



Document Name	Customer Service Charter and Grievance Policy
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Comment	It is the responsibility of the recipient to identify and/or control superseded documents

Appendix 1: GEM College of International Business Grievance Policy

Customer Service Charter

GEM College of International Business (hereafter referred to as ‘the **College**’) is committed to providing quality in training service and continuous improvement that will enhance the service that we provide to our Students/Clients and customers.

We believe that the relationship between our employees/agents and our Students/Clients and customers should encourage free and open dialogue and that any criticism of our service should be managed with transparency and honesty.

Should you (our Student/Client and/or customer) have any grievance/complaint with the way in which the **College** has conducted business, we will be pleased to listen to what you have to say and, by doing so, improve our service to you.

In the first instance, any Complainant should discuss his/her grievance/complaint with the Facilitator/Trainer or Administrator concerned in the light of our Grievance Policy (see Appendix 1). If the matter cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, you should then refer it for resolution to the Campus Manager and, if necessary, to the Corporate Leader.

In the event that the **College** does not resolve a complaint to your/our satisfaction, it may be referred by either party to the Australian Skills and Quality Authority (ASQA).

The **College** assures any individual or organisation lodging a grievance that they shall not be discriminated against. We view any criticism and/or suggested improvement as means to ensuring that our customer service will, at all times, be seen as an equitable and transparent vehicle for promoting continuous improvement.

Luceille Outhred
Corporate Leader

Appendix 1: Grievance Policy

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1. **Application of this Policy.** The College operates on the basis that the following matters are managed by the staff members indicated:
- 1.1.1.1 **Non-Academic Matters.** This would include all administrative matters (of a non-academic nature – defined below). Such matters are managed by designated administrative staff members in accordance with the approved policies and processes of the **College**.
 - 1.1.1.2 **Academic Matters.** This would include all academic matters (of a non-administrative nature – defined below). Such matters are managed by designated trainers and assessors in accordance with the approved policies and processes of the **College**.
- 1.1.2. **Our Commitment.** The **College** is committed to continuous improvement that will ensure that the service that we provide to you meets all reasonable expectations. The college will ensure that Applicants/Enrolled Students (hereafter referred to as 'Students') have access to a fair and equitable process for dealing with grievances relating to any act or omission, which might hamper your progress. We recognise that, from time to time, disputes might arise with respect to academic or non-academic matters. We are committed to resolve such disputes as quickly and as equitably as possible.
- 1.1.3. **Purpose.** This policy has been put in place to assist all parties to resolve any issues that arise. It reflects the expectations and responsibilities of the **College** staff, and Students in resolving academic or non-academic grievances, complaints and appeals. Should you have any grievance with the way in which the **College** has conducted business with you, we will be pleased to listen to what you have to say. The grievance policy of the **College** applies to every staff member, and Student, regardless of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the person's place of residence or mode of study (as applicable). In managing any grievance, we strive to use it as a vehicle to improve our service delivery. This, in turn, will benefit everyone seeking to access training or accessing training through the **College**.
- 1.1.4. **Scope.** This policy will outline the responsibilities and processes for the management of grievances/complaints within the framework of the following:
- 1.1.4.1 **Definitions.** The terminology that is used in this policy is explained.
 - 1.1.4.2 **General Stipulations.** Explanation of the General Stipulations that govern the management of this policy.
 - 1.1.4.3 **Informal Resolution.** Discussion of the process to find a resolution to a dispute before formal action is initiated.
 - 1.1.4.4 **3-Phase Process.** Explanation of the formal process to be followed to resolve a dispute.
 - 1.1.4.5 **Non-compliance with this Policy and Policy Review.** Implications regarding non-compliance with this Policy and Policy Review process.

1.2 Definitions

The terminology used in this policy means the following, unless expressly indicated otherwise:

- 1.2.1. **Academic Matters.** Includes, but not necessarily limited to, disputes arising from the:
- 1.2.1.1. Quality of education and support provided;

- 1.2.1.2. Treatment of learners during learning evolutions (including assessments); and
- 1.2.1.3. Management of academic issues, including Student progress, assessment, course content or awards.
- 1.2.2. **Appeal.** An appeal is the escalation step available to a Complainant/Respondent if he/she is dissatisfied with the outcome of a formal grievance resolution decision.
- 1.2.3. **Complainant.** The person lodging a complaint/grievance.
- 1.2.4. **Grievance.** Relates to the expression of dissatisfaction by an individual with any act (or omission to act) by any staff member of the College in his/her conduct in delivering services and activities, including both academic and non-academic matters.
- 1.2.5. **Informal Resolution.** Refers to the initial process used to deal with a complaint that normally takes the form of a discussion between the Complainant and Respondent.
- 1.2.6. **Non-Academic Matters.** Includes, but is not necessarily limited to, disputes arising from the:
 - 1.2.6.1. Enrolment and induction/orientation of Students;
 - 1.2.6.2. Manner in which someone has been treated;
 - 1.2.6.3. Payment/refund of fees; and
 - 1.2.6.4. Management of confidential/private information such as personal records.
- 1.2.7. **Respondent.** The person responsible for the act/omission to act that gives rise to a complaint/grievance.
- 1.2.8. **Staff/Staff Member.** Refers to any full/part-time agent, contractor, employee, office bearer or associate with delegated authority to act for/on behalf of the **College** who, for the purpose of this policy,
 - 1.2.8.1. is/was responsible for the act/omission that gives rise to a grievance/complaint; and/or
 - 1.2.8.2. manages any process regarding a grievance/complaint by virtue of his/her appointment.
- 1.2.9. **Student.** Refers to any person applying to enrol as a Student or a Student enrolled for study at the **College**.
- 1.2.10. **The College/GEM.** Refers to the **GEM** College of International Business

1.3 General Stipulations

- 1.3.1. **Guiding Principles**
 - 1.3.1.1. **Application.** Staff members of **GEM** are enjoined to expedite the timely resolution of grievances. This policy is inclusive of staff members of the **College** and Students.
 - 1.3.1.2. **Assistance to Complainants.** The College will appoint a staff member to assist Complainants as the reference person for such matters. In addition, this grievance mechanism is to be posted on the **GEM** website and communicated to every learner at the time of enrolment.
 - 1.3.1.3. **Third Party Assistance.** Any person who is involved in a complaint shall be allowed to be accompanied and assisted by a third party at any relevant meeting. However, such assistance shall **NOT** include legal counsel.

- 1.3.1.4. **Statement of Outcome.** Any Complainant will be given a written statement of the outcome of any formal complaint and of any appeals, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- 1.3.1.5. **Costs.** No levy or fee shall be incurred by Complainants for costs incurred by the College related to accessing internal and external grievance stages. Complainants shall, however be responsible for their own expenses relating to third party representation, travel, accommodation and other incidentals.
- 1.3.1.6. **Without Prejudice.** Grievances are to be managed without prejudice to any party involved. Thus, no Complainant or Respondent shall be victimised or discriminated against.
- 1.3.1.7. **Timeframes.** Grievances will be responded to as indicated (in this policy) within the timelines for responses to each stage of the process.
- 1.3.1.8. **Management- and Access to Records.** Appropriate records will be maintained of all grievances for at least five years. All parties to a complaint will be allowed appropriate access to records within the framework of the Privacy Policy of the **College**.
- 1.3.1.9. **Promulgation of this Policy.** This grievance policy is promulgated on **GEM** website and in writing to all staff. Staff are trained in its application during staff induction programmes and/or during in-house personal development learning interventions.
- 1.3.2. **Ratification of this Policy.** This policy has been agreed to and ratified by the governing body and authorised by the Corporate Leader of **GEM** on the date indicated hereunder.
- 1.3.3. **Implementation of Recommendations.** Recommendations arising from any external review shall be implemented via a 'System Improvement & Prevention Report' (form FM-05).
- 1.3.4. **Common Sense.** While very effort is made to align the policies of **GEM** with prescripts, accepted norms and best practice, it is acknowledged that no policy can provide for every contingency that might arise. Thus, it is hoped that when such unforeseen contingencies arise, resulting disputes would be resolved with common sense and in a spirit of good faith; therefore, resulting in 'win-win' outcomes.

1.4 Informal Resolution

Any grievance should firstly be informally discussed between the Complainant and the Respondent. If, for any reason, the Complainant does not wish to speak with the Respondent, he/she may discuss the matter with the Campus Manager/Designated Supervisor of the Respondent. If the person being approached cannot satisfactorily resolve the complaint, the Complainant is enjoined to initiate the formal 3-Phase Process (outlined in the next section of this policy).

1.5 3-Phase Process

- 1.5.1. **The-Formal process.** The 3-phase process is the formal process that the Complainant will follow, if he/she is not satisfied that the informal (discussion) process has resolved the complaint. Both the Complainant and the Respondent are to be given the opportunity to present their respective cases during each stage of the process, with reference to the following:
 - 1.5.1.1. **Third Party Assistance.** The Complainant and the Respondent shall each have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person. Third Party assistance could (for instance) include a family member, friend or a counsellor, but shall **NOT** include legal counsel.

- 1.5.1.2. **Fair and Equitable Treatment**. The Complainant and the Respondent will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- 1.5.1.3. **Access to Information**. All discussions relating to complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing. Decisions, recommendations and actions taken will be fully explained in writing, with reasons being made available to both the Complainant and/or the Respondent.
- 1.5.1.4. **Records Management**. Records of each grievance will be held for at least 3 years and be accessible to any party in accordance with the Privacy Policy of the **College**. These records are to be treated as confidential and held in the office of the Administrator of the **College**.
- 1.5.1.5. **Costs**. While Complainants and Respondents shall have access to this grievance process at no cost, they shall be responsible for the full cost of their own third-party representation, travel, accommodation and other incidentals.

1.5.2. Stage one Formal complaint

- 1.5.2.1. **Campus Manager**. The complaint is submitted in writing to the Campus Manager.
- 1.5.2.2. **National Manager**. If the Campus Manager was the first point of contact, then the National Manager shall endeavour to resolve the matter.
- 1.5.2.3. **Written Feedback**. Written feedback shall be given to the Complainant within 5 business days of the complaint being received.

1.5.3. Stage two Formal complaint (Review)

- 1.5.3.1. **5 Days to Lodge Appeal**. Should the Complainant not be satisfied with the response/resolution given during stage 1, he/she will have 5 business days in which he/she may lodge an appeal in writing to the National Manager.
- 1.5.3.2. **Review by Independent Senior Officer**. The Complainant's appeal will be reviewed by an Independent Senior Officer. This would be (one or a combination of) the National Manager and/or Director-International Business.
- 1.5.3.3. **Review Process**. The Independent Senior Officer to whom the appeal has been lodged may (at his/her discretion) either review the grievance and the outcome/recommendation of stage one independently or via a dedicated complaints committee established by **GEM** for this purpose.
- 1.5.3.4. **Corporate Leader**. The Complainant's appeal may be further reviewed by the Corporate Leader of the **College**, who will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination on the resolution of the appeal.
- 1.5.3.5. **Time Frame**. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision, within 10 business days of the complaint being received. The Complainant will be advised of his/her right to progress to Stage three of the grievance procedure if he/she considers the matter unresolved.

1.5.4. Stage three-Formal complaint

- 1.5.4.1. **Office of the Training Advocate**. If, in the unlikely event that the matter is not resolved after Stage two, the **College** will refer the complaint to the Office of the Training Advocate for a ruling – see Training Advocate Administrative Guidelines (can be located by clicking [here](#)).
- 1.5.4.2. **Contact Data**. Complainants are to be referred to the contact data of the Office

of the Training Advocate (<http://www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au/Contact-us>).

- 1.5.4.3. **Final Decision Binding on All Parties.** The decision of the office of the Training Advocate (or independent committee appointed by them) will be binding on all parties and final.

1.6 NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY AND POLICY REVIEW

- 1.6.1. **Non-compliance with this Policy.** Established breaches of the Customer Service Charter and Grievance Policy (and/or any associated procedures) will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary policy of the **College**. Non-compliance with this policy and any associated procedures may result in non-compliance with regulatory standards and damage the reputation of **GEM** as a quality provider that strives to achieve best practice and set benchmarks for the industry; breaches of this policy are therefore viewed in a serious light.
- 1.6.2. **Policy Review.** This policy will be reviewed every 12 months after its initial date of authorisation.