

Complaints and appeals policy

Purpose

Site Institute will ensure their overseas students have the right to natural justice protected through access to professional, timely, inexpensive and documented complaints handling and appeals processes.

Scope

This policy relates to all enrolled overseas students. The policy applies to Site Institute, its trainers, assessors, administration and management staff; any third-party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers and assessors, or other staff and learners.

Complaints and appeals may apply to training and assessment services and decisions, administrative services and decisions, or enrolment services and decisions.

Definitions

Academic complaints Complaints about the delivery of a student's enrolled units, including but not limited to:

- content of a unit
- delivery of a unit
- clarity of assessments
- assessment decisions
- equipment, resources or materials required for a unit
- feedback provided by trainers and assessors

Appeal A student's request for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by the Institute or a third-party providing services on the Institute's behalf.

Complaint An allegation involving the conduct or processes of:

- the Institute, its trainers and assessors, or other staff members
- a third-party providing services on the Institute's behalf
- other students

Non-academic complaints Complaints about non-academic decisions or about the services and facilities of Site Institute, including but not limited to:

- decisions relating to refund of fees and other penalties imposed
- administrative decisions (enrolment, attendance & academic progress, graduation)
- services of facilities
- health and safety issues

Policy stipulations

- 1.1. Site Institute will have and implement a documented internal complaint handling and appeals process, and provide the overseas student with comprehensive, free and easily accessible information about that process and policy.
- 1.2. Site Institute's internal complaints handling and appeals process will:
 - 1.2. 1. apply the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice
 - 1.2. 2. include a process for the overseas student to lodge a formal complaint or appeal if a matter cannot be resolved informally
 - 1.2. 3. include that Site Institute will respond to any complaint or appeal the overseas student makes regarding his or her dealings with Site Institute, Site Institute's education agents or any related party Site Institute has an arrangement with to deliver the overseas student's course or related services
 - 1.2. 4. commence assessment of the complaint or appeal within 10 working days of it being made in accordance with Site Institute's complaints handling and appeals process and policy, and finalise the outcome as soon as practicable
 - 1.2. 5. ensure the overseas student is given an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost and be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings
 - 1.2. 6. conduct the assessment of the complaint or appeal in a professional, fair and transparent manner
 - 1.2. 7. ensure the overseas student is given a written statement of the outcome of the internal appeal, including detailed reasons for the outcome
 - 1.2. 8. keep a written record of the complaint or appeal, including a statement of the outcome and reasons for the outcome.
- 1.3. If the overseas student is not successful in Site Institute's internal complaints handling and appeals process, Site Institute will advise the overseas student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review, of the overseas student's right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process at minimal or no cost. Site Institute will give the overseas student the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling and external appeals body.
- 1.4. If the internal or any external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the overseas student, Site Institute will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision.
- 1.5. All information and documentation supplied by the appellants to Site Institute will be treated in accordance with the Privacy Act.

Procedures: Complaint resolution

Step	What	By whom	By when
1	Ensure students are given print and online information about the complaints handling and appeals policy and process	Quality Assurance Manager	Prior to enrolment
2	Ensure students are given an orientation presentation which provides information about the complaints handling and appeals policy and process	CEO	At orientation
3	On receipt of a complaint (verbal or written, informal or formal), low-level intervention is the first preferred option. Encourage the parties to discuss the concern informally, in an attempt to resolve the complaint between them and without escalation	Campus administrator Marketing Specialist	Immediately on the complaint being raised
4	If required, act on the student's behalf to resolve the issue where possible, and/or advise the CEO	Campus administrator Marketing Specialist	Immediately on the complaint being raised
5	If the matter has not been resolved to the student's satisfaction, advise the student that they may submit an <i>Application for consideration of complaint</i> form	Campus administrator Marketing Specialist	As early as possible
6	Receive <i>Application for consideration of complaint</i> from student	Campus administrator	On receipt
7	Check that all information is fully completed, and signed and dated If not, return the form to the student for completion	Campus administrator	On receipt
8	Email the student to advise that the application has been received and that assessment of the complaint will begin within 10 working days	Campus administrator	On receipt
9	Take all actions required to assess, verify and resolve the complaint	CEO	Within ten days of the complaint being raised
10	Ensure the assessment of the complaint or appeal is conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner	CEO	As early as possible
11	Convene a mediated discussion between the student and the other party as appropriate	CEO	During resolution

Step	What	By whom	By when
12	Ensure the student is given an opportunity to formally present their case at minimal or no cost and be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings	CEO	During resolution
13	Ensure the subject of the complaint is given an opportunity to formally present their case at minimal or no cost and be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings	CEO	During resolution
14	Ensure another staff member is present at any mediated or formal discussion to serve as a witness and record keeper	CEO	During resolution
15	If Site Institute considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, advise the student, stating reasons, and regularly update the student on the progress of the matter	CEO	Ongoing
16	Uphold, or do not uphold, the complaint	CEO	On resolution
17	Advise the Campus administrator and the Marketing Specialist of the outcome	CEO	On resolution
18	Advise the student in writing that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the application was not upheld, citing the reasons the application was upheld, citing the reasons and the preventative or corrective action that will be taken 	Campus administrator	On advice from the CEO
19	Advise the student in writing that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if they are not satisfied with the outcome, or the handling of the complaint, they may choose to contact The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman (providing contact details) 	Campus administrator	On processing
20	Complete all fields of <i>Office Use Only</i>	Campus administrator	On processing
21	If the complaints assessment process upholds the student's complaint, implement preventative or corrective action to prevent recurrence	CEO	Post resolution
22	If The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, upholds the student's complaint, implement preventative or corrective action to prevent recurrence	CEO	Post resolution

Step	What	By whom	By when
23	Securely retain records of all complaints or appeals made by the student, for at least two years after the person ceases to be an accepted student.	Campus administrator	At end of student's course

Relevant legislation

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018), Standard 10

User's guide to the standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015, Standard 6

Related policies or documents

- *Application for consideration of complaint form*
- Orientation PowerPoint
- Student Handbook