

VSL GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES (ACADEMIC & NON-ACADEMIC)

Overview

Air Gold Coast Pty Ltd is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling procedure for all Students. This policy covers both academic and non-academic grievances and appeals.

Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a VET course of study. Academic appeals relating to CASA exams must be directed to CASA.

Complaints may include but are not limited to operational, administrative, discrimination and harassment issues. Examples of these could include alleged sexual harassment, racial or sexual discrimination, physical or verbal abuse.

This policy does not replace or modify policies or any other responsibilities under other RTO standards or under statute or any other law. Also these dispute resolution procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

2. Responsibility

The Student Manager is responsible for handling complaints in the first instance.

If the complaint involves this person, the Head of Operations (HOO) will be the first responsible person.

The ultimate responsibility for settling complaints internally rests with the General Manager.

An external mediator can be appointed at the parties' request to assist the parties to reach a resolution.

3. General principles

These principles, which will be adhered to by Air Gold Coast, apply to all stages of this grievance procedure:

- The Complainant and any respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
- The Complainant and any 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 any respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or any respondent if requested.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored at Air Gold Coast, 34 Eastern Avenue, Bilinga, QLD 4225. Access to these records may be requested by writing to the Administration Manager at the aforementioned address.
- A Complainant shall have access to the internal and external stages of this grievance procedure at no cost.

4. Informal Grievance Procedure

Students are encouraged initially to attempt to resolve a grievance informally by talking directly with the person concerned to resolve the problem. This step is not mandatory; the student may proceed directly to the Formal Grievance Procedure.

5. Formal Grievance Procedure

Stage One

Formal grievances and appeals should be submitted in writing to the Head of Operations at Air Gold Coast, P.O. Box 116, Coolangatta, QLD 4225. The Complainant is invited to include suggestions about how the grievance might be resolved. Forms (Academic Grievance Form and Non-Academic Grievance Form) are available from administration.

The HOO will notify the Complainant of receipt of the grievance within 5 working days.

The HOO will then assess the grievance, consult with relevant parties, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within 15 working days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this procedure 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 General Manager at Air Gold Coast, P.O. Box 116, Coolangatta, QLD 4225.

The Complainant's appeal will be determined by the General Manager who 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 10 working days.

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

Stage Three

At any point the complainant may decide to refer the matter to an external agency such as the Anti Discrimination Board or the Office of Fair Trading.

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal an independent mediator will be sourced by Air Gold Coast through LEADR, the Association of Dispute Resolvers.

If the academic Complainant remains unsatisfied with the outcome of the mediator's decision, then they may contact the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). For contact details and information please see: <http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/making-a-complaint.html>.

If you are dissatisfied with the manner in which Air Gold Coast has dealt with your non-academic complaint, you may wish to contact the VET Student Loans Ombudsman. The VET Student Loans Ombudsman will be operating from 1 July 2017. Further information on the VET Student Loans Ombudsman is available at www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/vet-student-loans-ombudsman.

Remedial action:

Air Gold Coast will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review of the grievance within 30 days of receipt of the recommendations.

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Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Records of all complaints and their outcomes will be maintained for a period of seven years to allow all parties access to the records on written request to the General Manager.

7 Continuous Improvement

Any improvement action arising from a student complaint or appeal will be assessed for continuous improvement and any action required to improve services will be activated.