



Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

This Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure ensures that Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education responds effectively and efficiently to individual cases of dissatisfaction in accordance with the requirements of the Standards for RTOs 2015 and National Code 2018, Standard 10.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to both enrolled and prospective Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education students.

3. Responsibility

The Student Support Services Coordinator is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that staff and students are made aware of its application.

4. Definitions

Complainant refers to a person who has lodged a complaint with Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education.

Complaint means a person's expression of dissatisfaction with any service provided by Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education including academic and non-academic matters.

Appeal refers to the process where a student requests for the decision to be reviewed if dissatisfied with a outcome made by Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education.

Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content, resources, or awards in a course of study.

Non-academic matters include those matters related to student enrolment, induction, or orientation process, quality of education and discrimination or harassment that the student may have experienced.

Natural Justice means general procedural fairness in the handling of complaints and appeals that involves all the following elements:

- The right to a fair hearing.
- The right to attend hearings with a support person, if needed.
- The opportunity for all parties involved to be heard.
- The respondent having full knowledge of the nature and content of the complaint.
- The Complainant not determining the outcome, but may be a party to it.



- The right to independent, unbiased decision-making.
- A final decision that is based solely on the relevant evidence.

5. Policy

Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education understands that on occasions, there may be instances of dissatisfaction and acknowledges that the causes must be addressed and rectified promptly. This Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure will be provided to all staff and students as part of staff induction and student orientation programs and will be made publicly available on Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's website TBA and the Student Handbook.

Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education will ensure that:

- It has necessary controls in place to deal with Complaints and Appeals by forming a Complaints and Appeals Committee with authorised members from different areas.
- All prospective students will be provided with information about the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure prior to enrolment.
- The principles of Natural Justice shall apply to student complaints and appeals proceedings.
- Students will be provided with details of external appeal providers they may approach, if required.
- All complaints and appeals will be handled professionally and confidentially. For internal complaints and appeals:
 - the student will have an opportunity to formally present their case, in writing or in person and at no cost to the student.
 - the student may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.
 - after the conclusion of the appeal meeting, the student will be given a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- The student's enrolment will be maintained while an internal complaint or appeal is in progress.
- Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education will encourage the parties to approach a complaint or appeal with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation.
- Where a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through conciliation, the student may contact an appropriate external and independent agent to review the decision implemented by Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education.
- If a student complaint or appeal highlights a systemic issue requiring change, the issue will be reported at Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's management meeting as part of the continuous improvement process.



- Nothing in this policy restricts the student's right to pursue other legal remedies, nor does the availability of dispute resolution processes remove the right of the student to act under Australia's consumer protection laws.
- All complaints are managed fairly, equitably, efficiently and in a timely manner.
- The complainant, or appellant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- The complainant, or appellant and the respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
- The complainant, or appellant and/or the respondent will have the right to have a representative present during any negotiations with Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education or its appointed representatives.
- The complainant, or appellant and/or the respondent will have the right to appeal a decision.
- Discussions relating to complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and full explanation for decisions and actions taken as part of this process will be provided to the complainant and/or respondent in writing.
- Records of complaints and appeals handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained in accordance with Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's Student Records Archiving Policy.
- Academic and non-academic staff will be communicated and trained to ensure that they understand this policy and procedure and its application.

6. Procedure

6.1 Informal Complaint

Students are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned or the Student Support Services Coordinator before it becomes a formal complaint. Student Support Services Coordinator and other Complaints and Appeals Committee members are available to assist students to resolve their issues at this level.

The staff member who is consulted, shall discuss the complaint fully with the complainant and with the complainant's consent, anyone else involved, to see if it can be resolved informally. This may involve referral of the complaint to a third party.

Complaints dealt in this way do not become part of the formal complaint process and will not be documented, recorded, or reported on unless the Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education staff involved determine that the issue in question or complaint is relevant to the wider operation of Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education.



6.2 Formal Complaint

If complaints are not resolved through an informal process, students can access the formal procedure, which will take place in three stages:

6.2.1 Stage 1: Formal Complaint

Formal complaints should be submitted in writing to Student Support Services Coordinator. The Student Support Services Coordinator or a delegate, will consider and investigate the complaint within ten (10) working days from the date submitted by the complainant.

In this process, the Student Support Services Coordinator or a nominated member from the Complaints and Appeals Committee, may seek information and clarification by written or verbal request or by face-to-face interview with the complainant and/or the respondent. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview, the complainant or respondent may ask another person to accompany them.

The Student Support Services Coordinator or a nominated member from the Committee, will then endeavour to resolve the complaint and will provide a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the complaint, including the reasons for the decision. The complainant will be notified of their decision in writing within ten (10) working days.

If a complaint investigation time exceeds the above timeframe, the Student Support Services Coordinator or nominated member from the Committee will notify the complainant in writing, the reason, and the new timeframe.

The complainant will be advised of their right to access an Internal Appeals process (Stage 2) if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint in Stage 1.

6.2.2 Stage 2: Internal Appeals (continuing from formal complaint or outcome from alternate process)

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint in Stage 1, or for an individual who is not satisfied with an outcome of an alternate process, they may lodge an appeal in writing within ten (10) working days of receiving notification of the outcome of their respective matter/formal complaint.

If a complaint investigation time exceeds the above timeframe, the Student Support Services Coordinator or nominated member from the Committee will notify the complainant in writing, the reason, and the new timeframe.

An Internal Appeal Process is initiated when the Student Appeal Form is lodged to Student Services by the respective individual, referred to as the Appellant.

Within ten (10) working days of receiving the Student Appeal Form, the Complaints and Appeals Committee will convene an investigation or Student Appeal Committee to hear the appeal and propose a final resolution. The Appellant's appeal will be deliberated by an independent and impartial officer of Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education, referred to as the Reviewer.



Where the Committee has been convened, if a member of the Committee has been involved in the complaint process, they will not be included in the Appeal Committee to ensure a fair process. The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the complainant and other relevant persons and determine the outcome of the appeal. The complainant, or appellant and /or respondent may ask another person to accompany them at any meetings with the Reviewer.

The Reviewer may:

- b) uphold and confirm the decision.
- c) vary the decision; or
- d) set the decision aside and substitute a new decision.

The Reviewer will advise the Applicant in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including the reasons for the decision, within ten (10) working days.

If the investigation time exceeds the above timeframe, the Student Support Services Coordinator or nominated member from the Committee will notify the appellant in writing, the reason, and the new timeframe.

The Appellant will be advised of their right to have the decision reviewed by an independent external body (Stage 3) if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

6.2.1 Stage 3: External Mediator

If the Appellant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Internal Appeal on Stage 2, they may refer the decision for review by an external dispute resolution process facilitated by the Resolution Institute (RI) or the Ombudsman within twenty (20) days of the decision being made.

For Domestic Students

Domestic students can lodge their appeal for matters other than assessment results with the Resolution Institute. The RI is a community of mediators, arbitrators, adjudicators, restorative justice practitioners and other professionals. Further information on RI can be found on their website at www.resolution.institute

Students may need to cover the cost for lodging appeals with RI for their part. An independent RI mediator will investigate the case, make an assessment, and advise the appellant of the outcome.

The RI mediator will also notify the outcome of the external appeal to the Student Support Services Coordinator of Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education.

Both parties may ask another person to accompany them at any mediation meetings. If the RI makes recommendations in relation to a complaint/appeal they have reviewed, the RI will forward those recommendations to the Student Support Services Coordinator of Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education.

Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education will give due consideration to any recommendation made because of the external review and will ensure that such recommendations are implemented within thirty (30) days.



Resolution Institute contact details:

Level 1-2, 13-15 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: (+61 2) 9251 3366 or Free call: 1800 651 650

Fax: (+61 2) 9251 3733 Email: infoaus@resolution.institute

Website: www.resolution.institute

These procedures do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of individuals to act under Australia's Consumer Protection laws. Also, these procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

For International Students

International students are advised to contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman office.

- The Ombudsman or Dispute Assessment Officer will consider a students' appeal and decide. The students will be provided with a written copy of the outcome.
- Please note that these complaints and appeal procedures do not restrict a student's right to pursue other legal remedies through the Australian legal system.
- Following receipt of the outcome of the external appeal, Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education will immediately implement the decision and convey the outcome to the student.
- If an appeal is against Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's decision to defer, suspend or cancel an international student's enrolment due to misbehaviour, Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education only needs to await the outcome of the internal appeals process before implementing its decision to change the student's enrolment status.

Please note that the availability of Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's Complaints and Appeals process does not remove the student's right to act under Australia's consumer protection laws.

Flowchart of the Student Complaints and Appeal Procedure

1. Informal Complaint Process

You can discuss the issue with your trainer/assessor, RTO Manager or the Student Support Services Coordinator.

2. Formal Complaint Process



If you are not satisfied, you can put your case in writing to the Student Support Services Coordinator. You should use the Student Complaints Form to lodge your formal complaint. This form can be obtained from Student Services at reception or on Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's website TBA.

The Student Support Services Coordinator or nominated member from the Complaints and Appeals Committee will investigate the complaint. A decision will be made within 10 working days, and you will be notified in writing.

If a complaint/appeal investigation time exceeds the above timeframe, the Student Support Services Coordinator or nominated member from the Committee will notify the complainant in writing, the reason, and the new timeframe.

3. Internal Appeal Process

If you are still not satisfied with the decision or complaints resolution, a written appeal can be lodged using the Student Appeal Form available from Student Services at reception or on Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's website www.safeducation.com.au.

Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education will appoint a Student Appeal Committee or investigator to hear the appeal within 10 days of you lodging your appeal in writing.

A meeting will be convened so that you can discuss your concerns with the committee or investigator. You will be advised in writing of the outcome within 10 working days of the meeting.

If a complaint investigation time exceeds the above timeframe, the Student Support Services Coordinator or nominated member from the Committee will notify the complainant in writing, the reason, and the new timeframe.

4. External Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal, a written appeal can lodge with an independent external agency for mediation within 20 working days of receiving the outcome of the internal appeal.

Domestic Students can lodge External Appeals with the Resolution Institute (RI)

www.resolution.institute

International Students can make an external appeal with the Ombudsman. You can find out more about how the Ombudsman can help by visiting www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-studentombudsman-landing-page.

If you need help with the appeal, you may contact the Student Counsellor or Student Services at reception.

7. Record Keeping



Records of complaints and appeals handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained in accordance with Study of Australian Technologies and Healthcare Education's Student Records Archiving Policy.

8. Associated Documents

- Complaints and Appeals Form
- Complaints and Appeals Acknowledgment Forms
- Complaints and Appeals Register
- Continuous Improvement Register

9. Revision History

Version No. / Date	Description	Approved By
V1.0 / 2024	First issue	RTO Manager