



# **Policy Document**

## **Grievance and Complaint**

## Policy Name

Grievance and Complaint

## Policy File Name

20090616GrievanceAndComplaintPolicy

## Policy Location

Cengage Education Inside and [www.cengage.edu.au/policies](http://www.cengage.edu.au/policies)

## Compliance Requirements

[NSW Department of Education and Training](#)

[NSW Higher Education Act 2001](#)

[Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations](#)

[Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(HESA\)](#)

[Australian Universities Quality Agency](#)

[Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board \(VETAB\)](#)

[Vocational Education and Training Act 2005](#)

[Australian Quality Training Framework \(AQTF\) 2007](#)

## Purpose

To ensure fair and equitable management of grievances and complaints within the Cengage Education learning community by providing a transparent and consistent process for resolving grievances and complaints, in conformity with the academic standards, integrity and other policies of Cengage Education.

## Scope

This policy articulates the general approach of Cengage Education in resolving complaints relating to decisions, acts or omissions of Cengage Education academic or non-academic staff or committees which may adversely affect the academic or non-academic well-being of staff or students, and the informal and formal procedures that should follow in pursuing grievances regarding their well-being.

Staff and students will be able to view this policy prior to employment or enrolment and will be advised to read it at the commencement of a course or employment with Cengage Education.

Anyone is entitled to access the grievance and complaint policy and related procedures regardless of the location at which a grievance may have arisen, or the place of residence, their mode of study or position they hold with Cengage Education.

Grievances may be about the decisions or actions of staff or committees at Cengage Education. They may not be about the policies, procedures or academic standards of Cengage Education. A grievance may be about the manner in which someone has *interpreted*

or *implemented* a policy or procedure, but it can not be about the policy or procedure itself.

## Definitions

**Grievance:** any perceived ground for complaint by a student, prospective student or client, concerning a decision, act or omission of a Cengage Education staff member or committee that may adversely affect a student's academic or non-academic well-being.

**Complaint:** the assertion of a grievance (either formally or informally).

## Policy Provisions

Cengage Education must develop procedures for handling grievances and complaints relating to academic and non-academic matters that are complete, unambiguous, easily accessible by and at no or reasonable cost to the complainant and that result in a timely resolution. A mechanism must also exist to implement and ensure compliance with these procedures.

Complaints that remain unresolved must be reviewed internally by an independent and impartial senior officer that is on staff or nominated by Cengage Education or a dedicated complaints committee established by Cengage Education. The internal review procedure should include details regarding who the independent person or body is.

An independent person or body must be established or nominated by Cengage Education as a provision for external review of decisions made by the senior officer or complaints committee. This external review procedure must provide details of who the person or body conducting the external review is.

A procedure should be in place for implementation of decisions or recommendations resulting from internal or external review of a grievance or complaint.

In addition, Cengage Education is committed to:

- Ensuring a complainant or respondent is not victimised or discriminated against;
- Conducting complaints processes in accordance with the principles of natural justice;
- Considering complaints in a consistent, transparent, objective and unbiased manner;
- Making all details of the procedures publicly available;
- Communicating the procedures in writing to all staff and ensure comprehensive training regarding comprehension and implementation of the policy's procedures and that amendments and their implications are understood;
- Informing students of the policy during their course orientation and advising students to read it at the commencement of a course;
- Specifying reasonable timelines for responses to each stage of the process and monitoring of these timelines;
- Allowing the complainant and / or respondent to be accompanied and / or assisted by a third party if desired;
- Providing reasons and full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures, if requested by the complainant and / or respondent;
- Keeping appropriate records of grievances for at least five years, and allow parties to the complaint appropriate access to these records;
- Ensuring that such records are treated as confidential, and;
- Reviewing the complaints-handling process regularly.

## Associated Documents

Academic Grievance and Complaint Policy (Higher Education)  
Non-academic Grievance and Complaint Policy (Higher Education)  
Academic Grievance and Complaint Procedure (Higher Education; HE)  
Complaint Procedures for Vocational Education and Training (VET)  
Cengage Education Student Handbook (HE)  
Cengage Education Student Handbook and Diary (VET)

## Authorities and Accountabilities

The Policy Officer is responsible for establishing, communicating and implementing this policy.

The Academic Director is responsible for enforcement of this policy and for dealing with breaches.

## Document Versions and Approvals

The version of this policy is indicated by the date in the file name of this document. Each new version of this policy, prepared by the Policy Officer, requires approval by the approvers indicated below and this policy will remain in draft status until a date is entered by each approver.

**This Version Approved By**  
Compliance Manager  
Academic Director

**Date Approved**  
28 April 2009  
16 June 2009