

International Complaints and Appeals Process

POLICY

The Melbourne College of Hair & Beauty (MCOHB) maintains a supportive and fair environment which allows training participants to raise any problems, concerns or complaints that they may have regarding MCOHB's facilities, services, personnel, policies, procedures or practices. A formal complaint is when a person has a grievance that they want investigated and a formal response made to them. Complaints are taken seriously by all MCOHB staff, and are to be actioned within 10 days of receipt of the formal complaint. MCOHB will act upon the subject of any complaint found to be substantiated. Appeals by students to MCOHB's formal response regarding any complaint must be lodged within 20 working days of the appealable decision, and are to be re-validated by the CEO/Principal. Students can appeal assessment outcomes or recognition decisions within one week of being notified of the decision or within 2 weeks of the assessment date, whichever is longer. Student complaints and appeals are ideally resolved as amicably as possible and must be completed within a reasonable timeframe which takes into consideration the length of a student's visa and the student's enrolment in future subjects and/or courses.

We will adhere to the National Complaints Code to respond to complaints and appeals. This means that our complaints and appeals process will be:

- well publicised and explained;
- accessible so you can lodge complaints by phone, electronically or in writing;
- fair and protect your rights;
- free so you can lodge a complaint without charge;
- handled in a manner that protects your privacy;
- transparent, equitable, objective and unbiased;
- comprehensive so that it effectively resolves a variety of complaints such as student dissatisfaction, assessment outcomes, poor service, fraud, misconduct etc;
- implemented effectively and efficiently to ensure complaints are resolved within an acceptable timeframe;
- monitored, recorded and reported to the appropriate people; and
- an input or trigger point to our continuous improvement process.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS

1.0 Purpose

This procedure defines the system available to students for dealing with student complaints against MCOHB concerning the conduct of MCOHB and appeals against the decisions made by MCOHB. Appeals can also relate to assessment decisions.

We will deal with any student complaints against MCOHB and appeals against our decisions in a fair, effective, consistent and timely manner.

Melbourne College of Hair & Beauty is committed to providing students with high quality education. Students are entitled to, and should expect, a high standard of learning and assessment and support services from us.

However, from time to time, students may have concerns or complaints about matters or issues relating to their experience at MCOHB. We view student complaints as providing an opportunity to review and improve our policies and practices, and also to gain insight into student levels of satisfaction. All substantiated complaints will be reviewed as part of MCOHB's Continuous Improvement procedure.

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2.0 Responsibility

2.1 The CEO is responsible for implementation of this procedure and ensuring that staff and students are made aware of its application.

3.0 Requirements

3.1 Students who are concerned about the conduct of the training provider are encouraged to attempt to resolve their concerns using this procedure.

3.2 The procedure will be implemented without cost to the student.

3.3 The procedure will commence within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and supporting information and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

3.4 All prospective students will be provided with information about the complaints and appeals procedure before making an agreement to enrol.

3.5 All complaints and appeals will be handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution that is fair and equitable to all parties.

3.6 Students will be provided with details of external authorities they may approach, if required.

3.7 At any stage in the internal complaint or appeal process students are entitled to have their own nominee included to accompany and support them.

3.8 Students may raise any matters of concern relating to training delivery and assessment, the quality of the teaching, student amenities, discrimination, sexual harassment and other issues that may arise.

3.9 For internal complaints and appeals:

- The student will have an opportunity to formally present their case, in writing or in person at no cost to the student
- The student may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.
- At the conclusion of the complaint or appeal the student will be given a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome and the record of the complaint and outcome will be placed in the student file.

3.10 If the appeal is against MCOHB's decision to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress and attendance, MCOHB will maintain the student's enrolment (i.e. not report the student for unsatisfactory progress or attendance) until the external process is complete and has supported MCOHB's decision to report.

3.11 If the appeal is against MCOHB's decision to defer or suspend a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour or to cancel the student's enrolment, MCOHB will await the outcome of the internal appeals process and if supporting MCOHB's decision will notify DEEWR through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment.

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- 3.12** Extenuating circumstances' relating to the welfare of the student will be supported by appropriate evidence and may include, but are not limited to the student:
- having medical concerns, severe depression or psychological issues which lead the provider to fear for the student's wellbeing;
 - having engaged or threatens to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others; or
 - being at risk of committing a criminal offence
- 3.13** MCOHB will encourage the parties to approach a complaint or appeal with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation.
- 3.14** Where a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, we acknowledge the need for an appropriate external and independent agent to review the process implemented by MCOHB. If a student wishes to lodge an external appeal against a decision made by us, they can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by MCOHB. More information is available on www.oso.gov.au.
- 3.15** If there is any matter arising from a student complaint or appeal that is a systemic issue which requires improvement action this will be reported to the RTO management meeting as part of the continuous improvement process.
- 3.16** Students will be informed of decisions that support the student together with the outcome of the continuous improvement process including corrective and preventative actions implemented by MCOHB.
- 3.17** Nothing in this procedure inhibits student's rights to pursue other legal remedies. Students are entitled to resolve any dispute by exercising their rights to other legal remedies. Students wishing to take this course of action are advised to:
- Contact a solicitor; or
 - Contact the Law Institute of Victoria - www.liv.asn.au

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1** **Complaint** is any formal expression of dissatisfaction, whether written or oral, submitted to Melbourne College of Hair & Beauty about their policies, services or decisions.
- 4.2** **Appeal** means to call into question a formal decision or action instigated by a staff member of Melbourne College of Hair & Beauty.

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5.0 Method

Informal Complaint Process

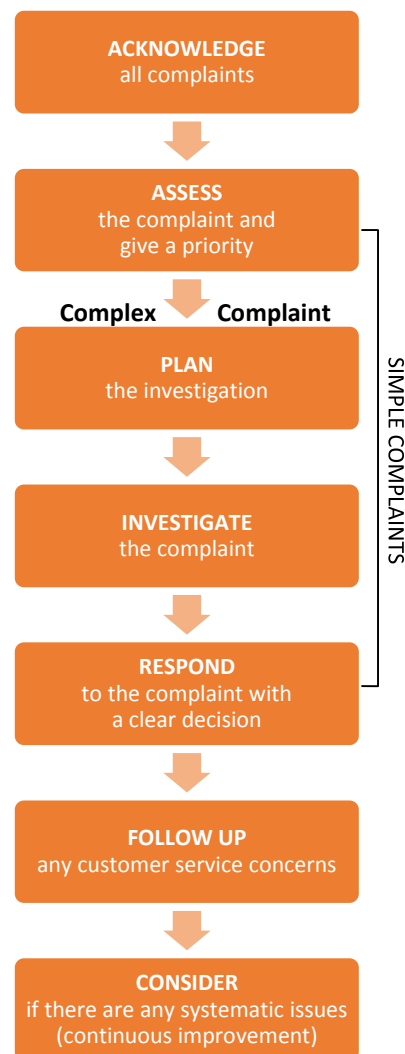
- 5.1 Any student with a question or complaint may raise the matter with staff of MCOHB to attempt an informal resolution of the question or complaint.
- 5.2 Questions or complaints dealt with in this way do not become part of the formal complaint process and will not be documented, recorded or reported on unless MCOHB staff member involved determines that the issue question or complaint was relevant to the wider operation of MCOHB.
- 5.3 Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of the question or complaint are encouraged to register a formal complaint.

Formal Complaint Process

- 5.4 Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, or, who want to register a formal complaint may do so by completing the student complaint form (appended to this Procedure), or obtainable from the MCOHB website in the downloads section under Complaints and Appeals Process, through any staff member or by contacting the Principal to arrange a meeting. At this meeting the complaint can be raised and a resolution attempted.
- 5.5 At the complaint meeting the complaint is recorded in writing by completing the student complaint form, prepared either prior to the meeting or a new document can be prepared and signed during the meeting.
- 5.6 The Principal will then attempt to resolve the complaint with the student and any other parties who may be involved. The resolution phase must commence within 10 working days of the complaint being lodged in writing.
- 5.7 A maximum time of 20 working days from the commencement of the resolution phase will be allowed for the resolution unless all parties agree in writing to extend this time. This period is called the resolution phase.
- 5.8 At the end of the resolution phase the Principal will report MCOHB's decision to the student. MCOHB's decision and reasons for the decision will be documented by the Principal and placed in the students file. A copy of this document will be provided to the student.
- 5.9 Following the resolution phase, MCOHB will implement the decision as conveyed to the student and undertake any improvement actions arising from the complaint.

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MCOHB COMPLAINTS HANDLING FLOW CHART



- 5.10** If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint process then they may institute an internal appeals process by completing the appeals form.

Internal Appeal Process

- 5.11** Internal appeals may result from a number of sources including assessment, and discipline actions. The essential nature of an appeal is that it is a request by a student to reconsider a decision made by MCOHB.
- 5.12** A student's enrolment must be maintained whilst an appeal is in progress and the outcome has not been determined.
- 5.13** The appeals process is initiated by a student completing the student appeals form, appended to this procedure or obtainable through any staff member and lodging the completed form with the Principal.
- 5.14** The appeal resolution phase must commence within 10 working days of the internal appeal being lodged in writing.

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- 5.15 A maximum time of 30 working days from the commencement of the appeal resolution phase will be allowed for the appeal resolution unless all parties agree in writing to extend this time.
- 5.16 After a student makes an internal appeal, MCOHB will appoint a person or body to hear the appeal and propose a final resolution. This person or body must not be the same as any person or body that heard the original complaint.
- 5.17 Students appealing an assessment or RPL outcome will be given the opportunity for reassessment by a different assessor selected by MCOHB and the Costs of reassessment will be met by MCOHB. The recorded outcome of the assessment appeal will be the most favourable result for the student from either the original assessment or the reassessment.
- 5.18 The outcome of the internal appeal and reasons for the outcome will be recorded in writing and signed and dated by the student and MCOHB and placed in the student file. A copy of this document will be provided to the student.
- 5.19 Following the internal appeals phase MCOHB will implement the decision as conveyed to the student and undertake any improvement actions arising from the complaint.
- 5.20 There are no further avenues within MCOHB for complaints or appeals after the internal appeals process has been completed, however an external appeals process is available.

External appeal process

- 5.21 The purpose of the external appeals process is to consider whether MCOHB has followed its student complaint and appeals procedure, not to make a decision in place of MCOHB. For example, if a student appeals against his or her subject results and goes through MCOHB internal appeals process, the external appeals process (if accessed) would look at the way in which the internal appeal was conducted; it would not make a determination as to what the subject result should be.
- 5.22 If a student wishes to lodge an external appeal against a decision made by MCOHB, they can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by MCOHB. More information is available on www.oso.gov.au.
- 5.23 The external appeals procedure will be determined by the Overseas Students Ombudsman.
- 5.24 If an appeal is against a College decision to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress, MCOHB must maintain the student's enrolment (i.e. not report the student for unsatisfactory progress) until the external appeals process is complete and has supported the provider's decision to report.
- 5.25 Following the receipt of the outcome of the external appeal MCOHB must immediately implement the decision, convey the outcome to the student, place a copy of the documentation on the student file and undertake any improvement actions arising from the complaint.

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Office Use Only	
Detail Action Taken:	

Improvement actions implemented (if relevant):	

Resolution phase commenced within 10 days? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution finalised within 30 days of original receipt? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Have all parties agreed in writing extend this time? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Improvement Request Raised? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Date IR Raised:	
IR Raised by: (other than Principal)	
Signed:	
Date:	
IR Received by the Principal? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Allocated IR N°:	
Signature of the Principal/Director:	
Date:	