



Believe,
Achieve,
Grow

ACS
PROFESSIONAL
YEAR
PROVIDER

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Professional Year Program Procedure: 010 Complaints & Appeals

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1. Definitions

Department of Education and Training – This department is responsible for national policies and programmes that help Australians access quality and affordable early child care and childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training, international education and research. For further information, visit www.education.gov.au

Department of Home Affairs (formerly Department of Immigration and Border Protection) - When planning to study and work in Australia, this department provides important information regarding visa types, application requirements, obligations while in Australia, and information about complying with the conditions of your visa. For further information, visit www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Australian Computer Society's Student Code of Conduct – The Code applies to all students studying or enrolled in an ACS education program and relates to all actions and activities as well as inaction/s that may affect or impact ACS, its partners and/or others. For further information, visit www.acs.org.au

1. Responsibility

The PY **Program Manager** and the PY Co-ordinator are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The **Compliance Manager** is responsible for the maintenance of this policy.

2. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this Policy and Procedures document is to ensure that Danford College manages and responds to any allegations involving the conduct of:

- Its trainers, assessors, and staff,
- PY delivery partners (PYP) and their trainers, staff, and stakeholders,
- a third-party providing services on behalf of the PYP, its trainers, assessors, or other staff, or
- a learner within the ACS Professional Year Program.

These Policies and Procedures will apply to all students enrolled in a Danford College /Australian Computer Society (ACS) PY Program through an accredited partner inclusive of all program components. At any point during a student's course of study a student may enact this policy, should they feel that:

- they have a justified grievance relating to the policies and procedures of the ACS, its delivery partner, or third parties involved in the program, or
- they have been wrongly represented and that the ACS, its delivery partner, and/or third parties have not acted in their best interests without full and fair consideration of all circumstances, or
- they have been unable to resolve a grievance informally despite previous attempts.

These Danford College policies and procedures are based on the belief that, in such circumstances, students have a right to an accessible, affordable, equitable, fair, open and timely internal complaints and appeals process. Should the matter not be resolved through such processes, the student may seek accessible, affordable, equitable, fair, open, and timely counsel and advice by contacting The

ISO SOP-PY-10 Complaints & Appeals.

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Council of International Students Australia who may assist. Alternatively, students can also contact the can provide a list of [Community Legal Centres](#) whom may assist.

The policies and procedures are divided into two parts:(1) Complaints and (2) Appeals.

Note: Students are not permitted to approach or enrol with other PY Providers whilst undertaking the complaints and appeals process. Furthermore, should the final resolution deem the student ineligible to complete the PY Program, the student may not re-enrol in the PYear with any ACS accredited provider.

Complaints & Appeals Policy Principles

Respecting the mutual rights and responsibilities of all staff and students, Danford College has adopted the following principles as guides for addressing and resolving all complaints and appeals.

Danford College is committed to:

1. Observing the principles of natural justice in the resolution of complaints and appeals—parties involved should respect each other’s rights and responsibilities, act with openness, fairness and flexibility, and with no fear of retribution, victimization or breach of confidentiality.
2. Openly informing students as to their rights and responsibilities as students and the Danford College policies and procedures.
3. Dealing with grievances, complaints and appeals impartially and, in the first instance, informally, and seeking resolution in a timely manner—all concerned parties will be fully informed of all outcomes/decisions and of the reasons for those decisions.
4. Respecting the right of all parties to nominate a third person to support their representation, including the use of an interpreter.
5. Maintaining full records of complaints and appeals, their processing and resolution and making them available to all parties.
6. Respecting the rights of students to remain enrolled throughout all stages of any internal and external appeals processes they enter, except in cases of suspension or cancellation of enrolment.

All complaints and appeals will be dealt with in accordance with Danford College Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures.

Complaints Stage

Stage 1: Informal resolution;

Stage 2: Formal PY Complaints Process

Stage 3: Final Complaints & Appeals Resolution

3. Procedure

The Danford College Complaints Policy and Procedures relate to situations in which a student has a grievance relating to:

- The overall quality and service levels received whilst undertaking the ACS Professional Year Program
- Unfair or unethical behaviour on the part of a trainer or the College
- A ‘breach’ of the Student Code of Conduct by another party;
- Unfair suspension or termination from the ACS Professional Year Program;

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General procedure of complaint submission is usually started with student by submitting a complaint to PY admin or coordinator officer; then if it's not resolved it will be passed on to PY manager and if it is still unresolved, the Danford CEO will be informed for a solution; however, if overall the complaint is still unsolved then ACS will be informed and involved to finalise with an appropriate solution.

Here are the stages of Complaint and Appeal at PY team-Danford college:

STAGE 1: Informal Resolution

Students are encouraged to resolve their grievances and/or complaints through informal avenues (e.g. phone, email) or by talking directly, or with the help of a mediator, to the person(s) of concern, their trainer. Where these informal approaches resolve the complaint, the agreed adjustments and changes will be implemented at that level.

STAGE 2: Formal PYP Complaint Process / Review

Where informal resolution is not achieved, or the grievance is of significant and ongoing concern, the student has the right to escalate the complaint to the next level of management:

- a. The complainant must undertake the partner's formal complaint process. All stages within this process will be managed and documented by Danford College. All students are required to undertake the entire PYP Complaints Process before engaging ACS to investigate as part of Stage 3.
- b. If the complaint is directly related to Danford College, its staff or trainers (either in relation to ACS Online Orientation or the PE Online component), the student must undertake a Review by submitting a completed *Complaints and Appeals Form*.

STAGE 3: Final Complaints & Appeals Resolution

Once the student has exhausted the formal grievance process and an outcome has been provided, if they are not satisfied with said outcome, the student may escalate a completed *Complaints and Appeals Form* to for Final Complaints & Appeals Resolution. This notice will alert Danford College to commence a formal investigation of the complaint and past proceedings.

All Stage 3 reviews will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement. Danford College will aim to finalise an outcome as soon as practicable and all outcomes will be conveyed to the student in a timely manner.

4. PY Program Appeals Procedure

Danford College Appeals Policy and Procedures are designed to resolve situations in which Danford College decision made in relations to a student is seen as unreasonable and against the student's interests. Appeals procedures can be triggered by a student following Danford College decision, such as:

- a student is formally warned for unsatisfactory academic progress;
- a student is withdrawn from a course due to academic misconduct;
- a student's enrolment is suspended or cancelled as a result of a breach to the Student Code of Conduct;
- a student is unable to resolve a complaint through the informal and formal complaints procedures;
- a student refund request is rejected; or
- a student leave request is rejected.

Depending on the severity of the breach or misconduct, Danford College will either:

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- a. hold the implementation of its original decision/outcome for a set period, allowing sufficient time for a student to appeal
- b. immediately implement the intended suspension/cancellation of enrolment.

5. Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Students are encouraged to resolve their grievances and/or complaints through informal avenues (e.g. phone, email, SMS) or by talking directly, or with the help of a mediator, to the person(s) of concern, their trainer, delivery partner and/or stakeholder. Where these informal approaches resolve the grievance, the agreed adjustments and changes will be implemented at that level.

6. Stage 2: Review

No informal resolution is required when appealing a decision. Students may commence the appeals process from Stage 2. Upon receipt of a decision, the student should review all notice details, including:

- rationale for the decision;
- the student's right to appeal within 20 working days of the receipt of the notice;
- the procedure for lodging an appeal by submitting a completed ACS Complaints and Appeals Form (Appendix 1) along with relevant supporting documentation.

Should the student wish to undertake an appeal, they must first submit a Complaints and Appeals Form stipulating suitable grounds for the appeal. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Danford College did not make the relevant policies and procedures and requirements available to the students; and/or
- Danford College did not measure/record the relevant requirements correctly, and had thereby made a demonstrably wrong decision; and/or
- Danford College did not implement its procedures in accordance with its published policies and procedures; and/or
- demonstrable and previously unconsidered compassionate and/or compelling reasons significantly contributed to the student's circumstance.

Assessment of all student internal appeals will commence within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged, and finalised as soon as practicable. Apart from situations in which circumstances prevent it, all

student internal appeals will be processed within 20 working days and the outcome of the appeal will be conveyed to the student in a timely manner. If the appeal cannot be resolved within 20 working days, the student will be notified and advised when the outcome will be communicated to him/her.

Should a student fail to submit an appeal request within 20 working days of receiving Danford College's written decision, or chooses to withdraw the appeal before a resolution is reached, or if the appeal is rejected, the Danford College will maintain its original decision/outcome.

If a student appeals against a decision and the appeal is successful, Danford College will reverse its original decision and/or offer suitable arrangements acting in accordance with the determination.

7. Stage 3: Final Complaints & Appeals

Resolution

Once the student has exhausted Stage 2's Danford College review and an outcome has been provided, the student may complete and escalate their appeal by completing a new Danford College Complaints and Appeals Form if they are not satisfied with the outcome. This notice will alert Danford College to commence Stage 3, which includes a formal investigation of the appeal and past proceedings.

All Stage 3 reviews will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement. Danford College will aim to finalise an outcome as soon as practicable and all outcomes will be conveyed to the student in a timely manner.

8. Complaints & Appeals Management

Upon receipt of a student complaint or appeal, the PY Program Manager will:

1. Review the details provided (email, evidence, and Complaints and Appeals Form) and register the case in the Complaints and Appeals Register.
2. Refer the case to the Program Manager
3. The PY Program Manager may take any of the following actions during the investigation:
 - gather and examine the complaint and associated documentation;
 - if necessary, interview the complainant and any other relevant people involved with the complaint (all parties may nominate an appropriate support person);
 - visit the site, if required, to investigate and gather further information;
 - if escalation is required, all information will be passed on to the Program Manager or equivalent to determine an outcome and respond to the complaint.
4. The PY Program Manager will release a formal outcome and/or recommendation in writing to both the complainant and respondent, which may include any of the following:
 - Endorsement of a conciliated/negotiated resolution; or
 - Resolution in favour of the complainant; or
 - Complaint/appeal dismissal if there are insufficient grounds and/or unsupported evidence to sustain the complaint/appeal
 - Rationale for the decision and any actions to be taken by relevant parties as a result
 - PY Manager will include CEO for a solution and if still unresolved, ACS will be involved.

It is expected that this process will be completed in a timely fashion, normally within 10 working days.

9. Review & Improvement

Danford College is committed to ongoing monitoring and improvement of its policies and procedures, and to this end has an integrated strategy including:

1. The Management Team, reviews of specific elements of the appeals policy and procedures when an appeal is upheld and thereby indicates a possible problem to be addressed.
2. Staff at Danford College responsibilities relating to the managing of appeals are encouraged to submit any concerns about, and suggestions for, making improvements to the appeals policies and procedures to the PY Program who is responsible for ensuring that appropriate responses are

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implemented.

3. The Management Team, will review and debrief after the complaint and / or appeal concludes. All information will be documented to provide ways of continuous improvement Danford College to prevent similar complaints and appeals from reoccurring.

It is understood that ACS may provide recommendations to the delivery provider to look at additional training to staff and implement support mechanisms if required.

3. The Management Team, review all policies and procedures relating to the ESOS National Code, every 2 years or as needed review of the written Policy and procedures documents, both of which may lead to modifications and improvements.

10. Appendix 1: Student Complaints & Appeals Form

This form is to be completed should you wish to lodge (1) a formal complaint or grievance, or (2) appeal against Danford College decision. Prior to lodgement of this form, all students should read the Danford College Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures.

All formal complaints and appeals will be investigated in accordance with Danford College Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures. Assessment of all student complaints and appeals will commence within 10 working days of lodgement of this form. Danford College will aim to finalise an outcome (normally within 20 working days) and all outcomes and delays will be conveyed to the student in a timely manner.

Please complete ALL sections of this Form and submit it with any supporting evidence and documentation.

Given Name:	
Surname:	
Student ID Number:	
Education Provider:	
PE Online Course (if known):	
Email:	
Postal Address:	
Mobile:	

1. This submission relates to the following: Select TWO ()

<input type="checkbox"/>	A complaint/grievance relating to:
	1. The overall quality and service levels received whilst undertaking the ACS PYEAR
	2. Unfair or unethical behaviour on the part of a trainer or the College
	3. A 'breach' of the Student Code of Conduct by another party
	4. Unfair suspension or termination from the ACS PY Program
	5. None of the above
<input type="checkbox"/>	An appeal relating to an ACS decision regarding:
	1. A formal warning for unsatisfactory academic progress

	2. My withdrawal from a course/program due to academic misconduct
	3. My cancelled enrolment due to a breach to the Student Code of Conduct
	4. An unresolved complaint through the informal and formal complaints procedures
	5. A rejected refund or leave request
	6. None of the above

2. What are the grounds for your complaint/appeal? Select all that apply (☐)

<input type="checkbox"/>		
	1. PY Provider Policies and Procedures were/are not properly followed.	PY Provider
	2. The College outcome was based on insufficient or inaccurate information.	
	3. The College did not inform me of PY Policies or Visa Requirements.	
	4. ACS Policies and Procedures were/are not being properly followed.	ACS
	5. ACS decision/outcome was based on insufficient or inaccurate information.	
	6. ACS did not inform me of PY Policies or Visa Requirements.	
	7. New or additional information is available.	Other
	8. The decision was unfair.	
	9. Other.	

Please provide further details regarding your current complaint/appeal process:

TRUE	FALSE		
		1. I have lodged a complaint/appeal with Danford College.	PY Provider
		2. I have received an outcome from lodging a complaint/appeal with Danford College	
		3. I am unsatisfied with the outcome of my complaint/appeal with Danford College	
		4. I have previously notified ACS of my Danford College complaint/appeal.	
		5. I have lodged a complaint/appeal with ACS previously.	ACS
		6. I am unsatisfied with the outcome of my previous complaint/appeal with ACS.	
		7. I have notified Danford College of my ACS complaint/appeal.	
		8. I have attempted to resolve my complaint informally with related parties (e.g. trainer, internship host, etc.) via talks, emails, or SMS.	Other
		9. I have reported this complaint/appeal to a third party, agency, or body.	

3. Please explain your grievance or appeal and the reasons for your submission. You should provide information and arguments to support your stance (as stated in Question 2). Please provide all details, including the main issue(s), date(s) of the event(s), names of key person(s) or any witnesses so that Danford College may investigate. Attach additional page(s) if required.

3. If applicable, how have you tried to resolve your complaint informally?

4. If applicable, what was the outcome of your previous complaint/appeal attempt(s)?

5. What is your desired outcome now?

6. Please list and attach any evidence you have to support your submission (examples of the documents you could include are Medical Certificates, Letters from Doctors, Psychologist or Social Worker; a Police Report; photocopies of receipts, photocopies of Death Certificates, photocopies of travel documents indicating both travel dates and date travel was booked, etc.)

List of documents attached:

7. By signing this form, I agree that the information provided, together with supporting evidence, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

8. Student Signature: Date:

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
Received by (name):		Appeal Number:	
Position:		Date Received:	
Referred to:		Date Referred:	
ACS Notes/Outcome:			

End of Document

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