A7.1 Student Grievance and Appeals Committee Procedures

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<th>Head Policy</th>
<th>Student Grievance Management Policy</th>
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Scope
The Student Grievance and Appeals Committee is the highest internal mechanism for resolution of grievances by students of Torrens University Australia. The committee is established to hear appeals pursuant to clause 6.3 of the Student Grievance Management Policy.

Definitions
Executive Manager: Vice-Chancellor and President, Director of Operations and Services, Academic Director and appointments at the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice-Chancellor level.

Senior Manager: Heads of School, managers of administrative units and other staff designated as Senior Managers on appointment.

1. Constitution and membership
   a. Purpose
      The Student Grievance and Appeals Committee is convened as required to hold a hearing and make a determination following the submission of an appeal by a student in accord with the Student Grievance Management Policy and related policies and procedures.
   b. Membership
      The committee is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and President, and comprises:
      i. an Executive Manager (who may be the Vice-Chancellor and President) as Chair;
      ii. a Senior Manager; and
      iii. a member of the Student Consultative Committee.

      The quorum of the committee is three. The Chair will decide in cases where a clear majority of opinion is not achieved.

2. Process
2.1. Appeal lodgement
      
      **Responsibility: student wishing to lodge appeal**
      
      **Timeline:** Within 20 working days of notification of the University decision about which the student wishes to appeal.

      a. Lodge a Student Appeal Application with the officer named on the application form.

2.2. Arranging the hearing
      
      **Responsibility: Student Grievance and Appeals Committee**
Timeline: Within 10 working days of receipt of completed Student Appeal Application.

a. Convene within 20 working days of receipt of application.
b. Notify student, in writing to their student email account, of date and venue of committee hearing, with a copy of the Student Grievance and Appeals Committee Procedure.

2.3. Committee hearing

Responsibility: Committee chair

The hearing must comply with the following:

a. The hearing is held without undue formality; the rules of evidence and court procedures do not apply; the format for presentation of evidence and submissions is as determined by the chair.
b. The committee may inform itself of any matter relevant to the determination of the appeal by whatever means it chooses, provided the student has an opportunity to respond to all material taken into account in determining the outcome of the appeal.
c. The hearing is held in closed session, except that:
   • an administrative officer may attend the hearing and take notes; and
   • the student may be accompanied by a support person who is not legally qualified.
d. The appeal is completed as quickly as possible subject to the requirements of procedural fairness. The student and witnesses may at the chair’s discretion appear or give evidence at the hearing by the use of technology.
e. Subject to the proviso in clause b., a hearing may proceed in the absence of the student if the student does not attend after receiving notice of the hearing in accord with this process.

2.4. Committee members’ responsibilities

All committee members have the following responsibilities:

a. Not to participate in any hearing where they have a direct interest.
b. To act fairly and without bias.
c. To examine the substantial merits of the case, without regard to legal technicalities or forms.
d. To base their decision on findings of fact that are in turn based on sound reasoning and relevant evidence.
e. To keep confidential all information provided during the grievance process.

2.5. Committee determination

Responsibility: Student Grievance and Appeals Committee

a. Once the facts have been established to the satisfaction of the committee, make a determination on the appropriate action required in light of those facts.
b. The committee’s determination may include the following options:
   i. Endorse the original decision about which the appeal is lodged and dismiss the appeal.
   ii. Determine an alternative resolution.
   iii. Refer the matter back to the original decision-maker for review and resolution.
   iv. Recommend a review of or changes to relevant policies, procedures or practices.

2.6. Notification

Responsibility: Committee chair

Timeline: Within 5 working days of the committee’s determination.
a. Notify the student in writing to the student’s email account of the committee’s determination, the grounds on which it was made, and the student’s options for external review and appeal, in accord with clause 6.4 of the Student Grievance Management Policy. If the determination is that a student be excluded or expelled from the University, the notification must be by registered mail.

b. Notify other relevant parties to the grievance of the determination.

c. Notify other University officers whose responsibilities require them to know of the determination. If there is a determination of misconduct against a student, enter it on the Central Misconduct Register. If the committee’s decision includes serious implications about a staff member’s conduct or performance, make a separate report to the Director, Operations and Services.

d. Retain all records of the hearing and related documents on a confidential University file.