

(9) Throughout the process a student's enrolment will be maintained. However the ELC will reserve the right to remove a student from class if considered necessary and appropriate, and in such cases will offer alternative learning opportunities for the student until the process is completed.

## Section 3 - Procedure

### Informal Complaint or Appeal

(10) If the student is not able to resolve the complaint by discussion and negotiation with the relevant ELC staff

member(s) or prefers not to handle the matter directly, they should direct their complaint or appeal as follows:

- a. If the complaint involves teaching staff and / or student(s), it should be directed to a Student Advisor or Senior Teacher in the first instance. Where the complaint involves a Student Advisor or Senior Teacher, the matter will be referred to the next most appropriate senior member of staff, e.g. Head of Academic Programs.
- b. Any complaint relating to student fees, enrolment or administrative staff should first be taken up with the Operations Manager.

## **Formal Complaint or Appeal**

(11) If the complaint or appeal has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the student at this stage, it should be referred to the Director, MUIC or their nominee. This should be done in writing, preferably using the Formal Student Complaint and Appeal form available at the Student Services counter. The Director, MUIC will respond within 10 working days regarding the progress or outcome of the complaint or appeal. A written statement (Appeal Outcome) of the outcome including details and reasons for the decision will be provided once the process has been completed.

## **External Appeal**

(12) If the student is not satisfied that the matter has been resolved at this stage, the student is able to lodge an external appeal or complaint about this decision by contacting the Overseas Students Ombudsman. More information can be found here: [NSW Ombudsman](#) website.

(13) The student has five (5) working days as of the date of the Appeal Outcome to provide evidence of an appeal to the Overseas Students Ombudsman. If no evidence is provided, then the matter will be considered resolved. The student is still entitled to lodge an appeal with the Overseas Students Ombudsman at a later date.

## **Maintaining a Student's Enrolment**

(14) The ELC will maintain a student's enrolment while the internal Complaints and Appeals process is ongoing. The ELC will not make any change in the student's enrolment via the Provider Registration and Student Management System (PRISMS).

## **Attendance in Class during Complaints and Appeals Process**

(15) The ELC will decide how learning opportunities will be offered to the student during the Complaints and Appeals process. In some circumstances, the student may be excluded from class but will be given appropriate alternative study arrangements. The ELC will ensure that a student who is excluded from the classroom will not be placed at a disadvantage regarding learning opportunities.

## **Timeframe of Complaints and Appeals Process**

(16) The process will begin within 10 working days of receipt of the formal complaint. It will be completed within a reasonable timeframe, taking into consideration factors such as the length of the student's visa and enrolment in future subjects and / or courses.

## **Outcome of the Complaints and Appeals Process**

(17) A written statement of the outcome including the details and reasons for the decision as well as any subsequent actions will be communicated to the student. The student's file will be updated to record the outcome and any subsequent actions.

(18) If the outcome of the internal or external Complaints and Appeals Process is in favour of the student, the ELC will implement any decision and / or corrective and preventive action required

## Section 4 - Guidelines

(19) Nil.

## Section 5 - Definitions

(20) Commonly defined terms are located in the University [Glossary](#). The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction with an ELC policy, practice or with an individual member of staff, student or service, with the aim of seeking a resolution.
- b. Appeal means a written expression of dissatisfaction against an ELC decision, lodged with the aim of seeking a resolution.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	22nd February 2021
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<b>Approval Authority</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)
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<b>Expiry Date</b>	22nd December 2021
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
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