

Grievance resolution policy and procedures [academic]

Introduction

All students of Australian Lutheran College [ALC] can use these procedures to submit a grievance about an academic matter. Academic grievances relate to matters such as student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course of study. This policy is posted on the ALC website [www.alc.edu.au] which should be checked for the latest version.

Grievance Procedure Stages

Students at ALC have access to a three stage academic grievance process which is set out below. Each stage is free of charge for the student.

Timeline for lodging grievance & commencement of process

Students may lodge a complaint or appeal via this process within 20 working days of notification of progress or assessment in a course of study. The grievance procedure will start within 10 working days of the lodgement of the grievance.

Stage 1 [Individual resolution]

In the first instance, students should discuss their grievance with the other person involved. Further action may be taken only when the matter remains unresolved, that is, when no reconciliation has taken place.

Where the matter remains unresolved, students should communicate with one of the staff listed below. A decision about the grievance will be made by the relevant person within 14 days.

- Grievances relating to a course unit are to be referred to the lecturer concerned.
- Grievances relating to a whole course are to be referred to the Dean of Studies.
- Grievances relating to a specific school are to be referred to the relevant Head of School.
- Grievances relating to special areas [eg Field Education, Vicarage] are to be taken to the staff member responsible for that area.

Stage 2 [Internal resolution]

If unsatisfied with the response to the grievance or the time take under stage 1 to resolve the matter, the student may submit the grievance in writing to the Principal and, through the Principal, to the teaching staff. The Principal will ensure that the complaint is dealt with within a reasonable time, normally within 30 days of the receipt of the complaint.

The matter may also be referred to the Board of Australian Lutheran College as the final internal court of appeal: the Board may also be asked to adjudicate where the teaching staff has a complaint against a student which has not been resolved.

Stage 3 [External resolution]

If the student is not satisfied with the decision in Stage 2, the student may request that the matter be further reviewed by an external body appointed by ALC for this purpose. An independent dispute resolution service is offered by Lutheran Community Care. This is a free service for ALC students funded by ALC.

Contact details are:

Lutheran Community Care
PO Box 288
KILBURN SA 5084
Ph: [08] 8269 9300
Fax: [08] 8269 1935
Email: enquiries@lccsa.org.au
www.lccsa.org.au

Grievances will be addressed through this external body within 30 days.

Whether or not a grievance is being heard by ALC authorities, or by a further conciliator, the parties have the option of taking action in a Consumer Claims Tribunal or a court of competent jurisdiction. Students are also informed of their legal right to access the Consumer Claims Tribunal through the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs.

If Lutheran Community Care makes recommendations in relation to a grievance they have reviewed, Lutheran Community Care will forward those recommendations to the Principal of ALC within 7 days who will ensure that the recommendations are implemented within 14 days.

General

1. The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against as a result of a grievance being raised.
2. This policy is communicated to academic staff and support staff through the ALC website and Quality Intranet Manual. The Dean of Studies is responsible for the training of academic staff and support staff in the application of this policy.
3. The complainant and/or respondent have the right to be represented by a third person [such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person] if they so desire.
4. At all stages of the process, reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures will be given if requested by the complainant and/or respondent.
5. Records of all grievances, applications for review of decisions and outcomes of the grievance process will be kept for a period of 5 years. These records will be strictly confidential and filed in a separate file [not kept on the student or staff file] and stored in the office of the Principal for a period of 5 years. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records.
6. Students of ALC are entitled to use the grievance procedure set out in this policy, regardless of the location of the campus of the institution at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study.

Approval

This policy was approved by the ALC Board of Directors and Management Team on the date as amended in the document footer below [following the regular ALC Quality document generation approval, tracking and publication process].