



GRIEVANCE (ACADEMIC MATTERS) POLICY: EDUCATION; COUNSELLING, CHAPLAINCY AND SPIRITUAL CARE

Responsible officer	Chief Academic Officer	
Contact	Policy Coordinator, policy@morling.edu.au	
Approved by	Academic Board	
Responsible body	Academic Board	
Approval date	8 May 2019	
Effective date	8 May 2019	
Review date	May 2022	
Superseded documents	Grievance (Academic Matters) Policy: Education and Counselling 2014	
Related documents	Grievance (Academic Matters) Procedure: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care	
Policy classification <i>Select a General OR an Academic option</i>	General	Academic Academic Governance

1. PURPOSE

To articulate the rules governing grievances relating to academic matters.

2. DEFINITIONS

Key Term or Acronym	Definition
MC	Morling College
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.
Support Person	A person that a complainant or respondent elects to provide support during formal discussion meetings. They may include a co-worker, a family member or friend.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to current and prospective students with an academic grievance in relation to units in Education, Counselling, and Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, regardless of the location of the campus of MC at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study, this includes MC students studying online.

The following matters are explicitly excluded from this policy:

Issue	Relevant Policy
Non-academic matters	Grievance (Non-Academic Matters) Policy: Education; Counselling and Spiritual Care
Refund of tuition fees	Refund of Tuition Fees and Re-crediting-of FEE-HELP Debt Policy: Education; Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care

Policies for each of these matters are published on the Morling website.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Morling College is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system for academic matters which is easily accessible and offered at no cost to the student.

All current and prospective students of MC are entitled to:

- a) raise a concern or grievance relating to an academic matter; and/or
- b) have an academic decision reviewed.

This policy emphasises positive outcomes and focuses on resolutions that work towards a rapid re-establishment of good working/learning relationships.

Any grievance will be attended to promptly, confidentially (within the constraints of an investigation), will be investigated impartially, involving a minimum number of people. Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that any harassment or discrimination will be treated seriously and at all times the rights of the complainant and the respondent will be respected.

5. PRINCIPLES

Timelines

- 5.1 A grievance must be lodged within 20 working days of notice of the academic decision that is being disputed.
- 5.2 MC will seek to resolve all concerns and grievances promptly. All parties will be kept informed about the progress of the issue at regular intervals and will be further advised where resolution is likely to extend beyond the specified times.

Confidentiality

- 5.3 Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the process of making and resolving grievances. This requirement seeks to protect the rights and privacy of all involved and to facilitate the return to a comfortable and

productive work/learning environment.

Procedural fairness

5.4 Grievance procedures must take account of the principles of procedural fairness that applies to the complainant, the respondent, and the investigating officer. Principles of procedural fairness encompass the following:

- grievance procedures should be explicit and known to all involved parties
- grievance handlers will employ honesty, integrity and fair dealing in all aspects of their communications, investigations, reporting and record keeping
- all parties involved will receive appropriate information and assistance in resolving the issue at all times.

Natural justice

5.5 It is a firmly established principle of Australian law that no one person should be condemned unheard. It is this opportunity to be heard that is the subject of the rules of natural justice/procedural fairness which means that every respondent to a grievance has the right to be heard; to present provable evidence and submissions in one's own cause; and the opportunity to be heard by an impartial decision-maker.

5.6 Support – current and prospective students who lodge a grievance in relation to academic matters may elect to have a support person present in any face-to-face meetings regarding their grievance. Additional pathways for support can be accessed via contacting the Chief Community Life Officer.

External review recommendations

5.7 If a body nominated by MC makes recommendations in relation to a grievance they have reviewed, that body will forward those recommendations to the Principal, who will ensure that the recommendations are implemented within 15 working days of receiving the recommendations.

Unsubstantiated grievances

5.8 Procedural fairness requires, in the interest of all parties, that a person raising a concern or grievance be aware that where a concern or grievance is investigated to its full extent and cannot be substantiated, no further action can be taken. This does not restrict the right of any parties to pursue legal remedies outside the MC grievance handling procedures.

Anonymous grievances

5.9 MC cannot act on an anonymous concern or grievance. Procedural fairness requires that any person raising a concern or grievance must be identified. An anonymous concern or grievance can include (but is not restricted to) unsigned letters, unidentifiable emails or anonymous telephone calls.

Victimisation

5.10 Victimisation of any kind is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

At all times during and following the resolution process, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that victimisation does not occur to:

- the complainant;
- the person/persons about whom the grievance was made, i.e. the respondent; and/or
- any other student or client with knowledge of the grievance.

Records and Reporting

5.11 All records pertaining to grievance or concern will be maintained in a confidential Grievance and Appeal file kept by the Registrar Department. Appropriate access to files about a particular grievance can be gained by all parties to that grievance by making a request in writing to the Registrar. Grievance files will generally be maintained for a period of five years and then destroyed. Where a proven grievance has longer term consequences the file may be kept for up to 15 years after the final decision before being destroyed.

5.12 A report on grievances under this policy will be made to the Academic Board annually.

Non-Restrictive

5.13 Nothing in this policy precludes students from taking action under Australia's Consumer Protection Laws.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

Privacy Act 1988 and the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

7. REFERENCES

Avondale Appeal & Grievance Policy (Academic Matters) – Students [S.03 | VS.12]

TEQSA Guidance Note: *Grievance and Complaint Handling*, 22 February 2019

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
3	Academic Board	8 May 2019	8 May 2019	Amended to reflect changes in roles and job titles. 3. Scope: Added exception table. Added 5.1 and 5.11. In 5.10, added to possibility of retaining a file for 15

				years. Added text to 6. And 7.
2	Academic Board	Feb 2014	May 2014	Updated
1	Academic Board	March 2011	March 2011	Original Policy

*Always **download** this policy anew from the Policies folder on the Morling share drive Policies/Student Policies, as it may have changed*