UNSW College

Student Appeal Policy

1. Purpose

(a) This Policy sets out the principles for the management and Resolution of a student request for reconsideration or Appeal of a UNSW College (College) decision.

(b) This includes:

i. academic decisions made by the College in relation to the student's studies; or

ii. administrative (non-academic) decisions made by the College in relation to the student.

(c) A request for reconsideration or Appeal of an action or decision made by UNSW College is distinct from a student grievance or Complaint, with the latter being an expression of dissatisfaction about the College people, activities, services, actions or processes. Student grievances and Complaints are managed in accordance with the Student Grievances and Complaints Policy and Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure (however any Appeals from decisions made during the Complaints processes are dealt with as set out in this Policy).

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

(a) all College students who are currently enrolled, where the request for reconsideration or Appeal relates to academic matters or non-academic matters;

(b) prospective students, whose request for reconsideration or Appeal relates to non-academic matters (including but not limited to the application process, the handling of their personal information, harassment, vilification, discrimination, financial matters, fines and payments or exclusions from events or facilities);

(c) former College students, where the former student is seeking to Appeal a decision made by the College in relation to a grievance or Complaint in accordance with the timeframes set out in the Student Grievances and Complaints Policy and Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure;

(d) all College staff and affiliates; and

(e) any third-party providing services on the College's behalf to College students, former students or prospective students (including education agents).

This Policy does not apply to requests for review of decisions relating to Fee Remission (including HELP debt, FEE-HELP and/or tuition fees) after the relevant Census Date. Please refer to the Enrolment Procedure: Award Programs (Diploma) for the process which applies to such reviews.

3. Policy statement

The College is committed to providing an Appeal process for students that is transparent, fair and consistent. The College will monitor Appeals and use the feedback as a mechanism for continuous improvement.

4. Policy principles

This Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

(a) interactions between the student and College staff are to be based on mutual respect and fairness, and in keeping with the Student Code of Conduct and the Staff Code of Conduct;

(b) applications for reconsideration or Appeal must be submitted by the student in writing using the specified forms;

(c) students are required to provide reasons and factual evidence to support their application for a reconsideration or Appeal;

(d) all applications are considered with courtesy, with due regard to confidentiality and without fear of prejudicial treatment;

(e) applications considered to be vexatious, malicious, trivial or lacking sufficient information will not be accepted and students will be advised accordingly;

(f) students are provided with a fair opportunity to present their case at minimal or no cost and the right to a decision by an unbiased decision maker;

(g) students and staff have the right to be represented or accompanied by a third party (e.g. a Support Person and/or translator) if they wish;

(h) College staff will inform students, staff and other parties concerned about options for obtaining independent professional advice in connection with a request for reconsideration or Appeal;

(i) applications for reconsideration or Appeal will be submitted as soon as possible after the decision which is the subject of the application for reconsideration or Appeal;

(j) the reconsideration and Appeals process will be administered in a timely manner and in accordance with the principles of Procedural Fairness;

(k) requests for reconsideration and Appeals must be decided by staff who are senior to those involved at earlier stages. Any staff involved in making decisions at earlier stages cannot be decision makers in any later Appeals processes;

(l) students will receive a written statement of the outcome, including the reasons for the decision, recommended actions (if any) and information regarding avenues for further Appeal of the decision;

(m) Staff, students and others who are involved in the process must treat grievances and Complaints confidentially and respect the privacy of all people concerned;

(n) If, during any internal or external Appeals process, a decision is made which supports the student's application, the College will immediately implement the decision and advise the student of the outcome;

(o) The College will abide by, and immediately implement, the decisions, recommendations and/or take corrective action required as an outcome of internal Appeal or external Appeal;

(p) The College will not, and will ensure that others do not, victimise or discriminate against any student involved in the processes set out in this Policy.

5. Review and Appeal process

(a) Students who:

i. have completed Stage 1 (if desired) and/or Stage 2 of the Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure commence the process at Stage 3;

ii. have received a College Notification of Intent to Suspend or Exclude and wish to Appeal the decision, commence the process at Stage 3;

iii. have completed a documented process involving the reconsideration of an academic or administrative decision of the College, and are seeking to Appeal that decision, commence the process at Stage 3;

iv. are seeking reconsideration of an academic or administrative decision of the College but have not completed a documented review process, begin the process at Stage 1.

(b) An overview of the process is provided below, with further detail available in the Student Appeal Procedure.

5.1 Overview of the reconsideration and Appeal process

Stage	Type	Description
Stage 1	Informal process for understanding the decision (not mandatory)	Raise directly with the decision-maker to seek a better understanding of the decision. Stage 1 is not mandatory but may help students understand the decision made and help them determine whether to seek a formal request for reconsideration at Stage 2. Initiation of the informal process should be as soon as possible but no longer than five (5) working days of being notified of the relevant decision. The decision-maker will communicate the outcome of the informal review no later than five (5) working days after the matter is raised.
Stage 2	Formal Request for Reconsideration	Students must submit an online Stage 2 Student Appeal form. If students have commenced the process at Stage 1, they should submit the request within ten (10) working

Stage	Type	Description
		days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome, or of being notified of the original decision (if there is no Stage 1 process). Decision makers for the review process are detailed in the Student Appeal Procedure. The application must cite grounds for the request for reconsideration and provide supporting evidence. The decision-maker will communicate the outcome of the review within twenty (20) working days of receipt of the student's submission. The advice will include detail relating to the internal Appeal process.
Stage 3	Internal Appeal	Students must submit an online Stage 3 Student Appeal form within twenty (20) working days following receipt of the decision/outcome of the Stage 2 process, or of being notified of the original decision. The application must cite grounds for the Appeal and provide supporting evidence. The decision-maker will communicate the outcome of the internal Appeal within twenty (20) working days of receipt of the student's submission. The advice will include detail relating to an external Appeal process.
Stage 4	External Appeal	Where the student remains dissatisfied with the final decision, the student may lodge an external Appeal of the College process or decision within ten (10) working days following receipt of the decision/outcome of the Stage 3 process. ~~External Appeal can be submitted with one of the Ombudsmen below.~~ ~~For international students - the Overseas Student Ombudsman. Information on how to submit an external Appeal can be found on the Ombudsman's website: https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints.~~ For domestic and international students - the National Student Ombudsman. Information on how to submit an external Appeal can be found on the Ombudsman's website: https://www.nso.gov.au/. At any time during the Appeal processes, a student can take an Appeal to the external bodies, however they would typically require the student to have completed the internal Appeal process before considering the student's application for external Appeal.

6. Outcomes of requests for reconsideration and Appeals

6.1 Possible outcomes of Stage 1

The outcomes of a Stage 1 process include:

(a) the student better understands the grounds for the original decision and elects not to progress to the Stage 2 Formal Request for Reconsideration process; or

(b) the student better understands the grounds for the original decision and elects to proceed to the Stage 2 Formal Request for Reconsideration process.

6.2 Possible outcomes of Stage 2

The outcomes of the Stage 2 process include:

(a) the application for reconsideration is deemed to be invalid;

(b) the original decision is overturned and a new decision is made;

(c) the original decision is affirmed;

(d) the student better understands the grounds for the original decision and elects not to progress to the Appeal stage;

(e) the student submits a formal application to Appeal the decision and proceeds to Stage 3.

6.3 Possible outcomes of Stage 3

The outcomes of the Stage 3 process include:

(a) the Appeals Committee deems the application for internal Appeal to be invalid;

(b) the Appeals Committee overturns the decision and a new decision is made;

(c) the Appeals Committee affirms the decision;

(d) the student better understands the grounds for the decision and elects not to pursue the matter any further;

(e) the student proceeds to an external review at Stage 4.

7. Student enrolment

(a) A student is entitled to continue their enrolment in their Program of study while the internal stages of the process are being undertaken (Stage 1, 2 and 3).

(b) On finalisation of the internal processes, any enrolment changes resulting from the decision are free from any academic or financial penalty.

8. Records and reporting of reconsideration and Appeals

(a) All formal requests for reconsideration and Appeals, including those which relate to an external Appeal process, will be recorded in the College Complaints and Appeals Register, together with outcomes of each process.

(b) All records relating to formal requests for reconsideration and Appeals are stored in a confidential College file. Such records will be kept for a period of at least five (5) years. Students involved in any Appeals process will be allowed appropriate access to the relevant records, upon request.

(c) A report on de-identified trends and emerging issues will be provided twice a year as follows:

i. Appeals relating to academic matters: College Academic Board;

ii. Appeals relating to administrative matters or services: College Executive.

(d) Information gathered will inform continuous improvement of College processes and services.

9. Review and consultation

The policy will be reviewed periodically (at least every 3 years), in consultation with students and staff, including those with lived experience of, or being directly affected by, discrimination, harassment, victimisation or violence, to ensure that these processes are accessible, easy to navigate, promote cultural safety, and administrative barriers are minimised.

~~9.~~10. Privacy and confidentiality

~~9.1~~10.1 Confidentiality

(a) Information and records collected during the processes outlined in this Policy will be kept confidential and handled in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy.

(b) Access to information will be restricted to staff of the College, UNSW or their service providers who are directly involved in the process or for whom access and use is necessary to enable proper investigation and Resolution of the matter.

~~9.2~~10.2 Disclosure to third parties

(a) The College will not disclose a student's personal information to third parties during or after the Appeal process, except in circumstances contemplated in the College Privacy Policy (such as where the student has given their consent, or the College is required or authorised to do so by law).

(b) In certain circumstances, the College will be under a legal obligation to report information provided by a student, or in connection with an Appeal, to the police, a government department or other public body.

~~10.~~11. Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibility
Head of Legal, Risk & Compliance	Implementation, dissemination and review
Governance and Policy Lead	(a) Administration and publication;

	(b) Day-to-day implementation (first point of contact for all enquiries); (c) Internal Reporting on trends and emerging issues to the Academic Board or College Executive
College Executives and Managers	Assisting implementation of and adherence to the Policy as part of overall responsibility for identifying, preventing, responding to and redressing problems experienced by students.

~~11.~~12. Definitions

Definitions and Acronyms	
Appeal	A request for reconsideration of a decision by an officer or body of the College.
Census Date	This is the last day within each Study Period to: finalise a Student's enrolment, withdraw from a Subject or Program without financial penalty and submit a Request for FEE-HELP Form.
Complaint	A formal expression of dissatisfaction about the College or its people, activities, services, actions or processes. The dissatisfaction could relate to action by the College or others engaged by the College in its operations, which is either academic or non-academic in nature.
Conflict of Interest	Interest, involvement or information that may influence or be reasonably perceived to influence a person's ability to make objective recommendations or decisions in investigating or determining a request for reconsideration or Appeal.
Domestic Student	A Student enrolled at an Australian location who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen or who holds an Australian permanent resident visa or Australian permanent humanitarian visa.
FEE-HELP	An Australian Government loan scheme that assists eligible full fee-paying Students pay their tuition fees at university and other higher education providers.
Fee Remission	Remission of HELP debt, FEE-HELP and/or tuition fees after the relevant Census Date, if a Student can demonstrate special circumstances.
International Student	A student who does not have Australian or New Zealand citizenship or full permanent resident status in Australia. It includes those who have student visas, provisional residency, temporary residency, bridging visas etc.

Procedural Fairness	A principle of law that is concerned with the procedures used by a decision-maker, rather than the actual outcome reached. Key requirements of procedural fairness include: (a) ensuring Respondents are provided with all necessary details of the allegations that have been made against them; (b) ensuring Respondents are given a proper opportunity to respond to the allegations in an appropriate way before a decision is made (including as to any mitigating circumstances); (c) that persons involved in deciding an outcome do not have any bias or Conflict of Interest; (d) that a decision is based only on relevant evidence.
Program	An Academic Board-approved set of requirements and Subjects into which a student is admitted. In some cases, this will lead to an UNSW College qualification and others, to an Australian Qualifications Framework award.
Resolution	A formal decision or agreement on a request for reconsideration or Appeal. Resolutions do not necessarily require the complete satisfaction of all parties, but rather an agreement that the issue has been reasonably investigated and/or resolved, or has provided a reasonable outcome given the available evidence.
Respondent	The person(s) subject to a Complaint or Appeal.
Study Period	A defined teaching and study period for the completion of Subjects for a particular Program.
Subject	A component of a Program, normally of one Term or Study Period in duration, with a specific credit value.
Support Person	A person nominated by a student to provide assistance and support to them during processes outlined in this ~~Procedure~~Policy.
Term	A teaching period in which Subjects and their related classes are taught and timetabled.

~~12.~~13. Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
Legislation	• Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (Cth) • Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023 • Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth) • Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 • National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 • Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Policy	• Academic Progression and Exclusion Policy • Academic Integrity Policy

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
	• Admissions Policy • Assessment Policy • Enrolment Policy • Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy • International Student Transfer Policy • Privacy Policy • Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy • Student Code of Conduct • Student Fees Policy • Student Grievances and Complaints Policy • Student Misconduct Policy • Student Refund Policy
Procedures	• Academic Integrity Procedure • Academic Progression and Exclusion Procedure • Admissions Procedure • Assessment Procedure • Student Appeal Procedure • Student Fees Procedure • Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure • Student Misconduct Procedure
Forms and Registers	• Stage 2 Student Appeal Form • Stage 3 Student Appeal Form • Complaints and Appeals Register

~~13.~~14. Policy Governance

Student Appeal Policy	
Category/Business Group	Students ~~Experience~~
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Head of Student ~~Experience~~ Success
Contact Officer	Manager, Conduct & Integrity ~~Case Manager~~
Effective Date	[Effective Date Display]
Next Review Date	[Next Review Date Display]
Version	~~2.0~~4.0

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
4.0		[Approved Date Display]	[Effective Date Display]	Updated to align with amendments to the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, including enhanced review and consultation requirements, updates to external appeal arrangements, and minor administrative amendments.
3.0	Chief Executive Officer – Sarah Lightfoot	18/12/2025	18/12/2025	Administrative amendments to update links, email addresses and additional information on submitting online appeal application forms and external appeals. Further details provided on contact information regarding external ombudsman.
2.0	Academic Board	23 May 2024	23 May 2024	Amendments made to accommodate DESE feedback seeking greater clarity around: fee remission, appeal grounds, staff decision makers, first stage informal appeal, record keeping requirements. Sections 2, 4, 5.1 and 8 modified.
1	Academic Board	08 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

Please visit our website to ensure that you have the latest version of this Policy. Policies are available at: unswcollege.edu.au/about/policies