



Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Purpose:

This policy and procedure outlines the processes undertaken by Sydney College for receiving and responding to complaints or appeals. It also addresses the requirements of Standard 6 of the *Standards for RTOs 2015* and Standard 10 of *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*.

Scope

This policy and procedure apply to students, employees, third parties acting on behalf of the college and members of the public who engage with the college.

Definitions:

Complaint: a statement from a person (the complainant) that a product or service or action is unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Examples of complaints include, but are not limited to:

- student services support received by students
- training and assessment delivered by trainers/ assessors
- assessment outcomes
- services provided by education agents acting on behalf of the college

Appeal: A request by a person (the appellant) to reverse a decision made about that person. Examples of when a person could submit an appeal include, but are not limited to:

- a complaint not being substantiated
- a decision to cancel a student's enrolment because of not meeting attendance, course progress or course fees payment requirements
- assessment decisions made by a trainer/ assessor

Policy:

- Sydney College will ensure that its complaints and appeals processes ensure that the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process
- Sydney College's complaints and appeals processes are publicly available on the college's website and detailed in the Student Handbook provide to all enrolled students
- Complaints and appeals will be acknowledged in writing via email within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint or appeal
- Where possible, the outcome of a complaint and appeal will be resolved in the earliest possible time frame. Sydney College will endeavor to finalise a complaint within 21 days from the date of receipt of the complaint or appeal
- the complainant or appellant will have the opportunity to meet with Sydney College representative(s) and present their case. The complainant or appellant may bring a support person to this meeting.
- Sydney College may ask the complainant or appellant to supply additional documentation to support their complaint or appeal
- The outcome of any complaint or appeal will be communicated to the complainant or appellant in writing within 10 working days of decision. All complaints and appeals will, where practicable, be finalised within 60 days from receipt
- If a complaint or appeal cannot be finalised within 60 days, the complainant or appellant will receive regularly updates on the progress of the complaint or appeal



- Sydney College will provide the option for review by an appropriate independent party at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal, if the process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal
- Sydney College will securely maintain records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes
- If a complaint or appeal is substantiated in part or in full, Sydney College will identify the potential cause of the complaint or appeal and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

Procedure – Complaints:

Informal Complaint Resolution

- In the first instance, an informal attempt is made to resolve a complaint
- The complainant is encouraged to raise their concerns directly with the relevant party to resolve the complaint, for example, Student Services, a trainer, Academic Manager or PEO.
- A written record is recorded of such informal complaints
- Relevant personnel are informed of the informal complaint and corrective action is taken, where appropriate, to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence

Formal complaints:

- Formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the Student Complaint Form available from the college's website.
- The Student Complaint Form requests that the complainant submit supporting documentation to support their complaint.
- The Student Complaint Form and supporting documentation may be submitted to the college by hand or by email to studentservice@sydneycollege.nsw.edu.au
- The Student Services Department sends the complaint documentation to the Academic Manager via email immediately on receipt from the complainant
- The Academic Manager will acknowledge receipt on the complaint within two working days of receipt of the complaint from Student Services
- The Academic Manager will also advise the complainant that the college will endeavour to finalise the complaint with 21 working days from receipt of the complaint from the complainant and that additional support documentation may be requested from the complainant while the complaint is being investigated
- The Academic Manager will commence assessment of the complaint within 10 working days of it being made
- The assessment of the complaint will be conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner
- The Academic Manager will investigate the complaint. Investigation of the complaint may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - review of supporting documentation submitted by the complainant
 - interviews with other parties that may be the subject of the complaint
 - review of documentation relating to the complaint, for example, completed assessments, student records, written communications
 - interview with the complainant; the complainant will be contacted to arrange a suitable meeting time and advised that they may bring a support person to this meeting
- The Academic Manager will document all matters discussed at meetings with the complainant or any other parties involved during the investigation of the complaint
- Once finalised, the Academic Manager will ensure the complainant is given a written statement of the outcome of the complaint, including detailed reasons for the outcome
- The Academic Manager will advise the complainant of the complaint outcome within 10 working days of concluding the complaint review



- When advising the complainant of the outcome of the complaint, the Academic Manager will also advise the complainant of their right to access an external complaints handling process at minimal or no cost to the student.
- The Academic Manager will also be given the complainant the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling body.
- For the purposes of this policy and procedure, the external complaints handling body is the Commonwealth Ombudsman
- Information about submitting a complaint to the Commonwealth Ombudsman may be viewed at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>
- The complainant will also be advised that, if they wish to appeal the complaint outcome, they must do so within 20 working days of receipt of being notified in writing of the complaint outcome
- If the internal or any external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the complainant, Sydney College will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the overseas student of that action

Procedure – Appeals:

- Appeals must be submitted in writing using the Student Appeals Form available from the college's website.
- The Student Appeals Form requests that the complainant submit supporting documentation to support their complaint.
- The Student Appeals Form and supporting documentation may be submitted to the college by hand or by email to studentservice@sydneycollege.nsw.edu.au
- The Student Services Department sends the appeal documentation to the Academic Manager via email immediately on receipt from the complainant
- The Academic Manager will acknowledge receipt on the appeal within two working days of receipt of the appeal from Student Services
- The Academic Manager will also advise the appellant that the college will attempt to finalise the appeal within 21 working days from receipt of the appeal from the appellant and that additional support documentation may be requested from the appellant while the appeal is being investigated
- The Academic Manager will commence assessment of the appeal within 10 working days of it being submitted to the college
- The assessment of the appeal will be conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner
- The Academic Manager will investigate the appeal. Investigation of the appeal may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - review of supporting documentation submitted by the appellant
 - interviews with other parties that may be the subject of the appeal
 - review of documentation relating to the appeal
 - interview with the appellant; the appellant will be contacted to arrange a suitable meeting time and advised that they may bring a support person to this meeting
- The Academic Manager will document all matters discussed at meetings with the appellant or any other parties involved during the review of the appeal
- Once finalised, the Academic Manager will ensure the appellant is given a written statement of the outcome of the appeal, including detailed reasons for the outcome
- The Academic Manager will advise the appellant of the appeal outcome within 10 working days of concluding a review of the appeal



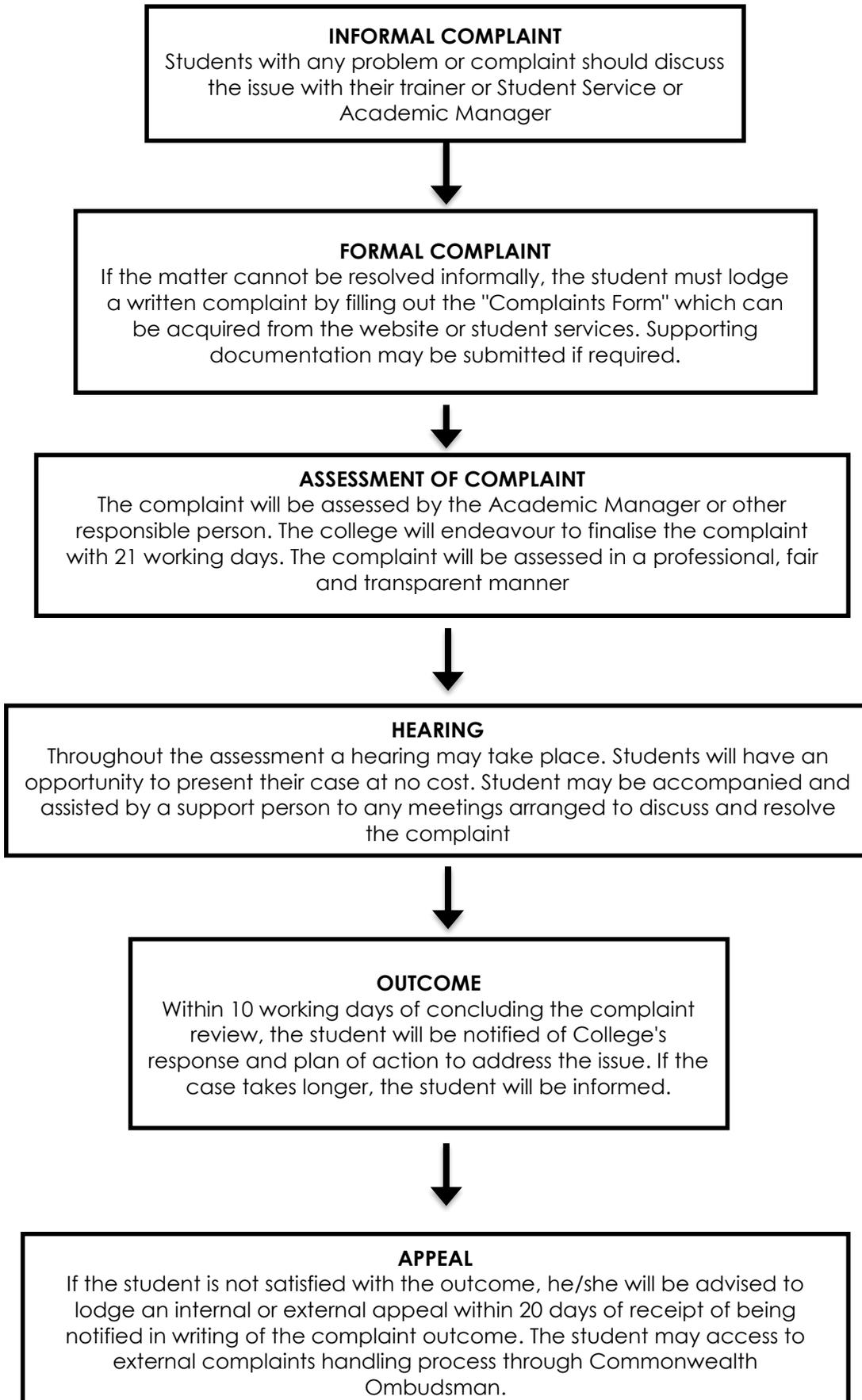
- When advising the appellant of the outcome of the appeal, the Academic Manager will also advise the complainant of their right to access an external appeal handling process at minimal or no cost to the student.
- The Academic Manager will also be given the appellant the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling body.
- For the purposes of this policy and procedure, the external appeals handling body is the Commonwealth Ombudsman
- Information about submitting an appeal to the Commonwealth Ombudsman may be viewed at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>
- If the internal or any external appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the appellant, Sydney College will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the appellant of that action.

Supporting documentation

- Student Complaint Form
- Student Appeal Form



Complaints Procedure Chart





Appeals Procedure Chart

