POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE RESOLUTION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS GRIEVANCES

The following policy and procedures relating to grievances/disputes cover students who are required to present theses, including minor dissertations and coursework projects, but excludes students undertaking Honours theses who are covered by the undergraduate procedure. Supervisors of higher degree students should also refer to these procedures when they have complaints regarding their students.

**POLICY**

Whenever possible disputes should be resolved between the student(s) concerned and the supervisor(s). In the event that such resolution is not possible it will occur within the hierarchical structure as follows:

- Supervisor(s)
- Department Postgraduate Coordinator
- Head(s) of Department(s)
- Dean of Graduate Studies (DOGS) in consultation with Faculty Dean(s) or his/her nominee
- Board of Graduate Studies

The procedures below relate to grievances/disputes concerning:

- individual academic staff members (e.g. supervisory practice, interpersonal relationships);
- administrative operations or decisions of the university (e.g. enrolment procedures, upgrading, intermission, extensions);
- ownership of intellectual property or authorship of papers;
- resources and maintenance;
- examination procedures;
- discriminatory treatment (in many instances may be referred initially to another committee, e.g. allegations of sexual harassment).

**PROCEDURES**

1. Postgraduate students with a complaint or grievance about supervision, resources, facilities, or any other aspect of their candidature, should endeavour to resolve it directly with the Supervisor(s), Departmental Postgraduate Coordinator(s) and/or the Head(s) of Department(s).

   The Postgraduate Coordinator(s) and/or Head(s) of Department(s) shall call the supervisor(s) and the student to a meeting to discuss the problem. The student may bring another student or other staff member of the Department to take part in the meeting. If these talks resolve the problem and the Postgraduate Co-ordinator(s) and/or Head(s) of Department(s) are satisfied as such, a report to this effect shall be sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

2. If the grievance has not been resolved within the Department, either party can take the matter to the Dean of Graduate Studies, either orally or in writing. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall consult the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Studies (or his/her equivalent) in the first instance to determine whether the matter can be most profitably addressed by the Faculty. In seeking a resolution of the grievance at this level, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Faculty or his/her nominee will ascertain the relevant facts and views of the Head(s) of Department(s), Postgraduate Co-ordinator(s), Supervisor(s) and the student. The parties concerned shall endeavour to resolve the grievance by negotiation and agreement.
3. If the grievance remains unresolved, the matter shall be taken to the Board of Graduate Studies for final determination. The following procedures will apply.

4. The Board shall appoint a Review Panel of four consisting of three of its members - two staff and one student - who have not been previously involved in the matter, and the Convener of the Student Academic Appeals Committee (being an external member of Council) to examine the grievance.

4.1 The student shall place the grievance in writing (if this has not already occurred) and the Head(s) of Department(s) (or the Postgraduate Coordinator(s)*) shall be given a copy of the student’s letter.

4.2 The Head(s) of Department(s) shall act as the respondent(s) and shall be asked to provide, within ten working days, written comments (where necessary from the appropriate sources) on the student’s grievance.

4.3 The student shall receive a copy of the response elicited from the Head(s) of Department(s) seven working days in advance of appearing before the Review Panel and he/she has the right to respond to the Department’s written submission.

4.4 The Review Panel shall interview both the respondent(s) and the student together and the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Associate Dean(s) for Postgraduate Studies. Each shall have the right to address the panel. The Panel may also consult the Faculty Dean(s) and the Higher Degrees Committee(s).

4.5 The Review Panel whenever possible shall make a decision on the grievance within 30 days from when the grievance is brought to the attention of the Board.

4.6 The student shall be advised as soon as practicable of the decision and the reasons for it.

(* the Postgraduate Co-ordinator shall act as the respondent if the Head of Department is involved in the complaint.)

5. The student is expected to present her/his own case but shall have the right to be accompanied at interviews, at any stage, preferably by another member of the University, who may be accorded speaking rights. Such a person may be:

- Executive Members of the PGSA, Waite Institute Postgraduate Association (WIPA) and Roseworthy Student Union Council;
- Education and Welfare Officers of the Adelaide University Union;
- International Student Adviser of the University;
- or other person of the student’s choice.

The complaint should remain at all times in the hands of the complainant who should be free to cease the grievance proceedings at any stage. However, the Board of Graduate Studies must be free to pursue matters which in its view involve policy decisions at a general level.

Strict confidentiality shall be adhered to by all involved in the grievance process.

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