

Procedure

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Use: This Academic Grievance Procedure will be made available to students enrolled with MEL through publication on the following websites <http://www.matereducation.qld.edu.au/recognised-training/mater-education-limited/grievance-policies> <http://www.matereducation.qld.edu.au/recognised-training/diploma-of-nursing/vet-fee-help> and included in pre-enrolment packs and student rules handbooks.

Ratification: This Non-Academic Grievance Procedure was agreed to and ratified by Mater Education Limited Board of Directors on 28th February 2013.

NOTICE OF CURRENCY: If viewing a printed copy of this document, NEVER assume that the printed copy being viewed is current. Always check the online Mater Document Centre to confirm you are viewing the current version of this procedure.

Our Mission	Our Vision	Our Values
In the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, Mater Health Services offer compassionate service to the sick and needy, promotes an holistic approach to healthcare in response to changing community needs and foster high standards in health-related education and research. Following the example of Christ the healer, we commit ourselves to offering these services without discrimination.	In the Mercy tradition, Mater will be renowned as a leader in the delivery of exceptional healthcare and experienced by all as a community of compassion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mercy Dignity Care Commitment Quality

Affirmation

This governance document is consistent with the Mater Values and supports the Mater’s Mission and Vision by establishing and mandating appropriate controls to support the delivery of health care services.

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1 Document Controls

1.1 Document Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1	28/02/2013	Final
2	28/05/2015	Transitioned to new template

1.2 Document Review and Approval

Person Name / Committee	Position (if applicable)	Function (Owner Review Approve)
Donna Bonney	Chief Executive Officer (MEL)	Document Owner
Caroline Hudson	Executive Director, People and Learning	Review
Pauline Stowers	Manager, RTO Quality and Compliance	Review
Corporate Policy Governance Committee		Approve
Mater Education Limited Board of Directors		Ratify

1.3 References

Internal Documents

Document Type	Document ID	Document Title
Governing	PY-PAL-020041	Workplace Complaints Resolution Policy
Supporting		
Related	PR-MEL-040005	Mater Education Limited (MEL) Student Complaints and Appeals
	PR-MEL-040009	Mater Education Limited (MEL) Academic Grievance Procedure

External Documents

1	Higher Education Support Act 2003
2	VET Guidelines
3	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
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2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

This procedure sets out Mater Education' Limited's (MEL) commitment to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential process for non-academic grievances for all students.

2.2 Scope and Context

This procedure applies to persons enrolled and who seek to enrol with MEL who are or would be entitled to VET FEE HELP assistance.

2.3 Definitions

Term	Definition
Non-academic matters	Matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the student. Non-academic grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider.
The Act	The Higher Education Support Act 2003
MEL student/s	All persons enrolled or seeking to enrol in a unit of study with MEL that meets the course requirements under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act who are, or would be entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.
Complainant/s	MEL students (as defined above) who have lodged an academic complaint.
VET FEE-HELP	An income contingent loan scheme for the VET sector that is an extension of FEE-HELP, part of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)
VET	Vocational Education and Training
Australian Skills Quality Authority	The national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector as described in the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

3 Procedures

The following procedures are to be followed:

3.1 Access to Grievance Process

Complainants are entitled to access this grievance procedure regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the complainant's place of residence or mode of study.

3.2 Compliance and Availability

MEL Course Coordinators are responsible for implementation of this procedure and ensuring that all relevant staff are fully trained in its operation and MEL students and complainants are made aware of its availability.

3.3 Informal Grievance

Prior to initiation of a formal grievance process a MEL student who has a grievance should:

1. Ask for a meeting with the Course Coordinator to discuss concerns
2. Keep records of any discussions and advice that is given
3. Proceed to formal grievance process if grievance remains unresolved

This informal process is not a mandatory component of the grievance process. The complainant may proceed directly to the formal grievance process.

3.4 Formal Grievance

General principles that apply to all stages of this grievance procedure, which will be adhered to by MEL, are:

- The Complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the process.
- The Complainant and/or the respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire.
- The Complainant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this process will be provided to the complainant and/or respondent if requested.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored securely in the office of the Manager, RTO Quality and Compliance.
- A Complainant shall have access to this grievance process at no cost.

Stage One

Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to the Course Coordinator or Manager, RTO Quality and Compliance via email to mel@mater.org.au or by posting to Mater Education, Level 4, Duncombe Building, Raymond Tce, South Brisbane, Qld, 4101.

The Course Coordinator or Manager, RTO Quality and Compliance will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within 2 weeks of receipt of the grievance.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this process at this time if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

Stage Two

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the Head of Discipline.

The Complainant's appeal will be determined by an independent and impartial officer of MEL (an independent person or panel nominated by the Head of Discipline) to investigate grievance (the Reviewer).

The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 2 weeks of receipt of the complaint.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance process at this time if they consider the matter unresolved.

Stage Three

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may request that the matter be referred to an external dispute resolution process by a body appointed for this purpose by MEL. MEL's external dispute resolution provider is Assure Programs and is independent of and external to MEL and will hear complaints or appeals arising from MEL's internal processes.

Mater Education Limited will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within five (5) working days.

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) may investigate complaints that allege training organisations are breaching, or have breached the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 and/or its associated legislative instruments.

ASQA advises that only under exceptional circumstances, or after all opportunities to resolve the matter through the training provider's internal complaints process are exhausted, should students seek to have a complaint investigated by ASQA.

To have a complaint about a training organisation investigated by ASQA complainants should go to ASQA's website <https://rms.asqa.gov.au/registration/newcomplaint.aspx> and complete the *Complaint about a training organisation operating under ASQA's jurisdiction* online form attaching evidence to the online complaint form showing:

- i. confirmation that ASQA can consider all or part of your complaint, and
- ii. MEL's complaints processes has been followed, and
- iii. MEL's response.