Grievance Resolution Policy – Students and Clinic Clients

**Policy Code:** ACA-003  **Version:** 2.0S  **Effective Date:** 13 December 2010

**Purpose:**
This policy pertains to the management of student grievances by providing guidance to the procedure to be followed and ensuring that the concern raised is addressed using the appropriate channels to facilitate an equitable confidential and prompt resolution.

**Scope:**
- All campuses and online
- All courses and departments
- All students including International, HE, FEE-HELP, VET and VET FEE-HELP students
- Recent graduates of the College (for a period of 12 months after graduation)
- All staff; permanent and sessional
- All clients of Student Clinics

**Policy Statement:**
Endeavour College is committed to providing high quality educational programs and excellent graduates who will practice natural medicine as leaders in their field. The College recognises the importance of effective communication as being essential to resolving any concerns and this policy is fundamental in the resolution of grievances and in the reconciliation of Claimants with the College.

Endeavour College considers it important to be made aware of all student appeals and grievances. The College aims to respond to appeals and grievances in a fair and equitable manner and to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of all parties. These documented procedures are in place to deal with academic appeals and grievances and to guide the actions taken by all parties.

This Policy and related Procedures will be published on the College’s website for the
information of current and prospective students. In addition it will be provided to students at course commencement.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Records of grievances and their outcomes will be kept strictly confidential and filed in a separate file (not student or staff files). All related correspondence both inwards and outwards will be maintained in the file and stored in the office of the Executive Assistant to the DOE. Each file is to be held by the College for a minimum period of five years after the student’s final dealings with the College on the grievance. The minimum five year retention provision also applies where the grievance is dealt with externally, with the retention period commencing at the conclusion of the external reviewer’s involvement with the grievance. Informal grievance records will be destroyed when mutual resolution is agreed.

Confidentiality is observed at all times, with records of all grievances, applications for review and the outcomes only available to the parties involved in the grievance under supervised access upon written request to the Director of Education.

Academic and Non-Academic Matters

**Academic matters** relate to student academic progress, assessment, curriculum, quality of course delivery, academic achievement in a course and awards in a course.

**Non-academic matters** do NOT relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and award in a course(s).

This policy also extends to grievances about breaches of personal information by the College relating to information obtained by the College for the purposes of VET-FEE HELP assistance and repayment of HELP loan. VET Non-academic matters may include, but are not limited to operational, administrative, discrimination and harassment issues.

Examples of both academic and non-academic matters are listed in the Table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Non-Academic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results of review or re-mark against assessment marks or final grade</td>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from study or continual enrolment</td>
<td>Racial or sexual discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results of credit transfer or RPL applications</td>
<td>Unfair treatment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Findings of allegations of cheating
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Quality of course delivery
- Behavioural issues
- Breach of personal information
- Concerns about campus facilities, environment, health and safety or equipment

During all stages of the Grievance Process, Endeavour College will take all steps necessary to ensure that the Claimant and Respondent will not suffer any disadvantage, victimisation or discrimination as a result of raising a grievance.

An explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken at any stage of the process will be provided if requested by the Claimant or the Respondent.

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained and where possible disclosure of grievance information will be limited to those who are legitimately involved in the process of resolving the grievance.

This policy does not replace or modify policies or any other responsibilities that may arise under other Endeavour College policies or under statute or natural justice. This policy, and the availability of grievance and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia’s consumer protection laws or the right to pursue other legal courses of action.

Feedback from students about academic services and courses offered by Endeavour College is encouraged and would not normally be viewed as a grievance, unless specific action is requested in the form of a concern raised. However, in some cases, students may feel that they have experienced unfair or unreasonable treatment, disadvantage or distress, about which they wish to pursue in a more formal manner.

This policy also covers students who have ceased their enrolment with Endeavour College. Issues from such students can be considered under this policy for a period of up to 12 months after their enrolment has ceased.

Negotiated solutions will aim to address the key issues and be acceptable to all individuals or parties involved without ascribing blame, victimisation or discrimination.

If the grievance is not resolved through informal procedures, students may initiate a Formal Grievance Process. There is no cost to the Claimant for utilising the internal
Endeavour grievance procedure.

**Stages of Grievance Implementation**

The following steps identify the four key stages through which a grievance may be dealt with.

Endeavour provides the following steps to allow the grievance to be formalised. The Claimant’s privacy rights will be assured whilst also ensuring that victimisation and discrimination does not occur at any time during the following stages.

The Claimant has the right to be heard on the matter of the grievance at any stage and may be accompanied by a nominated support person when meeting with the College to discuss their particular concern.

The four stages of the Grievance Process are fully detailed in the related Academic Grievance Resolution Procedure – Students and Clinic Clients and Non-Academic Grievance Resolution Procedure – Students and Clinic Clients.

**Stage 1 – Informal Resolution Process**

Claimants are encouraged to attempt to resolve the grievance informally and amicably at an early stage. This can be done through speaking directly with a member of student support or academic staff.

Requests for reviewing or remarking assessments should refer to the Review and Re-mark of Assessment Policy and Procedure.

**Stage 2 – Formal Resolution Process**

The formal grievance procedure begins when a current or prospective student or clinic client states in writing that they have a grievance. Separate procedures apply to academic and non-academic grievances.

**Stage 3 - Appealing the Original Decision**

If the Claimant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their grievance, they may lodge an appeal detailing the reasons for the appeal to the Director of Education within 20 working days of being informed of the decision. The Director of Education and Director of Campus Services are responsible for reviewing appeals relating to formal grievances and convening the Complaints or Decision Review Committees.

**Stage 4- External Independent Review**

If the Claimant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they may make a written request to the Director of Education or the Director of Campus Services for an independent external review of the decision, to be facilitated by the Australian Council for
Private Education and Training (ACPET). The service provides Claimants with access to external independent review of grievance decisions for academic matters. ACPET’s charges for these services are identified on their website www.acpet.edu.au.

If a grievance still remains unresolved after the external dispute resolution process, the student may decide to refer the matter to an external agency such as the relevant State departments of the Anti-Discrimination Board or The Office of Fair Trading.

**Continuous Improvement**

Any improvement action arising from a student grievance or appeal will be recorded in accordance with the Endeavour College Continuous Improvement Process.

**Related Procedures:**

**Student Grievance Procedures**

The specific procedures for submitting and dealing with academic and non-academic grievances will follow the guidelines and principles set out in this Policy, and are detailed in the following documents:

- **Academic Grievance Resolution Procedure – Students and Clinic Clients**
- **Non-Academic Grievance Resolution Procedure – Students and Clinic Clients**

**Definitions:**

- **Academic grievance** – a grievance about student academic progress, assessment, curriculum, the quality of course delivery, academic achievement in a course and awards in a course.

- **Appeal** - An application to a higher authority for a decision to be reversed.

- **Advocate** – a person who pleads on someone else’s behalf, for the purposes of this policy, a person who pleads on behalf of the Claimant and supports the Claimant’s case.

- **Claimant** – refers to the person(s) who formally instigates a grievance, complaint or appeal.

- **Complaint** – A statement that a situation is unsatisfactory.

- **Formal grievance** – refers to the formal lodging of a written grievance, complaint or appeal.
Grievance – An official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong, which has resulted in what is believed to be by the Claimant, unfair treatment.

Informal grievance – refers to a range of processes, such as discussion, a request or query lodged with an appropriate staff member.

Mediator – A person or body that intervenes between people in a dispute in order to bring about an agreement, resolution and/or reconciliation. The mediator may be internal or external to the College. ACPET may serve as the external mediator.

Natural justice – Natural justice refers to a due process that displays fairness to all parties. It includes the right to be heard, the right of reply, the right to be treated fairly and the right to be informed of allegation(s) being made.

Non-academic grievance – a grievance about operational or administrative matters within the College, unfair treatment, abusive behaviours, concerns about facilities, environment and safety.

Respondent – refers to the person(s) or institution against whom the grievance is lodged.

Further Information:

Related Policies:  
Student Code of Conduct Policy  
Review and Re-mark of Assessment Policy  
Information Privacy Policy

Benchmarking:  Not Applicable

Supporting Research and Analysis:  Not Applicable

Related Documents:  
Formal Grievance Form  
Grievance Report Stage 2 Form  
Grievance Report Stage 3 Form
Related Legislation: Not Applicable

Guidelines: Not Applicable
Policy Author: National Manager – Quality, Standards and Compliance

Policy Owner: National Manager – Quality, Standards and Compliance

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Approval Committee: Academic Board
Meeting date: 25 November 2010
Agenda Item: 4.1

Campus Services Management (CSM)
Meeting Date: 02 July 2010
Item number: 45

Endorsement Committee: College Council
Meeting date: 10 December 2010
Agenda Item: Section D

Policy Status: Revised

Responsibilities for Implementation: National Manager – Quality, Standards and Compliance
Quality Committee

Key Stakeholders: Director of Education
Director of Campus Services
Heads of School
Student Support Team
Students

Date for Next Review: December 2011

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Version Summary

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<td>16/08/10</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>08Nov10</td>
<td>N Chaperon &amp; H Morrison</td>
<td>Incorporation of Feedback; change of policy title</td>
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<td>2.0S</td>
<td>13Dec10</td>
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