

Policy title	Policy Student Complaints & Grievances	Year	2026
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Policy signed off by	Head of academics: Anelma Janse van Rensburg		
Signature			

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1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and fair procedures for managing student complaints, grievances, and disciplinary matters at **eta**.

It ensures:

- 1.1 That students' rights are upheld and grievances are addressed promptly and transparently.
- 1.2 That misconduct or breaches of the Student Code of Conduct are handled consistently and fairly.
- 1.3 That all processes align with eta's WISE values (Wellness, Innovation, Sustainability, Engagement) and the principles of natural justice.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- 2.1 All registered **eta** students (contact, distance, or blended/hybrid modes).
- 2.2 All **eta** campuses and online platforms.
- 2.3 Student complaints relating to academic, administrative, or interpersonal matters.
- 2.4 Student disciplinary matters that breach institutional rules, regulations, or the Code of Conduct.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Complaint	A concern raised by a student about unfair treatment, academic decisions, administrative service, or staff behaviour.
Grievance	A formal complaint lodged when a student believes that a matter has not been adequately resolved informally.
Disciplinary Offence	Any act by a student that breaches eta's Code of Conduct, academic integrity rules, or laws of South Africa.
Appeal	A request for review of a decision relating to a complaint, grievance, or disciplinary outcome.

4. GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
Campus/Academic Manager	Receives and investigates student complaints; implements disciplinary actions for first and second offences.
Head of Academics	Reviews appeal and ensure fairness in academic grievances.
National QA Manager	Maintains central records of all complaints and outcomes; monitors trends.
Academic Board (AB)	Provides oversight of student governance and reviews annual grievance trends.
Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	Monitors complaint trends and recommends policy improvements.

5. COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

5.1 INFORMAL RESOLUTION (STAGE 1)

- 5.1.1 Students are encouraged to resolve issues informally by speaking directly with the lecturer, supervisor, or campus staff member involved.
- 5.1.2 If unresolved, the student may escalate to the **Campus / Academic Manager** within **5 working days**.

5.2 FORMAL GRIEVANCE (STAGE 2)

- 5.2.1 Students must ensure that all appeals are made in writing to the **eta** Campus / Academic Manager.
- 5.2.2 A copy of the student's letter is kept on student's file; one copy is kept in the student appeals file.
- 5.2.3 If student grievances involve another student, a report on this grievance is kept on both students' files.
- 5.2.4 The student completes a **Student Grievance Form** (template to be added).
- 5.2.5 Appeals and their outcomes are logged during appeals meetings and records of such meetings are kept on student files.
- 5.2.6 The Campus / Academic Manager investigates and provides a written response within **10 working days**.

- 5.2.7 Records are filed in the **Campus Grievance Register** and uploaded to **SharePoint (QA > Student Governance)**.

5.3 APPEAL (STAGE 3)

- 5.3.1 If the student is dissatisfied with the decision, they may appeal in writing to the **Head of Academics** within **5 working days**.
- 5.3.2 The appeal is reviewed by a **Student Appeals Task Team**, which includes one academic, one student representative, and one QA representative.
- 5.3.3 The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.
- 5.3.4 If a trend in student problems is noted, this must be investigated by a representative from **eta** Main Campus: Centre for Academic Development and Quality Assurance.

6. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

- 6.1 All students are expected to uphold **eta's** values and represent the College with integrity.
- 6.2 Students' behaviour must comply with the **eta** Student Code of Conduct and institutional rules. Undisciplined behaviour that disrupts teaching or learning constitutes a breach.
- 6.3 Any infringement or abuse of the rights of other students or staff members is forbidden.
- 6.4 Theft, drug use or trafficking, vandalism, or other criminal offences will result in disciplinary and possible legal action.
- 6.5 As a sports and fitness college, **eta** is a non-smoking institution. Smoking is prohibited on campus, during WIL placements, and while wearing **eta** attire.
- 6.6 Students may not smoke during experiential learning or practical sessions or when wearing **eta** clothing.
- 6.7 Sexual misconduct or harassment is a serious offence and will result in disciplinary action.
- 6.8 Any student who witnesses unlawful activity must report it immediately to the Campus Manager or Academic Head.

- 6.9 Students must always act in ways that uphold eta's reputation and values.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-RETALIATION

eta ensures that:

- 7.1 All complaint investigations are handled confidentially.
- 7.2 Students who raise concerns in good faith will not be subject to victimisation or retaliation.
- 7.3 Findings are communicated respectfully, with due regard for student dignity.

8. RECORD KEEPING AND DATA MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 All complaints, grievances, and disciplinary records are logged in the **Student Governance Database** (SharePoint).
- 8.2 QA monitors trends, resolution rates, and response times.
- 8.3 Annual data summaries are presented to **QAC and AB** for review and policy improvement.

9. OFFENCES REQUIRING DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 9.1 Any breach of the student code of conduct, the academic rules, the code of conduct of a student working with eta or any activities relating to cheating or plagiarism will be an offence and student will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 9.2 If a student is found to have broken the law while on campus or during activities relating to their studies, the disciplinary action will be to report the action to the police.

10. OFFENCES THAT MAY LEAD TO DISMISSAL

- 10.1 Criminal offences
- 10.2 Repeated cheating or plagiarism

11. GROUND RULES RELATING TO TIME KEEPING

- 11.1 Classes start and finish on time and the Lecturer is present in class when sessions begin.
- 11.2 If students are late for class, they can enter after the first break.
- 11.3 Late students can work quietly in the library until they are able to enter the classroom.

- 11.4 Continuous lateness (more than three occasions) will be treated as a breach of rules and students will be asked to meet with the faculty members to remedy the timekeeping problem.
- 11.5 Repeated lateness following remediation will be treated as misconduct.

12. HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS

When lecturing or presenting, students are warned of this disruption rule in the induction session and at the start of first term classes. The rule is as follows:

- 12.1 If a student or a group of students make a noise that disrupts the lecture or class, the lecturer will ask them to be quiet so that the rest of the class can hear the presentation.
- 12.2 If students continue to disrupt the class, they will be asked to leave the classroom (at this point the next penalty applies to the whole class).
- 12.3 If the same student or the next student disrupts the class, this is viewed as continuing the disruption and the student is asked to leave (even if you were not first offender).
- 12.4 If the student/s continues to disrupt the class, the lecturer can leave if they are unable to continue teaching.
- 12.5 Group discussions can bring about an increase in noise levels. If discussions relating to the class topic are taking place, the noise level should be acceptable.

13. HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS

Students are informed during induction and the first term about classroom disruption procedures:

- 13.1 If a student disrupts teaching, they will first be asked to stop.
- 13.2 Continued disruption results in being asked to leave the classroom.
- 13.3 Repeated disruption by any student will result in removal from class and formal reporting to the Campus Manager.
- 13.4 If disruption persists, the lecturer may end the class and report the incident.
- 13.5 Group discussions must maintain acceptable noise levels related to the learning topic.

14. MANAGING AND DEALING WITH DISRUPTION AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- 14.1 **For first offence:** a private meeting is held between the student and manager. Such meeting must take place within 24 hours of the offence.

- 14.2 The student is given a verbal warning relating to the offence and the Manager and student are encouraged to ensure remediation to the behaviour - the outcome of the meeting is recorded in the student file.
- 14.3 **Second offence:** A written warning is issued after a follow-up meeting and agreement on behavioural correction. If the offence is repeated after the written warning the student is suspended.
- 14.4 **Third offence:** Suspension and referral to the Regional Manager for disciplinary review.
- 14.5 There is no refund of course fees in the event of student misconduct and student suspension.
- 14.6 The regional manager manages these disciplinary actions.

15. REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy is reviewed every three years, or sooner if national regulations or institutional priorities change. Continuous improvement actions are based on QA trend analysis and feedback from students and staff.

16. APPENDICES (INSTRUCTIONAL PRODUCTS)

1. Student Grievance Form
2. Student Disciplinary Hearing Template
3. Appeals Form

16.1 STUDENT GRIEVANCE FORM

(POLICY REFERENCE: STUDENT COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES, AND DISCIPLINE POLICY 2026)

Student details

Field	Information Required
Full Name	
Student Number	
Programme / Qualification	
Year / Level of Study	
Campus	☐ CPT ☐ DBN ☐ JHB ☐ PTA ☐ PLZ ☐ STB ☐ BFN ☐ ELZ ☐ GRG ☐ DL
Contact Number	
Email Address	
Date of Submission	

TYPE OF GRIEVANCE

(Tick the appropriate box)

- ☐ Academic (assessment, grading, lecturer conduct, etc.)
- ☐ Administrative (registration, fees, documentation, etc.)
- ☐ Interpersonal (peer conflict, staff–student relations)
- ☐ Campus Facility / Environment
- ☐ Discrimination or Harassment
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

DESCRIPTION OF GRIEVANCE

Please describe your concern clearly and factually. Include relevant dates, persons involved, and any attempts to resolve the issue informally.

Details:

(Attach supporting documents or screenshots where applicable.)

INFORMAL RESOLUTION ATTEMPT (Stage 1)

Person(s) Approached	Date	Outcome / Response

Was the issue resolved informally?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If **No**, please explain why informal resolution was unsuccessful:

FORMAL GRIEVANCE (Stage 2)

I hereby submit this grievance for formal review by the Campus Manager.

Student Signature	Date

CAMPUS / ACADEMIC MANAGER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Received by (Campus Manager): _____

Date Received: _____

Investigation Start Date: _____

Target Resolution Date (within 10 working days): _____

INVESTIGATION SUMMARY (to be completed by Campus / Academic Manager)

Findings:

Evidence Reviewed:
☐ Student statement ☐ Witness accounts ☐ Staff input ☐ Documentation / emails ☐

Other (specify): _____

Resolution / Action Taken:

Was the grievance resolved?

☐ Yes ☐ No (escalated to Head of Academics)

Campus Manager Signature	Date

APPEAL (Stage 3 – if student not satisfied)

Appeal lodged to:

☐ Head of Academics ☐ Student Appeals Panel

Date Appeal Received: _____

Summary of Appeal Grounds:

Outcome / Decision of Appeals Panel:

Panel Chairperson Name	Signature	Date

QA TRACKING AND ARCHIVING

QA Use Only
Date Logged on QA Database
QA Reference Number
Category (Academic / Admin / Behavioural)
Follow-up Completed (Yes/No)
Final Closure Date
QA Officer Signature

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION



All information in this form will be treated as confidential in accordance with POPIA and eta's QA data governance standards. Grievances will be handled fairly, without discrimination or retaliation.

16.2 STUDENT DISCIPLINARY HEARING TEMPLATE

(Policy Reference: Student Complaints, Grievances, and Discipline Policy 2026)

1. STUDENT DETAILS

Field	Information Required
Full Name	
Student Number	
Programme / Qualification	
Year / Level of Study	
Campus	☐ CPT ☐ DBN ☐ JHB ☐ PTA ☐ PLZ ☐ STB ☐ BFN ☐ ELZ ☐ GRG ☐ DL
Contact Number	
Email Address	
Date of Hearing	
Location / Platform (if online)	

2. DETAILS OF OFFENCE / MISCONDUCT

Field	Information Required
Date of Incident	
Location of Incident	
Type of Misconduct	☐ Academic Misconduct (Cheating / Plagiarism) ☐ Behavioural Misconduct ☐ Breach of Code of Conduct ☐ Other (Specify): _____
Description of Incident	
Rule / Policy Breached	
Initial Action Taken (prior to hearing)	☐ Verbal Warning ☐ Written Warning ☐ Temporary Suspension ☐ None

Reported By	
Report Received By	

3. NOTICE OF HEARING

Item	Details
Date Student Notified	
Method of Notification	☐ Email ☐ Verbal ☐ Written Letter ☐ Other
Notice Period Given	
Student Acknowledgement of Receipt	☐ Yes ☐ No
Student Accompanied By	☐ Self-represented ☐ Support person / SRC representative (Name: _____)

4. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Role	Name	Designation	Signature
Chairperson			
Committee Member 1			
Committee Member 2			
QA / Minute-Taker			

5. HEARING PROCEEDINGS

Opening Statement by Chairperson:

Summary of Allegation(s):

Student Response:

Witness Statements (if applicable):

eta College

Witness Statements (if applicable):

Name	Affiliation	Summary of Statement

Evidence Presented:☐ Written reports ☐ Emails ☐ CCTV ☐ Photographs ☐ Testimony ☐ Other (specify):

Committee Discussion / Findings:

DECISION

Verdict	☐ Guilty ☐ Not Guilty ☐ Deferred (Pending Further Investigation)
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Summary of Decision and Reasoning:

16.3 STUDENT APPEALS FORM

(Policy Reference: Student Complaints, Grievances, and Discipline Policy 2026)

1. STUDENT DETAILS

Field	Information Required
Full Name	
Student Number	
Programme / Qualification	
Year / Level of Study	
Campus	☐ CPT ☐ DBN ☐ JHB ☐ PTA ☐ PLZ ☐ STB ☐ BFN ☐ ELZ ☐ GRG ☐ DL
Contact Number	
Email Address	
Date of Appeal Submission	

2. TYPE OF APPEAL

(Select the appropriate option)

- ☐ Academic Decision (assessment, result, or progression)
☐ Disciplinary Outcome (hearing decision or sanction)
☐ Administrative or Procedural Issue
☐ Other (please specify): _____

3. DECISION BEING APPEALED

Field	Information Required
Date of Original Decision / Hearing	
Reference Number (if applicable)	
Decision-Making Body / Chairperson	
Summary of Decision / Sanction	

Date Student Notified of Decision

4. GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

Appeals must be based on one or more of the following grounds (tick and provide explanation):

- ☐ **Procedural Irregularity:** The process followed was unfair or not in accordance with policy.
- ☐ **New Evidence:** Relevant new information has become available that was not previously considered.
- ☐ **Disproportionate Sanction:** The outcome or penalty is too severe relative to the offence.
- ☐ **Bias or Conflict of Interest:** Evidence that the decision-maker(s) were biased.
- ☐ **Other (specify):** _____

Provide detailed explanation of your grounds for appeal:

5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

List all documents attached to this appeal (e.g., disciplinary outcome letter, evidence, witness statements, medical certificates):

Document Name / Description	Date

6. DESIRED OUTCOME / RELIEF SOUGHT

Please state clearly what outcome you are requesting from this appeal:

7. STUDENT DECLARATION

I declare that the information provided in this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the Appeals Panel's decision is final and binding.

Student Name	Signature	Date

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT (to be completed by eta)

Received By (Name)	Designation	Date Received	Signature
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Appeal Reference Number	Recorded in QA Database
	☐ Yes ☐ No

9. APPEALS PANEL DETAILS

Panel Member	Role	Signature
Chairperson		
Academic Representative		
Student Representative		
QA Officer / Minute-Taker		

Date of Appeal Hearing: _____

Location / Platform: _____

10. OUTCOME OF APPEAL

Verdict	☐ Appeal Upheld ☐ Appeal Dismissed ☐ Modified Outcome
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Summary of Decision and Reasoning:

Sanction / Resolution (if modified):

Effective Date of Outcome	Follow-Up Required (Yes/No)
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11. COMMUNICATION AND CLOSURE

- Student notified of outcome on: _____
- Method of communication: ☐ Email ☐ Meeting ☐ Letter
- QA database updated on: _____
- Final closure date: _____

12. QA SIGN-OFF

QA Officer Name	Signature	Date
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13. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All appeal information is treated as confidential in accordance with the **Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)**. Data will be used solely for institutional learning, fairness, and compliance monitoring.