

STUDENT COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

Policy and Procedure

Version 2.3

VERSION CONTROL & DOCUMENT HISTORY		
Date	Summary of Modifications	Version
Jul 2009	Created	V1.0
Jun 2011	Amendments	V1.1
Jul 2011	Amendments	V1.2
Aug 2011	Revised Version Control and Document History	V1.3
Jan 2012	Reformatted document in Arial font	V1.4
Aug 2012	Insert flow chart with Overseas students Ombudsman details	V1.5
May 2013	Replace Academic Director with Managing Director	V1.6
Nov 2013	Replace Anne Duncan with generic email at DES	V1.7
Jun 2015	Change new complaint lodgement form Version 1.8	V1.8
Jul 2016	Amended version control and document history	V1.9
Oct 2016	Separate Complaint/ Grievance and Appeal procedure	V2.0
Aug 2018	Update to align with National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 and add the procedure if more than 60 days	V2.1
Jul 2019	Add procedure on complaint about staff members	V2.2
Jan 2022	Re-formatting to the new system and separation of staff and student policies	V2.3
Next Review: February 2023		
Staff Responsible: Client Services Manager		

RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form](#)

[National Code 2018](#)

Purpose of this Policy

This policy addresses [Standard 10 of the National Code 2018 'Complaints and Appeals'](#), which outlines that Registered Training Organisations are required to:

- Have and implement an internal complaints and appeals policy and procedure;
- Advise students of their right to access an external complaints and appeals process if the student is dissatisfied with the internal complaints and appeals process, within 10 working days and;
- Implement any decision or recommendation of the complaints and appeals process in favour of the student immediately.

APSI's internal complaints, grievances and appeals process is impartial, inexpensive and easily and immediately accessible to all students. Any student who is dissatisfied with either the services or policies and procedures of APSI is encouraged to make use of this process and APSI, in response, endeavours to reach a resolution in a reasonable timeframe. Please note, all complaints, grievances and appeals are treated by APSI with strict confidentiality at all times.

Complaints or Grievances

APSI classifies complaints or grievances as either 'academic' or 'administrative'. The complaints, grievances and appeals process is the same regardless of the classification with the exception of the staff that handle each classification. All academic-related complaints or grievances are handled by the Course Coordinator whilst, all administrative-related complaints or grievances are handled by either the Student Services Manager or Client Services Manager. Each classification of complaint or grievance is further classified into either 'informal' or 'formal'.

Informal Internal Complaints

In the first instance, APSI encourages students to attempt to resolve their complaint or grievance informally with the other parties involved and, are recommended to have a support person of their choice with them during this process. The informal complaints or grievances process may include but not be limited to advice, discussions or mediation and, are designed to promote efficient resolutions. It is expected during the informal complaints or grievances process that all parties involved will participate with honesty, integrity and respect for each party's perspective and with the intention of reaching a resolution.

Assessment Complaints

In the first instance, any students who would like to appeal an assessment grade are required to discuss their complaint or grievance with their Trainer. The Trainer, at their discretion, may then choose to re-assess the student if appropriate and regardless will send an email informing the student of the decision to either re-assess or not re-assess and the reasoning behind the decision.

If the student is not satisfied with the informal complaints or grievances process then they are encouraged to lodge a formal complaint with the Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form in Related Documents.

Formal Internal Complaints

Any student who would like to lodge a formal complaint must submit their Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form to the Student Services Manager who will log the lodgement into the Complaints Register and send an email to the student confirming the receipt of their Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form, within 48 hours.

The Student Services Manager will then notify and refer to the relevant APSI staff, such as the Course Coordinator or Client Services Manager, with any relevant documentation. Alternatively, the Student Services Manager may choose to make a decision without referring the lodgement to another APSI staff member, if appropriate. As part of the formal complaints process, the student and all involved parties may be requested to attending a mediation meeting, if required and are encouraged to bring a support person of their choice.

APSI endeavours to reach a decision on all formal complaints within 10 working days and maintain communication with student on the progress of their lodgement throughout this time. Please note, all communication regarding the complaint or grievance, including the lodgement of the complaint itself, will be recorded in the student's file. If a decision is unable to be reached within 10 working days, the Student Services Manager will email the student to inform them on the progress of their lodgement at that time. If APSI will be unable to reach a decision within 60 calendar days, the student will be informed by email with the reasons as to why more than 60 calendar days will be required to reach a decision on their complaint or grievance. Once a decision has been reached the Student Services Manager will send an email to all involved parties informing them of the decision and reasoning behind the decision. If the decision is in favour of the student, APSI will implement the decision immediately. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision, APSI will inform them of their right to lodge an appeal.

Appeals

Internal Appeals

All students who are dissatisfied with the decision of a formal complaint have the right to appeal the decision. Students may seek to appeal a decision related to but not limited to:

- Assessments or;
- Intention to report to the Department of Home Affairs for breaches in academic performance, course progression or attendance or;
- Deferral, suspension or cancellation of an enrolment as a result of a breach of the Student Code of Conduct, academic performance, course progression or attendance.

Students must submit the Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form, in Related Documents, with the grounds of their appeal to the Student Services Manager who will log the appeal into the Complaints Register and send an email to the student confirming the receipt of their Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form, within 48 hours. The Student Services Manager will then notify and refer to the Client Services Manager, with any relevant documentation. As part of the appeal process, the Client Services Manager will request the student and all involved parties to attend a mediation meeting and all students are encouraged to bring a support person of their choice.

As with all complaints and grievances, APSI endeavours to reach a decision on all appeals within 10 working days and maintain communication with student on the progress of their appeal throughout this time. Please note, all communication regarding the appeal, including the lodgement of the appeal itself, will also be recorded in the student's file. If a decision is unable to be reached within 10 working days, the Student Services Manager will email the student to inform them on the progress of their appeal at that time. If APSI will be unable to reach a decision within 60 calendar days, the student will be informed by email with the reasons as to why more than 60 calendar days will be required to reach a decision on their appeal.

Intention of APSI to Report to the Department of Home Affairs

If a student is dissatisfied with APSI's decision to notify the Department of Home Affairs for a breach or breaches in academic performance, course progression or attendance they must contact and arrange a meeting with the Client Services Manager within 20 working days of being notified. During this meeting, the student must provide all documentation pertaining to their grounds for appeal and any extenuating, compassionate or compelling circumstances that led to the breach or breaches. Please note, if a student submits an appeal APSI will not report the breach or breaches to the Department of Home Affairs until the completion of the appeal process.

Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment

If a student is dissatisfied with APSI's decision to defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment due to a breach or breaches of the Student Code of Conduct, academic performance, course progression or attendance they must provide all documentation of any extenuating, compassionate or compelling circumstances that led to the breach or breaches upon the submission of the Complaints and Appeals Lodgement Form, in Related

Documents. Please note, if a student submits an appeal APSI will not report the breach or breaches to the relevant authorities until the completion of the appeal process. Furthermore, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the completion of the appeal process, if the decision to defer, suspend or cancel the student's enrolment is maintained.

External Appeals

If a student is dissatisfied with the internal appeal process, APSI will inform them of their right to lodge an external appeal. If the decision of an external appeal body is in favour of the student APSI will implement the decision immediately.

Domestic Students

Domestic Students can lodge an appeal with either the [Equal Opportunity Commission WA](#), the [Consumer Protection Council](#) or the [Administrative Appeals Tribunal](#).

International Students

International students can lodge an appeal with the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). Please note, if the external appeal is in relation to APSI's intention to notify the Department of Home Affairs for a breach or breaches in academic performance, course progression or attendance, APSI must not report to the Department of Home Affairs until the completion of the external appeal process, if the decision to report is maintained by the external appeal body. If the external appeal is in relation to APSI's decision to defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment due to a breach or breaches of the Student Code of Conduct, academic performance, course progression or attendance, APSI must maintain the student's enrolment until the completion of the external appeal process, if the decision to defer, suspend or cancel the student's enrolment is maintained by the external appeal body. These requirements of APSI are in accordance with the National Code 2018 in Related Documents.

All students have the right to seek independent legal advice at their own expense if they are dissatisfied with the decision reached by the external appeal body.

Implementation

Any decisions reached in any of the appeal processes within this policy that favour the student will not only be implemented immediately but will also be incorporated into the continuous improvement of the services and policies and procedures of APSI.

Both the Client Services Manager and Course Coordinator, as appropriate, are in charge of identifying the causes of complaints and appeals and implementing appropriate improvements to either eliminate or at least mitigate the likelihood of such a complaint or appeal reoccurring.

Record Keeping

The Student Services Manager is in charge of maintaining all records pertaining to all complaints, grievances and appeals including their lodgement, communication throughout all complaints and appeals processes and the decisions reached in both the Complaints Register and student's file.