



# Procedure

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**Use:** This Academic Grievance Procedure will be made available to students enrolled with MEL through publication on the following website <http://www.matereducation.qld.edu.au/About-Us/Policies> and included in pre-enrolment packs and student rules handbooks.

**NOTICE OF CURRENCY:** If viewing a printed copy of this document, NEVER assume that the printed copy being viewed is current. Always check the online Mater Document Centre to confirm you are viewing the current version of this procedure.

Our Mission	Our Vision	Our Values
In the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, Mater Health Services offer compassionate service to the sick and needy, promotes an holistic approach to healthcare in response to changing community needs and foster high standards in health-related education and research. Following the example of Christ the healer, we commit ourselves to offering these services without discrimination.	In the Mercy tradition, Mater will be renowned as a leader in the delivery of exceptional healthcare and experienced by all as a community of compassion.	Mercy Dignity Care Commitment Quality

## Affirmation

This governance document is consistent with the Mater Values and supports the Mater's Mission and Vision by establishing and mandating appropriate controls to support the delivery of health care services.

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# 1 Document Controls

## 1.1 Document Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1	18 April 2017	Final
2		

## 1.2 Document Review and Approval

Person Name / Committee	Position (if applicable)	Function (Owner   Review   Approve)
Barry Hankinson	Director Vocational Education and Training	Document Owner
Pauline Stowers	Manager, Quality and Compliance	Review
Corporate Policy Governance Committee		Approve

## 1.3 References

### Internal Documents

Document Type	Document ID	Document Title
Governing	PY-PAL-020041	Workplace Complaints Resolution Policy
Supporting		
Related	PR-MEL-040005	Mater Education Limited (MEL) Student Complaints and Appeals
	PR-MEL-040021	Mater Education Limited (MEL) Academic Grievance Procedure

### External Documents

1	Higher Education Support Act 2003
2	VET Student Loans Rules 2016
3	Standards for RTOs 2015
4	ASQA Delegations Responsibilities
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## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose

This procedure sets out Mater Education' Limited's (MEL) commitment to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential process for non-academic grievances for all students.

### 2.2 Scope and Context

This procedure applies to persons enrolled and who seek to enrol with MEL who are or would be entitled to a VET Student Loan.

### 2.3 Definitions

Term	Definition
Non-academic matters	Matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include complaints in relation to enrolment in a course and personal information that the provider holds in relation to the student.
The Act	The Higher Education Support Act 2003
MEL student/s	All persons enrolled or seeking to enrol in a unit of study with MEL that meets the course requirements who are, or would be entitled to a VET Student Loan.
VET Student Loans	An income contingent loan scheme for the VET sector that is an extension of FEE-HELP, part of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)
VET	Vocational Education and Training
Australian Skills Quality Authority	The national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector as described in the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

## 3 Procedures

The following procedures are to be followed:

### 3.1 Access to Grievance Process

Complainants are entitled to access this grievance procedure regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the complainant's place of residence or mode of study.

### 3.2 Compliance and Availability

MEL Course Coordinators are responsible for implementation of this procedure and ensuring that all relevant staff are fully trained in its operation and MEL students and complainants are made aware of its availability.

### 3.3 Informal Grievance

Prior to initiation of a formal grievance process a MEL student who has a grievance should:

1. Ask for a meeting with the Course Coordinator to discuss concerns
2. Keep records of any discussions and advice that is given
3. Proceed to formal grievance process if grievance remains unresolved

This informal process is not a mandatory component of the grievance process. The complainant may proceed directly to the formal grievance process.

### 3.4 Formal Grievance

General principles that apply to all stages of this grievance procedure, which will be adhered to by MEL, are:

- Each party will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the process.
- Each party have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire at each stage of the process.
- Each party will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this process will be provided to each party.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential however will allow parties who have used this procedure to access records of that use.
- Records will be stored securely in the office of the Manager, Quality and Compliance.
- There shall be no charge for either the internal or external stage of this grievance process.

#### Stage One

Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to the Course Coordinator or Manager, RTO Quality and Compliance via email to [mel@mater.org.au](mailto:mel@mater.org.au) or by posting to Mater Education, Level 4, Duncombe Building, Raymond Tce, South Brisbane, Qld, 4101.

The Course Coordinator or Manager, Quality and Compliance will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise each party in writing of their decision within 2 weeks of receipt of the grievance.

Parties will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this process at this time if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

## **Stage Two**

Where a party is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the Director, Vocational Education and Training.

The appeal will be determined by an independent and impartial officer of MEL (an independent person or panel nominated by the Director) to investigate grievance (the Reviewer).

The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the parties and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. Each party will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 2 weeks of receipt of the grievance.

The parties will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance process at this time if they consider the matter unresolved.

## **Stage Three**

Where the party is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may request that the matter be referred to an external dispute resolution process by a body appointed for this purpose by MEL. MEL's external dispute resolution provider is Assure Programs and is independent of and external to MEL and will hear complaints or appeals arising from MEL's internal processes. Assure Programs will provide written notice of the decision on review including reasons for the decision.

Mater Education Limited will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within five (5) working days.

ASQA can investigate complaints about:

- ASQA-regulated providers that may have breached the required standards, and
- The marketing/advertising practices of organisations claiming to be registered training organisations or to offer nationally recognised training.

ASQA's legislation allows them to investigate certain types of complaints about ASQA-regulated providers, where those providers breach the required standards and other legal requirements.

However, you may have a valid or serious complaint about a training provider which does not involve the provider breaching ASQA's standards and legal requirements. In this case, ASQA may consider the information you have reported, and refer all or part of your complaint to another agency. ASQA may also recommend that you directly contact another agency, or seek legal advice.

To have a complaint about a training organisation investigated by ASQA complainants should go to ASQA's website and complete the [ASQA online complaints form](#) attaching evidence to show you have exhausted MEL's formal grievance process.