

POLICY & PROCEDURE: COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

The purpose of this policy is to provide Complaints, Grievances and Appeals guidelines for all domestic and International students who are currently enrolled or previously studied at the Ella Baché College of Skin and Beauty Therapy. All Students that have a complaint, grievance or wish to appeal an academic decision should consult this policy and procedure before initiating their actions.

Policy

The policy aims to ensure that the College responds effectively to all complaints, grievances and appeals in an effective, timely, fair and equitable manner. The policy relates to domestic and international students and applies to both academic and non-academic matters.

Feedback from students regarding the College, courses, staff and other services is always encouraged and this feedback is not considered as a grievance, until and unless this is stated as such and specific actions or outcomes are requested. A written record of all grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of at least 5 years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the Head of Education.

A grievance can be defined as a person's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the College's services and activities. In relation to non-academic grievances, the term "student" or "complainant" applies to both current students of the College and persons seeking to enrol with the College. Students who have ceased to study with the College will be given a further 12 months after they have ceased their enrolment to use this Complaints, Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedures.

The Ella Baché College of Skin and Beauty Therapy will ensure that any grievances are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity. All complaints, grievances, appeals and outcomes are treated as confidential (unless they involve breaches of the law) and records will be dealt with in accordance with the College Policy and Procedures on Privacy and Access to Information.

The College will ensure that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a grievance is not discriminated against nor victimised. Each complaint, grievance or appeal and outcome is recorded in writing. A written explanation for decisions and actions taken during the process will be given to all parties if requested.

Where the internal or external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, the College will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome. There is no cost to students in utilising the internal Complaints, Grievance and Appeals process.

Procedure

Before an Issue becomes a Formal Grievance

Students are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties informally with the person(s) concerned. There is support staff available to assist in the resolution of issues at this level:

- The student should contact the class trainer who will endeavour to resolve the problem in the first instance without the need for a formal complaint.
- If the complaint is of a general nature, the student may fill out the 'Complaints, Grievances and Appeals form' and submit it to the Head of Academic Studies or seek an appointment with the Head of College for an informal discussion.
- If the problem is of a personal nature that may need professional help, the trainer or the Head of Academic Studies will help the student to find an appropriate professional person in their local area

Stage 1 - Formal Grievance or Complaint

If the grievance, complaint or appeal is not able to be resolved through informal discussion with the parties involved, then a formal complaint should be made. The person making the complaint or appeal should follow this process:

1. Students should complete the 'Complaints, Grievances and Appeals form'. The form is available:
 - a. From the 'My Course Information' subject in the <https://my.ellabachecollege.edu.au> learning portal, or
 - b. By contacting Student Support on studentservices@ellabachecollege.edu.au
2. Lodging the complaint or appeal:
 - a. Students should complete the Form and email it to studentservices@ellabachecollege.edu.au
 - b. The Form should be accompanied with all supporting documentation and evidence which supports the claim

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days. The formal grievance handling process will commence within 10 days of the receipt of the formal complaint, and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practical. The Head of College will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve. Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face interview with the complainant. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview the complainant or respondent may ask another person to accompany them.

The Head of College will then endeavor to resolve the grievance and provide a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within 10 working days. The report will also advise the complainant of their right to access the internal appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance. At all meetings the minutes are taken and outcomes recorded. All parties will receive a written copy of the minutes.

Stage 2 – Internal Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance or complaint they may lodge an appeal with the Head of Education within 20 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of their formal grievance. Appeals must be submitted in writing marked to the attention of the Head of Education as follows:

**Head of Education
Ella Bache College of Skin and Beauty Therapy
2-4 Lambs Road,
Artarmon, NSW 2061**

The Head of Education will consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged. Each case can be heard by the Head of Education, independent person or a panel and always with two persons present.

Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these interviews. Following the consultation, the Head of Education will provide a written report within 10 working days to the complainant advising the further steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision. The report will also advise the complainant of their right to access the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal.

Stage 3 – External Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, he or she can seek to exercise their rights to a better resolution or an appeal from other outside parties and legal sources should that be necessary. If the complaint cannot be resolved through the internal complaints handling process, then the student may lodge their complaint with an external body such as:

- Representatives of state or territory government departments
- Commonwealth and State or Territory offices of the Ombudsman
- The Anti Discrimination Board
- The Office of Fair Trading
- National Training Complaints Hotline
- Private conciliators or dispute resolution counselors.

OR

- Complainants may lodge an external appeal to the Australian Skills Quality Authority.

In the first instance students must first follow the Ella Baché College of Skin and Beauty Therapy College internal appeals process prior to lodging a complaint with ASQA. If after the internal process, a complainant still believes the RTO is breaching or has breached its legal requirements, they can submit a complaint to ASQA by completing the Complaint about a training organisation operating under ASQA's jurisdiction form.

Except in exceptional circumstances, students must attach evidence to the complaint form showing:

- They have followed the RTO's formal grievance procedure; and
- The RTO's response.

ASQA's processes require students to identify themselves as a complainant; however students may request to keep their identity confidential throughout the investigation. If students need help with the Complaints, Grievances and Appeals process or if they are unsure whether ASQA can help with the complaint, they can call the ASQA Info line on 1300 701 801 or email complaintsteam@asqa.gov.au for further information.

The College will act accordingly when an outcome is reached, and will ensure that all parties are treated fairly and without bias. While the complaint, grievance and appeal process is in motion, the College will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the ongoing matter until it is resolved.

Appeals against an Assessment Decision

Students can appeal against an assessment result. It is important that the appeal is settled as quickly as possible. This may include:

Resubmission or a second testing

In the first instance, the trainer will consult with the Head of Academic Studies and depending on the circumstances, will provide an opportunity to re-sit the exam or resubmit the piece of work. It will then be re-marked. The request and reasons will be recorded in writing.

Marking by a second assessor

The trainer should immediately inform the Head of Academic Studies if a re-sit or re-submission is recommended or if the student has a grievance, disagreement or dispute about the results. The appeal will be discussed with the student and trainer and recorded in writing, considered by the Head of Academic Studies and if appropriate, arrangements will be made for re-assessment by another assessor.

A written assessment appeal

If the student is still not satisfied with the re-submission process and second marking the student must put their appeal in writing as per the Complaints, Grievance and Appeal Policy. The Steps under "Stage 2 – Internal Appeal" of the Complaints, Grievance and Appeal Policy will then be followed.