

STUDENT RIGHTS INFORMATION

GRIEVANCE

- effects on other activities external to study

State why you believe your situation is contrary to the decisions or actions of the staff member/Faculty/University. If necessary, outline sections of the relevant university policy that could have been breached:

- unit outlines
- Academic Policies on Assessment
- Faculty Guidelines
- university equity policy
- rights and responsibilities of staff and students
- other Monash University policies or procedures

State why you believe this is an unacceptable outcome and attach documents that support your claim. Also state what you think is an acceptable outcome:

- your preferred solution
- other solutions you may consider
- suggestions you have found unacceptable

Outline the steps you have taken to resolve these problems and give reasons as to why this grievance is not frivolous or vexatious. Include any questions you have in regards to your case and how you would prefer to be contacted for future dates.

Suggested Closing Statement: Thank you for your consideration regarding these matters, I look forward to your response.

Attach any copies of documents you wish to use to assist your case such as:

- emails
- specific documents e.g. assignment marking sheets or medical certificates.

Make sure you keep a photocopy of your letter and documents in a safe place for your records.

It is highly recommended that a grievance should not be lodged without informal investigation by a Student Assistance staff member. To skip the correct processes, or to proceed without help, may be detrimental to your case.

The information in this brochure has been prepared by MONSU Student Assistance staff. It is intended as a guide to assist you with your educational issues.

For further information, or to speak to someone, please make an appointment with the Student Rights Manager.

If you wish to make an appointment, please register your details on our websites.

CAULFIELD STUDENTS:

MONSU Caulfield
www.monsucaulfield.org.au/studentrights
Ph: 9903 2596
L3, Bldg S

PENINSULA STUDENTS:

MONSU Peninsula
www.monsupeninsula.org.au/studentrights
Ph: 9904 4217
Gr FI, Bldg U

MONSU Student Assistance publications:

INFOSHEETS

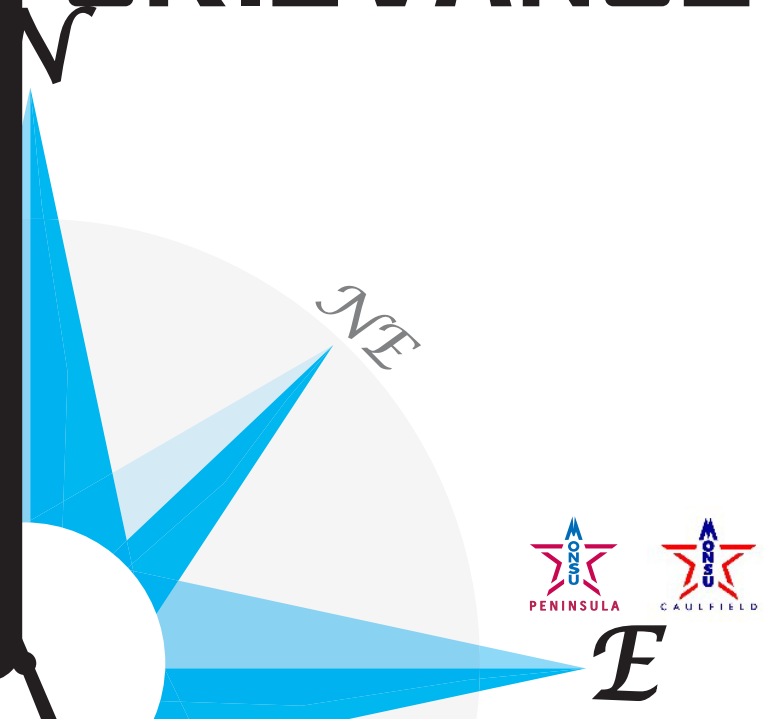
Academic Progress - Early Warning
Academic Progress - Exclusion
Academic Progress - Hearing Hints
Discipline
Exams
Exams - Cheating
Grievance
Results
Special Consideration

BOOKS

Steady Course - Your Student Rights Guide

Copies of all publications are available at our offices or can be requested via email.

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WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE?

A grievance is a formal complaint that is lodged with the faculty by a student who feels that they have been adversely affected by an issue or decision. It is best that before you lodge the grievance you have a Student Assistance staff member informally investigate the matter.

HOW DO I REPORT A GRIEVANCE?

Know your case:

- what is the issue(s)?
- how is it a problem (and for whom)?
- what are possible solutions?

Get the facts clear in your mind and write it down.

Make sure to include:

- dates and a sequence of events;
- summaries of any verbal or written communication;
- other supporting evidence.

Try to separate objective fact from subjective interpretation.

It may help to talk to someone about this. Make an appointment to see a Student Assistance staff member.

Have a clear idea of what you want to achieve, and the minimum you will accept. The University has Student Grievance policy that seeks to provide a means for individual problems to be dealt with. This is available on the Monash University website.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS INVOLVED?

Start with the staff member involved as soon as possible:

The longer you take to resolve your problem, the harder it will be to solve, or worse, may compound the issue. If you cannot resolve the issue with the person concerned, contact the Student Assistance service, who can help you with the process. A Student Assistance staff member will firstly speak with this person and try to negotiate an outcome on your behalf. If there is no resolution, move to step 2.

Make an appointment to see the Chief Examiner / Unit Leader / Head of School (which ever is appropriate) to discuss the issue:

A Student Assistance staff member can attend to support you at this meeting. If there is still no resolution, move to step 3.

Request for resolution:

A written request for a resolution must be formally submitted to the Grievance Officer of the Faculty, Division, Section or organisational unit. The matter is now considered a 'grievance'.

The Grievance Officer will determine if the matter is academic or administrative in nature, record details of the grievance, acknowledge receipt of the grievance and explain the timelines for resolution and any other relevant information.

If the grievance is academic it will be referred to the Associate Dean (Teaching) or their nominee, of the appropriate faculty. If the grievance is administrative, the matter will be directed to the faculty manager, or nominee.

The person to whom the grievance has been directed will attempt to resolve it through investigation and conciliation, and may also direct you to the appropriate University support services.

The person to whom the grievance has been directed must conduct an investigation, normally within ten working days of receiving the grievance, and consult with relevant staff.

The person to whom the grievance has been directed may determine that the grievance is frivolous, vexatious, or lacking in substance, and decide that no enquiry is necessary. You must be advised in writing of this decision.

The person to whom the grievance has been directed may call a conciliation meeting with all parties concerned, for the purpose of arriving at agreed solution.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances an investigation or conciliation cannot be concluded within ten working days, the person, to whom the the grievance has been directed will keep you informed of the status of the matter and the reasons for any delay.

If a resolution cannot be met after an agreed upon number of conciliation meetings, and you are not satisfied by the solution proposed to you, you may within ten working days of either the offer or the dismissal of the grievance, forward the details of the grievance to the University Student Ombudsman for consideration.

If the University Student Ombudsman considers that the matter warrants further action, he or she will conduct an independent investigation and may consult with any staff member whom he or she regards as relevant to the case.

The University Student Ombudsman will make recommendations to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (DVC(E)) for the resolution of the grievance within twenty working days from receipt of the appeal.

The DVC(E) will consider the recommendations of the University Student Ombudsman and take action where appropriate within twenty working days from receipt of the recommendations.

If the grievance is academic, the DVC(E) will make recommendations to the Faculty in whom the ultimate decision making power resides with.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the University, or the way a grievance has been handled by the University, you may make a complaint to the Victorian Ombudsman.

WHAT SHOULD I WRITE IN MY GRIEVANCE?

The following information is a general guide to assist you in relation to lodging a letter of academic grievance with your faculty.

Suggested Introduction: I am writing to you to request that my concerns about my treatment in relation to (unit/process) be considered through the formal academic grievance process as I have spoken with (staff member/ head of department/school/ chief examiner) and I do not feel that the issue has been resolved.

State what was meant to occur:

- the number of assessments and their weighting such as exams (50%), assignment (30%), other tests (20%)
- any issues raised in the subject outline that was not followed

State what actually occurred:

- effect of a process or system on your education ability or outcomes
- behaviour of staff / students that imposed on your ability to fulfil your academic requirements, and describe any relevant events that support your case
- your actions during the events to attempt to resolve the difficulty

State how this outcome has affected you:

- your personal ability to complete educational requirements due to
 - indirect effects
- relationship difficulties with staff / students
- directly reduced academic results or quality of study