

JCUSA Advocacy Service Charter

Introduction:

The James Cook University Student Association (JCUSA) Advocacy Service Charter states our commitment to provide:

- Quality services and provides standards by which to measure our performance;
- State our clear standards; and
- Strive for excellence service.

JCUSA Vision:

A well-respected, influential and sustainable organisation, integral to student success and university success.

JCUSA Mission Statement:

To enhance student life and development through high quality representation, support services and quality extra-curricular activities for all members.

Aim of the JCUSA Advocates:

JCUSA Advocates are independent of the James Cook University (JCU) and were established to provide information, advocacy and referral services for all students enrolled through the Australian based James Cook University campus, a range of academic, procedural and administrative issues.

The JCUSA Advocates also makes recommendations to JCU for improving policies and outcomes for enrolled students.

Our Commitment:

JCUSA Advocates are committed to delivering a high quality advocacy service that is independent, accessible, fair and timely.

List of services Advocates provide:

- Provide information on general university related questions and issues;
- Assist in clarifying JCU student-related policies and procedures, or official correspondence from the University;
- Accompany you to meetings, hearing or discussions with JCU staff, in person or by phone/video, or, in some cases represent you at University hearings;
- Proof read your communications to the University, for example: informal complaints, formal complaints, misconduct or appeal statements and other correspondence;
- Promote self-advocacy to empower students to understand and act on their rights and responsibilities; and
- Act on your behalf where appropriate and as explained further in this document.

Service Standards

What we will do:

General:

- We will respect our students;
- We will provide prompt, courteous and efficient customer service and at all times remain professional;
- We will be realistic about what we can do and in what timeframes;
- We will provide you with accurate and consistent information;
- We will show respect for your privacy in your dealings with us and the confidentiality of information discussed; and
- We will strive to excel in providing excellent customer service through continuous improvement, customer surveys and identification of new technologies to assist in the customer experience.

Face to Face

- We will wear a name badge for ease of communication;
- We will provide you with relevant options and available services to you; and
- We will listen to you and discuss your requirements fully.

Over the telephone

We will endeavour to answer your call promptly.

- Where messages that include contact details are left on voicemail, they will be contacted within two working days of the Advocate;
- We will advise you of any Advocacy services delays and offer suitable options; and
- We will introduce ourselves using first name and provide a direct contact number for further communications where necessary.

In writing or email

- We will endeavour to respond to your letter or e-mail within five working days of receipt; and
- If your enquiry requires in-depth research or follow-up that will take longer than five working days, we will acknowledge your correspondence, and where possible, provide an expected response date.

Helping us to help you

You can help us to meet our commitments to you by:

- Making initial contact via the online Request an Advocacy Appointment Form that is located on the JCUSA website (Student Support tab);
- Being open and honest with us by providing accurate and complete details when contacting us;
- Being courteous, polite and respectful;
- Requesting ZOOM or telephone appointments if unwell.
- Attending appointments and meetings on time;
- Respecting the rights of, and provide courtesy towards, other students and JCU staff;
- Promptly letting us know if your situation changes;
- Taking a collaborative approach to working with us to resolve matters; and
- Completing the Advocacy Service Survey.

What we are unable to do:

- We are unlikely to be able to assist you if you wait until the last minute to request our assistance, provide information too late, and/or cancel meetings without warning;
- We won't write statements or letters to the University for you. We are happy to suggest how to structure your statements, advise you about content, and proof-read your writing;
- We won't contact a JCU staff member on your behalf unless your efforts have not been successful, or it would be inappropriate for you to communicate with JCU staff member yourself. The Advocate will discuss with you the various options available to meet your requirements before we take any action on your behalf;
- We will not use or disclose personal and sensitive information about you without your consent, unless required to by law, or, where we reasonably believe that to do so is necessary to lessen or prevent:
 - a serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health or safety;
 - or a serious threat to public health or public safety.
- We cannot provide legal advice; or personal (emotional) counselling as it is outside the scope of the role of an Advocate;
- We will not engage in any act that we feel is unsafe, discriminatory or unlawful, or that contradicts JCUSA or JCU policy;
- Advocates will withdraw assistance if a student:
 - engages in frivolous or vexatious claims against a JCU student or staff member;
 - becomes verbally or physically aggressive towards an Advocate, another student or JCU staff member;
 - acting contrary to policies of JCUSA or JCU policy;
 - if it is in the best interest of the student to do so;
 - student debtors;
 - your request or situation is outside of the scope of the Advocates role;
- We cannot assist you with matters that are outside the scope of your JCU experience and/or if the last relevant university interaction and/or if the latest interaction with JCU is greater than 12 months.

COVID-19 Impacts

In order to protect the health of staff and students, Face to Face appointments have been restricted.

Students are not to enter an Advocate workspace if they:

- are unwell (including any signs/symptoms of cold, flu, COVID-19 or other illness);
- have been in close contact with a known active case of COVID-19;
- have travelled overseas in the previous 14 days; and/or
- have been to a declared COVID-19 hotspot in the previous 14 days.

Appointments now need to be made for contact tracing purposes, hence "walk in" appointments may not be possible. This of course is all subject to change depending on the COVID-19 pandemic and the Queensland Chief Health Officer public health directions.

Confidentiality

We will treat your personal and confidential information with sensitivity. We will collect, store and use your personal and confidential information responsibly. Please note that in some circumstances, we may be required to release your information without your consent. This would occur when required to by law, or, where we reasonably believe that to do so is necessary to lessen or prevent:

- A serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health or safety; or
- A serious threat to public health or public safety.

Access and Inclusion

JCUSA is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive community for all students.

Concerns and Complaints:

Email the JCUSA General Manager at jcusa.generalmanager@jcu.edu.au

Measuring and improving the quality of our service

We will measure and improve the quality of our service by:

- Emailing each student who accessed the services of an Advocate a link to the Advocacy Service Survey;
- Implementing quality training and professional development coaching activities for Advocates;
- Using key performance indicators in performance appraisals; and
- Collection and analysis of statistical data to form business decisions.

Contact us

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