

## Complaints and Appeals Policy

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### 1. Nature of complaints and appeals

- AIP responds to all allegations involving the conduct of:
  - The RTO, its trainers and assessors and other staff.
  - Any student or client of AIP
- Complaints may be made in relation to any of AIP services and activities such as:
  - the application and enrolment process
  - marketing information
  - the quality of training and assessment provided
  - training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements
  - the way someone has been treated
  - the actions of another student
- An appeal is a request for a decision made by AIP to be reviewed. Decisions may have been about:
  - course admissions
  - refund assessments
  - response to a complaint
  - assessment outcomes / results
  - other general decisions made by AIP

### 2. Principles of resolution

- AIP is committed to developing a procedurally fair complaints and appeals process that is carried out free from bias, following the principles of natural justice. Through this policy and procedure, AIP ensures that complaints and appeals:
  - Are responded to in a professional, consistent and transparent manner.
  - Are responded to promptly, fairly, objectively, with sensitivity and confidentiality.
  - Are able to be made at no cost to the individual.
  - Are used as an opportunity to identify potential causes of the complaint or appeal and take actions to prevent the issues from recurring as well as identifying any areas for improvement.
- AIP will inform all persons or parties involved in any allegations made as well as providing them with an opportunity to present their side of the matter.
- There are no charges for students to submit, a complaint or appeal to AIP, or to seek information or advice about doing so.
- Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of an individual to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws and it does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

### 3. Making a complaint of appeal

- Complaints about a particular incident should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurring and appeals must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the original decision being made.
- Complaints and appeals should be made in writing using the *Complaints and Appeals Form*, or other written format and sent to AIP head office attention to the Chief Executive Officer.  
When making a complaint or appeal, provide as much information as possible to enable AIP to investigate and determine an appropriate solution. This should include:
  - The issue you are complaining about or the decision you are appealing – describe what happened and how it affected you.
  - Any evidence you have to support your complaint or appeal.

- Details about the steps you have already taken to resolve the issue.
- Suggestions about how the matter might be resolved.

**4. Timeframes for resolution**

- The complaint or appeal will be acknowledged in writing within 3 business days.
- The complaints and appeals process will commence within 10 business days of receipt of the application. Complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable or at least within 60 calendar days unless there is a significant reason for the matter to take longer.
- Where the RTO considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the RTO:
  - a. informs the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required
  - b. regularly updates the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

**5. Resolution of complaints and appeals**

- Some or all members of the management team of AIP will be involved in resolving complaints and appeals as outlined in the procedures.
- Where a complaint or appeal involves another individual or organisation, they will be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations made.
- Each party involved in the complaint or appeal may have a support person of their choice present at meetings scheduled to resolve the issue.
- In the case of an assessment appeal, an assessor who is independent from the original decision will assess the original task again. The outcome of this assessment will be the result granted for the assessment task. The complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of the process and the reasons for the findings made.
- The enrolment status of student will be handled as follows: students that choose to access this policy and procedure, AIP will maintain the student’s enrolment while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.

**6. Independent Parties**

- AIP acknowledges the need for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant or appellant and the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter. Costs associated with independent parties to review a matter must be covered by the complainant/appellant unless the decision to include an independent party was made by AIP
- AIP will provide complete cooperation with the external mediator investigating the complaint/appeal and will be bound by the recommendations arising out of this process.
- The CEO will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within twenty (20) days of being notified of the recommendations. The complainant or appellant will also be formally notified in writing of the outcome of the mediation, and any recommendations being actioned by AIP

**7. External complaint avenues**

- Complaints can also be made via the following avenues:
  - National Training Complaints Hotline:  
 The National Training Complaints Hotline is a national service for consumers to register complaints concerning vocational education and training. The service refers consumers to the appropriate agency/authority/jurisdiction to assist with their complaint. Consumers can register a complaint with the National Training Complaints Hotline by:
    - **Phone:** 13 38 73, Monday–Friday, 8am to 6pm nationally.
    - **Email:** [ntch@education.gov.au](mailto:ntch@education.gov.au)
  - Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA):

**Head Office**

📍 Level 1, 333 Queen Street,  
Melbourne, VIC 3000, Australia

☎ +61 3 9749 7727

🌐 info@aiop.edu.au

www.aiop.edu.au

**RTO: 32521 | CRICOS: 03934G**

Complainants may also complain to AIP registering body, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

ASQA can investigate complaints about AIP in relation to:

- the quality of our training and assessment
- our marketing and advertising practices

For students:

- ASQA may not be able to investigate complaint if you do not include evidence that you have already exhausted our formal internal complaints process as above.
- If your complaint does not fall within ASQA's jurisdiction, it may be resolved more quickly if you directly contact the agency responsible as listed on the relevant webpage.

**8. Records of complaints and appeals**

AIP will maintain a record of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes and reasons for the outcomes on the *Complaints and Appeals Register*, which will be securely stored according to the Privacy Policy and Procedures.

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**Sample Complaint Register**

Date of complaint or appeal	Complainant's name	Complainant relationship with RTO	Description of complaint	Staff member managing complaint	Outcome and Date complaint resolved



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