

## External Grievance Resolution Policy

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### 1. Background

Gateway Business College (GBC) recognises there must be systems in place that give students and staff access to independent third parties if internal processes fail to provide adequate resolution to grievances. The effective implementation of such processes will uphold GBC's commitment to transparency, impartiality, and accountability.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of the *External Grievance Resolution Policy* is to outline the processes through which grievances that occur at GBC may be externally resolved. The policy outlines under what conditions external grievance resolution processes may be utilised, namely with regard to any situations where internal resolution processes fail to resolve the grievance. The effective utilisation of the policy will enable GBC to uphold its commitment to transparency, impartiality, and accountability.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*, and *Information to Students Policy*.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at GBC, and all academic and non-academic staff members. Additionally, the policy applies to all GBC graduates, as well as all potential students who have a complaint or appeal regarding any aspect of the application, selection and admission process.

The specific procedures outlined in this policy apply to complaints made by domestic students; international students may appeal to the Overseas Students Ombudsman according to the Ombudsman procedures.

### 4. Definitions

**Academic staff:** staff engaged in higher education teaching, learning and research as employees of GBC.

**Corporate Governance Board:** the formally constituted governing body accountable for the governance of GBC as a higher education operation.

**Course:** a program of study that is aligned to a higher education certified qualification. A course of study is organised according to requisite subjects and credit points. Students enrol in a course of study and, when they fulfil all requirements for that course of study, receive a certified qualification on graduation.

**Graduate:** a student who has successfully completed a GBC course of study.

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**Non-academic staff:** staff employed at GBC in administrative, IT, marketing and student support roles.

**Student:** a person currently enrolled in study in a GBC course.

### 5. Principles

GBC recognises the right of students to seek an external grievance resolution if they feel that the internal processes of GBC are not satisfactory.

Students are able to initiate an external grievance resolution process without fear of reprisals or disadvantage.

GBC will ensure that students are made aware of their rights with regards to an external grievance resolution process.

Students and staff should only utilise an external third party to resolve a conflict if all internal conflict resolution procedures have failed. For internal conflict resolution in relation to student complaints, see *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

GBC strives to effectively contribute to, and cooperate with, all external grievance resolution processes.

### 6. Procedures

The procedures outlined below will only be implemented upon the exhaustion and unsatisfactory result of all procedures outlined in the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Any aggrieved party shall only file an external grievance on their own behalf. A third party may not file a grievance in place of the complainant.

During any external grievance resolution process, both parties have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or GBC representative.

Upon failure of internal processes, the student in question will be informed in writing of their options regarding pursuing the matter further, including external grievance resolution. Alternatively, if the student decides to introduce an external mediator before the internal processes are complete, all internal resolution processes will be terminated.

In both cases, the responsibility for establishing contact with an external mediator rests with the student, not GBC.

GBC will ensure adherence to the following guidelines:

- The external mediator must be neutral towards both parties
- The external mediator must demonstrate the capability to achieve resolution
- All cost of external mediation will be covered by GBC if the external mediation is deemed reasonable by the CEO
- GBC must keep the student enrolled for the duration of the grievance process

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- Once the external resolution process has been undertaken, it is the responsibility of all parties to be completely cooperative
- All parties will be informed in writing of the outcome
- Any actions required by relevant parties must be implemented promptly
- The outcome of the external resolution will be final, and will not be subject to review or appeal.

### 7. Records

Records associated with this policy will be maintained according to the Records Management Policy.

### 8. Related legislation

- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011
- TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the National Code 2018)

### 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Corporate Governance Board every three years, or more frequently should the Board deem it necessary.

### Version Control

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