



## ROYAL VICTORIAN AERO CLUB

# Student Complaints and Appeals

## Policy / Procedure

(National Code 2007 – Standard 8)

### 1. Policy

Despite all efforts of the Royal Victorian Aero Club to provide satisfactory services to its students, complaints may occasionally arise that require formal resolution. If the student is dissatisfied with any Club decision, a formal Club Policy exists to provide a structured framework for appeal and resolution, including access to external mediation. Students will be provided with the complaints and appeals policy at the time of orientation. A written record of the complaint or appeal and outcome must be kept on file.

All complaints and appeals received by the Royal Victorian Aero Club will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement and will be dealt with confidentially, promptly and fairly with the intention of achieving a satisfactory resolution and, to maintain a high level of student satisfaction. RVAC would view the matter very seriously and would expedite the process as it would be in RVAC and the student's best interest. Each complainant or appellant has the right to formally present his/her case at minimal cost to him/herself. If a student chooses to access the complaints and appeals processes, the student's enrolment must be maintained for the duration of the process. Each party is entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.

Complaints will be accepted in writing for a period of 20 working days after the event. Consideration will be given to a complaint lodged after 20 working days if compelling reasons are substantiated.

The formal resolution process must begin within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and all reasonable measures must be taken to resolve the issue as soon as practicable. It is in the interest of both the student and RVAC to expedite the process.

The following procedures provide students the opportunity to have any issues relating to a substantiated complaint or appeal resolved and resolutions reached that attempt to satisfy all parties involved. This complaints and appeals process will be at no cost to the student.

### 2. Procedure

#### *Informal process*

##### Step 1

It is in the student's best interests for a dispute to be resolved amicably and at an early stage. A 'Student Support' form (available at reception) should be submitted and concerns initially discussed with the relevant staff member, a satisfactory outcome might be achieved through discussion or general mediation. If the issue is not resolved within 10 working days then the student should proceed to Step 2.

## **Formal process**

### Step 2

A student wishing to submit a formal complaint or appeal can do so by completing the 'Complaints and Appeals Form' stating their case providing as many details as possible and submitting to the Chief Flying Instructor for investigation. This application form can be gained by contacting Student Administration at the Royal Victorian Aero Club. A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person regardless of the nature of the complaint throughout the process at all times.

Complaints are to include the following information:

- Submission date of complaint
- Name of complainant;
- Nature of complaint ;
- Date of the event which lead to the complaint
- Attachments (if applicable);

Within 10 working days of receipt the Chief Flying Instructor will review documentation and the informal resolution process to date and notify the student of his recommendation in writing. A satisfactory outcome might be achieved through conciliation. Copies of the written complaint and the Chief Flying Instructor's recommendation shall be placed on the student's Personal Document File.

The notification shall include the following:

- Determined Resolution
- Date of Resolution.
- Chief Flying Instructor Signature
- Complainant Signature of receipt
- Notification of the right of appeal.

If the complaint remains unresolved, the student should proceed to Step 3. To appeal a decision the RVAC must receive, in writing, grounds of the appeal. Students are referred to the appeals procedure.

## **Appealing a Decision**

### Step 3

All students have the right to appeal decisions made by the Royal Victorian Aero Club where reasonable grounds can be established. The areas in which a student may appeal a decision made by the Royal Victorian Aero Club may include:

- Assessments conducted
- Deferral, suspension, or cancellation decisions made in relation to the student's enrolment
- Or any other conclusion / decision that is made after a complaint has been dealt with by the Royal Victorian Aero Club in the first instance.

To activate the appeals process the student is to complete a 'RVAC Complaints and Appeals Form' which is to include a summary of the grounds the appeal is based upon and submit to the Chief Pilot. The reason the student feels the decision is unfair is to be clearly explained and help and support with this process can be gained from student administration.

The Chief Pilot shall then determine the validity of the appeal and organise a meeting with all parties involved in the matter and attempt to seek resolution where appropriate.

The process for all formally lodged appeals will begin within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged.

The Chief Pilot shall ensure that the Royal Victorian Aero Club acts on any substantiated appeal.

Where an appeal has been lodged it will be defined into one of the following categories and the appropriate procedures followed:

## **General appeals**

- Where a student has appealed a decision or outcome of a formal complaint they are required to notify the Royal Victorian Aero Club in writing within 20 working days of the grounds of their appeal. Any supporting documentation should also be attached to the appeal.
- The Chief Pilot shall seek details regarding the initial documentation of the complaint and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal.
- The student shall be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decisions.

## **Assessment appeals**

- Where a student wishes to appeal an assessment they are required to notify their assessor in the first instance. Where appropriate the assessor may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable decision is gained. The assessor shall complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why assessment was or was not granted.
- If this is still not to the student's satisfaction the student shall formally lodge an appeal by submitting a written letter outlining their reasons for the appeal. They shall lodge this with the Chief Pilot.
- The Chief Pilot shall be notified and shall seek details from the assessor involved and any other relevant parties. A decision shall be made regarding the appeal either indicating the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a 'third party'. The third party shall be another assessor appointed by the Royal Victorian Aero Club.
- The student shall be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decision.

## **Step 4**

If the student remains unsatisfied he/she can appeal to the RVAC Board of Directors. The student should lodge an appeal in writing within 20 working days of receiving a response from the Chief Pilot (Step 3) and must detail the nature of the matter, the grounds of the appeal and the avenues of conciliation previously undertaken.

A Director will be nominated by the President to meet with the complainant within 10 working days of the receipt of the written appeal from the student. A support person may assist the student during the appeal. The President will advise the student in writing of the decision within 10 working days of the hearing.

If the matter is still unresolved, the student can proceed to Step 5.

The student shall also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify the Royal Victorian Aero Club if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

## ***External Appeals***

### **Step 5**

If a student is still dissatisfied with the decision or conduct of the complaint handling and appeals process of the Royal Victorian Aero Club, a student may wish to refer the matter to an external independent / third party mediator at minimal or no cost. The student will be provided with the information below. The student is also advised that if they are not happy with RVAC suggestions that they are free to pursue other avenues at their own cost. Evidence of a student accessing independent advice and the outcome shall be maintained in the Student's personal file. If the formal outcome of an internal or external appeal process supports the student, RVAC must immediately implement any decision and/or any corrective and preventative actions required and advise the student accordingly.

Australian Skills Quality Authority <http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints.html>  
Overseas Student Ombudsman: <http://www.oso.gov.au/>  
Victorian Legal Society: <http://www.liv.asn.au/>  
Administrative Appeals Tribunal <http://www.aat.gov.au/>

## **RVAC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR COMPLAINTS & APPEALS**

