

Name of Policy	Students Complaints Policy
Policy Code	POL003
Description of Policy	This document outlines ACU College's policy on managing and responding to complaints made by enrolled and prospective students with ACU College.
Policy applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Specific (<i>outline location, campus, organisational unit, etc</i>)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and students
Policy status	<input type="checkbox"/> New policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of existing policy

Approval authority	ACU College RTO Committee
Governing authority	Internal – ACU College RTO Committee & ACU Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Innovation) External – ASQA, State and/or Federal Funding & Regulatory Bodies
Responsible officer	Compliance Manager

Approval date	August 2019
Effective date	August 2019
Approval date of last revision	April 2018
Effective date of last revision	April 2018
Date of policy review*	August 2020

**unless otherwise indicated, this policy will still apply beyond the review date*

Related legislation, policies, procedures, guidelines and local protocols	Australian Standards AS ISO 10002:2006 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 - Standard 6 Complaint Handling at Universities – Australasian Best Practices Guidelines, Commonwealth Ombudsman, March 2006 Student Complaints Procedure PRO003 Access and Equity Policy POL001 Privacy Policy POL002 Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy POL011 Continuous Improvement Policy POL013
--	--

File Name:	POL003 – Student Complaints Policy			Version:	2.0
Prepared by:	Compliance Manager	Review Date:	August 2020	Version Date:	August 2019
Location: N:\ACU College\02.Compliance\01 ACU College Master Documents\Policies & Procedures\003 Student Complaints\POL003 - Student Complaints Policy V2.0.docx				©ACU College	Page 1 of 4

1. Glossary of Terms/Definitions

In the context of this policy the following terms apply:

- **Complaint** refers to a statement or expression that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
- **Complainant** refers to the student who has initiated the complaint.
- **Designated complaint handler** refers to an ACU College staff member who is responsible for handling the complaint.
- **Informal complaint** is where the concern is less serious and may not result in disciplinary action.
- **Formal complaint** relates to matters of a more serious nature or where an informal complaint has not been managed and resolved appropriately and has escalated in seriousness.
- **Student/s** refers to enrolled and prospective students with ACU College.

2. Purpose

This policy provides clear and practical guidelines to ensure that complaints and grievances of students can be resolved in accordance with the principles of natural justice, procedural fairness and in a manner that is consistent with the College's values.

3. Scope/Application

- 3.1 This policy will apply to the management and response to complaints arising from ACU College that may relate to:
- The performance of administration, academic, teaching or any other service functions of ACU College (including IT services, campus services or student services)
 - Actions or behaviour of another student within ACU College
 - Actions or behaviour of staff member of ACU College
 - A third-party, including community engagement placement, involved with the delivery of services on behalf of ACU College

- 3.2 This policy does **NOT** relate to:
- Any applications or decisions made in relation to appeals of assessment extensions, assessment results, special consideration, etc. For further information relating to these matters please refer to the [Student Appeals Policy POL028 & Procedure PRO028](#) which is located on LEO and the ACU College website.
 - Any allegations of discrimination, harassment or bullying, as these are addressed under the [Access and Equity Policy and Procedure POL001](#) which is located on LEO and the ACU College website.

File Name:	POL003 – Student Complaints Policy			Version:	2.0
Prepared by:	Compliance Manager	Review Date:	August 2020	Version Date:	August 2019
Location: N:\ACU College\02.Compliance\01 ACU College Master Documents\Policies & Procedures\003 Student Complaints\POL003 - Student Complaints Policy V2.0.docx				©ACU College	Page 2 of 4

4. Policy Statement and Principles

ACU College is committed to continuous improvement and quality assurance; and values comments and feedback from students regarding their ACU College experiences and suggestions for improvement. ACU College recognises students' rights to raise concerns and complaints without fear of a negative outcome or reprisal.

- 4.1 All actions under this policy are to be based on the values that are consistent with ACU College's mission and are underpinned by the principles of mutual respect and procedural fairness for and by all students, staff and others who may be involved.
- 4.2 All parties involved in the complaint process have the right to:
 - a. be heard;
 - b. be treated fairly without judgment or bias;
 - c. be informed of any complaint made which relates to them;
 - d. have an opportunity to respond to any complaint that relates to them;
 - e. be informed about the status of any complaint which has been formally raised and to which they are a party, or in which they are named.
- 4.3 Complaints will be treated by all parties with appropriate confidentiality.
 - a. Information arising from the complaint will only be circulated between the parties involved, unless otherwise required by law.
 - b. Information arising from the complaint will only be used for the purpose of resolving the complaint, monitoring, reporting and evaluation requirements in relation to continuous improvement.
- 4.4 The complaint will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible following the receipt of all relevant information, material and supporting documentation.
- 4.5 ACU College will endeavour to resolve and manage the complaint within 40 days of lodgement. If the resolution exceeds this timeframe the complainant will be informed in writing as to the reasons why more than 40 days are required. The complainant will be regularly updated on the progress of the investigation.
- 4.6 A student may seek confidential, independent professional advice at any stage of complaint. This can be provided by the [Student Advocacy Service](#) available through ACU University or they may seek their own support person.
- 4.7 Students making a complaint will not be disadvantaged in any way as a result of lodging a complaint.
- 4.8 Students have the right to withdraw a complaint at any stage of the process. This must be done in writing to the designated complaint handler.
- 4.9 The student has the right to appeal the outcome of the complaint. Please refer to the [Student Appeals Policy POL028 & Student Appeals Procedure PRO028](#) to ensure that the appropriate processes are followed and adhered to. Nothing in this policy detracts from the right of a student to access any other appeal or complaint mechanism available to them as legislated in the relevant State or Territory. If any external process is initiated, the internal complaint process will be terminated.

File Name:	POL003 – Student Complaints Policy			Version:	2.0
Prepared by:	Compliance Manager	Review Date:	August 2020	Version Date:	August 2019
Location: N:\ACU College\02.Compliance\01 ACU College Master Documents\Policies & Procedures\003 Student Complaints\POL003 - Student Complaints Policy V2.0.docx				©ACU College	Page 3 of 4

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Approval Authority

ACU College RTO Committee

5.2. Governing Authority

Internal – ACU College RTO Committee and ACU Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education & Innovation)

External – ASQA and State and/or Federal Funding and Regulatory Bodies

5.3. Responsible Officer

Compliance Manager

5.4. Other Relevant Stakeholders

Compliance Coordinator & Program Coordinators

6. Review

In line with the ACU College's [Policy Development Policy POL029](#), this policy is scheduled for review every year.

7. Revision made to this Policy

Version	Date	Type of Revision	Author	Description of Revision
1.4	05/06/2019	Major	Compliance Coordinator	Policy separated from previous version which was combined with Appeals process. More detailed information added in relation to complaints process
1.5	08/07/2019	Minor	Compliance Coordinator	Amendments made according to review undertaken by RTO Committee. Waiting final approval.
2.0	07/08/2019	Minor	RTO Committee	Issued

8. Further Assistance

Refer to the associated documents for further assistance:

Student Complaints Procedure PRO003

Student Complaints Process Map PM003

Student Complaints Form D-ST003

File Name:	POL003 – Student Complaints Policy			Version:	2.0
Prepared by:	Compliance Manager	Review Date:	August 2020	Version Date:	August 2019
Location: N:\ACU College\02.Compliance\01 ACU College Master Documents\Policies & Procedures\003 Student Complaints\POL003 - Student Complaints Policy V2.0.docx				©ACU College	Page 4 of 4