

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE: CCSC; EDUCATION; MRC

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Contact	Andre Kurniawan, andrek@morling.edu.au		
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1. PURPOSE

To articulate the procedures for raising and handling grievances by students enrolled in a Morling College (MC) course or as a resident of accommodation on an MC campus.

2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this document:

Key Term of Acronym	Definition
Academic matters	Include, but are not limited to, matters relating to admissions, courses, units, review of a grade, credit transfer or advanced standing, quality assurance, student progression and eligibility for graduation. Academic disagreement is not a grievance.
CCSC	The faculty of Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, including Professional Supervision.
Complainant	A person who makes a statement expressing discontent or unhappiness about a situation.
Course	A course that is provided by Morling College and is accredited through TEQSA.
Dean of Residents	The Dean of Residents oversees Morling Residential, including Morling Residential College and Morling Village.
DSS	Director of Student Services

Grievance Officer	A suitable person selected (per this policy) to investigate the grievance.
Leadership Team	The Principal and C-Suite Officers: currently the Chief Administrative Officer, the Chief Operating Officer; the VP(A) and the VP(SC).
MC	Morling College Limited, which includes Morling College and Morling Residential College.
MR / MRC	Morling Residential and Morling Residential College– encompassing those living on a Morling Campus, excluding staff
Non-academic matters	Administrative or other matters (for example, matters related to fees, withdrawals, expulsion, allegations of bullying or harassment, etc.) and other action, inaction or decisions that students may consider are interfering with the progress of their studies or with the granting of an award.
Overseas student	A student who is studying in Australia whilst on a student visa.
Resident	A person who has signed a contract for accommodation on a Morling campus, excluding staff who are under a different accommodation arrangement.
Residential matters	Administrative or other matters (for example, matters related to fees, living arrangements, accommodation standards or relational conflicts or concerns etc.) and other action, inaction or decisions that residents may consider are interfering with their accommodation experience.
Respondent	The person about whom the complaint is made.
Staff	Includes academic and administrative employees employed on permanent, fixed term and casual arrangements. Student A person who is enrolled in a course at Morling College.
Support person	A person that a complainant or respondent elects to provide emotional support during formal discussion meetings. They are not there to speak on behalf of the complainant or respondent. They may include a co-worker, a family member or friend.
VP(A)	Vice-Principal (Academic)
VP(SC)	Vice-Principal (Students and Community)

3. SCOPE AND CONTEXT

The procedures in this document apply to current and prospective, domestic, and overseas, students who are studying a course offered by MC in its capacity as a Institute of Higher Education, and for residents who have signed a contract for accommodation on a MC campus. They do not apply to grievances that relate to studies undertaken in courses offered by MC under a third-party arrangement with other providers.

Grievances related to inappropriate or unwanted behaviour related to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and/or sexual assault students or residents should be processed in accordance with the *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Prevention and Response Policy* and *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Prevention and Response Procedure*.

4. PROCEDURE

STEP 1 – PERSONAL RESOLUTION

- 4.1 If the complainant feels safe doing so, in the first instance they should attempt to resolve the issue informally by speaking directly with the person(s) involved with the grievance.
- 4.2 Depending on the concerns, the complainant should clarify the situation with the person(s) involved with the grievance, obtain more details or reasons, communicate their concerns or the effect the person's behaviour has had on them. The complainant should also communicate their expectations and preferred outcomes.
- 4.3 The complainant should keep written records of this conversation and any further conversations, with the knowledge of the other person(s) involved.
- 4.4 Should the complainant not feel safe bringing the issue directly to the person(s) involved or such an action does not result in a suitable outcome, they should continue with the formal grievance procedure, as outlined from Step 2 onwards.

STEP 2 – SUBMIT GRIEVANCE IN WRITING

- 4.5 Confirm whether the grievance is an academic matter or a non-academic matter, as per the definitions above.
- 4.6 For academic matters, submit details of the grievance in writing to the VP(A).
- 4.7 For non-academic matters, submit details of the grievance in writing to the VP(SC).
- 4.8 For residential matters, submit details of the grievance in writing to the Dean of Residents.
- 4.9 For academic grievances that implicate the VP(A), non-academic grievances that implicate the V(SC), and residential grievances that implicate the Dean of Residents submit details of the grievance in writing to the Principal.
- 4.10 Please note, as per the Grievance Policy, a grievance relating to the appeal or dispute of a result or decision must be lodged within twenty (20) working days of notice of that result or decision.
- 4.11 A formal written grievance should include the following information:
 - 4.11.1 the complainant's name, location and contact details;
 - 4.11.2 the name of the respondent (if the grievance is about a person);
 - 4.11.3 details of the specific incident or issue including dates, locations, and actions already taken; and
 - 4.11.4 the outcome the complainant is seeking.

STEP 3 – GRIEVANCE OFFICER IS APPOINTED

- 4.12 The VP(A), VP(SC), Dean of Residents, or Principal (whichever is relevant) shall acknowledge receipt of the grievance within five (5) working days, informing the complainant who has been appointed as the Grievance Officer for their grievance.

STEP 4 – THE GRIEVANCE IS ADDRESSED

- 4.13 The Grievance Officer will commence investigation of the grievance within 5 working days of being appointed to handle the grievance by organising an initial meeting with the complainant. The Grievance Officer must state to the complainant their right to bring a support person to the meeting.
- 4.14 The purpose of such a meeting is to inform the complainant of the process moving forward, ensure they are aware of the principles outlined in the *Grievance Policy: CCSC; Education; MRC* and clarify/collect more evidence from the complainant in relation to their grievance, ensuring everything spoken about is documented.
- 4.15 The Grievance Officer will ensure to take details of witnesses and/or other involved parties.
- 4.16 The Grievance Officer will write a summary of the meeting with the complainant, sending it to the complainant for the complainant to confirm the summary as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 4.17 The Grievance Officer will meet with the respondent, informing them of their right to a support person at any and all meetings, and collect information and evidence from the respondent, taking note of details of witnesses and/or other parties involved from the respondent.
- 4.18 The Grievance Officer will write a summary of the meeting with the respondent, sending it to the respondent for the respondent to confirm the summary as accurate.
- 4.19 The Grievance Officer will meet with each witness and/or other parties involved to collect as much evidence and information as possible, ensuring that each person interviewed is sent a summary of their respective meetings to confirm its accuracy.
- 4.20 The Grievance Officer may determine to complete ss. 4.13 - 4.19 as many times as necessary to ensure they have as much accurate evidence and information as they can possibly receive.
- 4.21 The Grievance Officer may determine, with appropriate permissions, to access security footage as necessary to ensure information gained from interviews is accurate and factual.

STEP 5 – OUTCOME OF A GRIEVANCE INVESTIGATION

- 4.22 The Grievance Officer will provide an in-depth report based on their investigation of the grievance to the VP(A), VP(SC), Dean of Residents, or Principal (as appropriate), including an outcome and, if relevant, recommended actions.

- 4.23 The VP(A), VP(SC), Dean of Residents or Principal (as appropriate) will check the report to ensure it follows the principles outlined in the Grievance Policy. If they believe the investigation was not conducted appropriately and/or rigorously, they may determine to complete their own investigation, informing the complainant and respondent of that decision in writing.
- 4.24 If the VP(A), VP(SC), Dean of Residents, or Principal (as appropriate) believe the investigation by the Grievance officer was appropriate and rigorous, they will determine which actions, if any, should be implemented from those recommended by the Grievance Officer and/or other actions they determine as appropriate. They will then inform the Grievance Officer, confirming the outcome of the investigation and resulting actions, if any.
- 4.25 Actions arising from a grievance can include, but are not limited to:
- 4.25.1 disciplinary actions;
 - 4.25.2 training to assist in addressing the problems underpinning the grievance;
 - 4.25.3 monitoring to ensure that there are no further problems;
 - 4.25.4 implementing a new policy and/or reviewing existing policy; and/or
 - 4.25.5 implementing new systems and/or updating existing systems.
- 4.26 The Grievance Officer, within ten (10) working days of receipt of confirmation of the outcome, will write a report outlining the outcome of the investigation of the grievance, detailed reasons as to why the decision was reached, and the actions, if any, arising as a result. The report must also state that both the complainant and the respondent, if unsatisfied with the outcome and/or resulting actions, may appeal the outcome to the Academic Board for academic matters and to the MC Board for non-academic or residential matters, within twenty (20) working days of receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation.
- 4.27 If both the complainant and respondent indicate their acceptance of the outcome of the investigation, or if twenty (20) working days pass without the complainant or respondent appealing the outcome, the Grievance Officer will inform the VP(A), VP(SC), Dean of Residents, or Principal (as appropriate) and any actions arising as a result will be implemented immediately.
- 4.28 A statement indicating that the actions have been implemented must be sent to the complainant and respondent as soon as they have been enacted.

STEP 6 – APPEAL OF OUTCOME OF GRIEVANCE

- 4.29 If unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation of the grievance, either the complainant or the respondent may appeal the outcome within twenty (20) working days of receipt of notice of the outcome.
- 4.30 To appeal the outcome, a letter summarising the grievance and detailing why the grievance investigation is believed to be unsatisfactory must be sent to:

- 4.30.1 the Academic Board for grievances relating to an academic matter; or
- 4.30.2 the MC Board for grievances relating to a non-academic or residential matter.
- 4.31 The relevant body will notify the complainant and the respondent of receipt of the appeal within ten (10) working days, asking the complainant and the respondent to provide supporting documentation.
- 4.32 Once the notification of receipt of the appeal has been received, the complainant and respondent will have ten (10) working days to submit all supporting documentation.
- 4.33 The relevant body will review the supporting documentation and the report provided by the Grievance Officer. If it deems appropriate, it may also initiate further investigation, which may include the use of an external third-party.
- 4.34 The relevant body will then determine its decision. Upon determination of its decision, the relevant body will, within ten (10) working days, notify the VP(A), VP(SC), Dean of Residents, or Principal (as appropriate), and provide the complainant and the respondent with a statement of the outcome, including detailed reasons for the outcome, any resulting actions, and the right of the complainant and the respondent to seeking an appeal through an external body.
- 4.35 The statement of the outcome must include contact details for Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA) which will facilitate a review of eligible grievances:

Chief Executive Officer
Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA)
Suite 310, Level 3
198 Harbour Esplanade
Docklands VIC 3008

Email: info@ihea.edu.au

Website: <https://ihea.edu.au>

Grievance options for overseas students and other avenues which are available to students and residents are outline.

STEP 7 – EXTERNAL REVIEW

- 4.36 If either the complainant or the respondent remains unsatisfied with the outcome of the internal process, or its management, they may request an external review.
- 4.37 Overseas students' requests for review go to the Commonwealth Ombudsman Overseas Students. Refer to their website for how to make your complaint about the internal grievance process. This service is free.

- 4.38 The body for most external review is IHEA, with the contact details for IHEA being provided to the complainant and the respondent in the statement of outcome, as determined by s.4.35.
- 4.39 The outcome of a grievance investigation can also be submitted for external review to authorities other than IHEA.
- 4.40 The Principal will ensure recommendations or directives provided to MC from an external authority are implemented immediately with written confirmation of this sent to both the complainant and the respondent.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

INTERNAL

- Grievance Policy: CCSC; Education; MRC
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Procedure

EXTERNAL

- *ACT Grievance Resolution Policy – Students*
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)*
- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*
- *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- *Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth)*

6. REFERENCES

Nil

7. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Changes made
2.01	VP(SC)	26 August 2024	26 August 2024	Minor editing. Included IHEA details in 4.35. Updating job titles.
2.0	VP(SC)	7 Sept 2022	7 Sept 2022	Consolidated the following to create this procedure: Grievance Procedure (Academic Matters) Ed CCSC v1; Grievance (Non-Academic Matters) Procedure Ed CCSC v1; Grievance Procedure (Academic Matters) International Counselling Students v1.1; Grievance Procedure (Non-Academic Matters) International Counselling Students v1.1

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