VET FEE-HELP Non-Academic Grievance Policy and Procedures
Ascet Institute of Technology

Definitions
For the purposes of this document the following applies:

The Act refers to the Higher Education Support Act 2003

Student/s refers to all persons enrolled or seeking to enrol in a unit of study that meets the course requirements under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act who are, or would be entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.

Complainant/s refers to students (as defined above) who have lodged a non-academic complaint with Ascet Tech.

Overview
Ascet Institute of Technology (Ascet Tech) is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential non-academic grievance handling procedure for all Students.

Complainants are entitled to access the grievance procedures regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the Complainant’s place of residence or mode of study.

Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the Student. Non-academic grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider.

Responsibility
The Training Operations Manager is responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation and Students and Complainants are made aware of its availability.

Informal Grievance Procedure
Where possible all non-formal attempts will be made to resolve the grievance. This may include advice, discussions and general mediation in relation to the issue and the student’s grievance. Any staff can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but once a student has submitted a formal complaint the following procedures must apply.

Formal Grievance Procedure
General principles that apply to all stages of this grievance procedure which will be adhered to by Ascet Tech, are:

- The Complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
- The Complainant and/or the respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire.
- The Complainant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or respondent if requested.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored in the ‘Registers’ Arch lever file.
- A Complainant shall have access to this grievance procedure at no cost for internal procedures. External processes may incur a fee.

**Stage One**
Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to the Student Administration Officer.

The responsible officer the Training Operations Manager within Ascet Tech will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within ten (10) working days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

**Stage Two**
If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the Training Operations Manager.

The Complainant’s appeal will be determined by the Company Executive Officer or delegate (the Reviewer).

The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 28 days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

**Stage Three**
If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may request that the matter be referred to an external dispute resolution process by a body appointed for this purpose by Ascet Tech.

The details for the external body and contact person are:
- **Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)**
  - **Postal Address:**
  - **Victorian Consumer and Business Centre**
  - **GPO Box 4567 Melbourne Victoria 3001**
  - **113 Exhibition Street**
  - **Melbourne Victoria 3000**
  - **Phone:** 1300 5581 181
  - **Email:** consumer@justice.vic.gov.au
  - **Web:** www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Ascet Tech will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within 28 days.

**Publication**
This *Non-Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure* will be made available to Students through publication on the website www.ascet.edu.au and the Student Information Handbook.

This *Non-Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure* was agreed to and ratified by Senior Management Committee of Ascet Tech on 14/12/2012.