

COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

Policy number: 14.23
Authorised by: Director, Trison Business College
Introduction date: 1/7/98
Last revision date: 15/3/10

Policy Statement

It is Trison Business College's sincere intent and commitment to be fair and reasonable to all students at all times. We strive to maintain this principle and practice not just in relation to the matters covered by anti-discrimination laws, but to all work, and all course matters.

A grievance is a dispute, concern, problem or complaint on any course related matter which a student considers to be unfair or unjust.

It is recognised that in relationships at all levels problems, concerns or complaints may arise. It is important that satisfactory solutions be found so that problems are not escalated or continue unresolved.

Emanating from our commitment to fostering a fair, reasonable and harmonious workplace and our commitment to providing a high quality standard of service to our students, it is Trison Business College's policy to provide a fair, effective and efficient mechanism to investigate, rectify and resolve problems and eliminate dissatisfaction.

This Policy establishes both informal and formal grievance resolution procedures, structured to promote a fair, sensitive, quick and confidential process. We trust this Policy contributes to maintaining harmonious and constructive relationships for the benefit of all.

Policy Guidelines

1. This Policy applies to all students regardless of the course or module they are studying.
2. All course-related issues, problems, complaints, concerns, misunderstandings or disputes may be the subject of a complaint or grievance process.
3. This Policy establishes both informal and formal procedures for grievance resolution. Students may nominate to use either or both of these avenues. A student is also free to choose to have the grievance evaluated by an external party.

All students, including International Students, are to be advised that they may be able to avail the services of an independent counsellor(s), for example:

The Office of the Training Advocate
Ground Floor
55 Currie Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: 1800 006 488
Web:
www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au

CentaCare Catholic Family Services
33 Wakefield Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: 8210 8200

Uniting Care Wesley Adelaide
10 Pitt Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: 8202 5160

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In the specific case of International Students, they are also to be advised that they may be able to make contact with a representative organisation of their home country to seek independent advice or assistance. The Council for International Trade and Commerce SA Inc (Ph: 8373 5599) may be able to assist in locating a specific country's representative organisation.

Any student who has laid a complaint or grievance, who is not satisfied with how their grievance is being handled, is to be advised that they are able to seek independent and unbiased information and advice from:

The Office of the Training Advocate
Ground Floor
55 Currie Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: 1800 006 488
Web: www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au

Students are also to be encouraged to seek advice from other State and Commonwealth Government agencies such as the Department of Business and Consumer Affairs, if appropriate.

4. It is important that all grievances be dealt with as quickly as possible. It is the responsibility of all employees, trainers, management or other related parties to minimise delay and to proceed through the grievance process in a timely and efficient manner. All involved have a further obligation to be absolutely diligent in maintaining confidentiality, and to remain fair, impartial and respectful of people and process.
5. Everyone is reminded that in any grievance procedure, the aim is to ascertain the facts as fully as possible, investigate the facts, gather supporting evidence, then endeavour to reach a fair and reasonable resolution after evaluating all information. Both sides will be given the opportunity to present their version of events and put forward supporting material.
6. Students are encouraged (but not obliged) to endeavour to resolve a problem or concern directly with the employee involved, who shall ensure they are open and accessible to discussing matters and addressing issues.
7. Where informal procedure does not resolve the issue, a student may follow the formal process set out below. A student may opt to follow the formal procedure without first pursuing informal resolution if desired.
8. A student wishing to embark on formal grievance procedures should raise a complaint with the Director within 14 working days of the issue arising. Complaints lodged outside of the time may be considered at the discretion of the Director.
9. The Director will contact the student on the day the complaint is lodged. A written record of the grievance is to be taken, and is to be forwarded to the student for signature. The person (or persons) against whom the complaint is made is to be informed at the earliest opportunity, and at least 48 hours before any discussions regarding the matter are conducted. The full facts of the complaint are to be provided. A written record of reply is to be taken (and signed).

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10. The responsibility of the Director is to then talk with the parties (together or separately), and others if involved, investigate issues, and gather information or evidence. Based on all the foregoing, an evaluation will be made. Three outcomes are possible. The grievance is substantiated (it occurred), the grievance is unsubstantiated (facts do not support the allegation), or the issue the subject of the grievance did not, in fact, occur. A written report of the evaluation, supported by recommendations, is to be provided within 2 weeks of the complaint being lodged. Action which may be taken, depending on the nature and seriousness of the grievance and outcome of procedures, range from requiring a written apology, to warning or dismissal, training or counselling.
11. The decision made is to be regarded as a final one. An exception will apply where a student thinks that the processes set out in this policy were not followed, or were not followed properly. In that case, a student may appeal in writing to the Director. If the Director is of the view that the grievance was properly handled, no further action will be taken. If not, another investigation may be undertaken by a person other than the one who conducted the initial one.
12. The following written records will be made/kept as part of the formal grievance procedure. The written statements of both the student with the grievance and the person who has the grievance made against them, notes or reports of contact officers, notes or reports of those reviewing the grievance and any supporting documentation. The records will be maintained in a "grievances" file. Copies of the records are to be placed on the Student Record File.
13. The student's enrolment will be maintained while the grievance process is ongoing.
14. If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, Trison Business College will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.