



## **Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure**

## Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure

### Purpose and Scope

This policy provides details processes as to how Infinity Institute Australia (“IIA”) deals with complaints, grievances and appeals made by prospective and current students. It outlines the resolution of complaints or appeals in compliance with the relevant legislative requirements and without reprisal to the complainant or appellant.

This document sets out the processes and procedures for prospective and current students to lodge a complaint and the steps that will be taken by IIA to deal with the complaint and achieve the best possible outcome for the student.

IIA is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential academic and non-academic complaint handling procedure for all students.

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

Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the Student. Non-academic complaints tend to arise from events occurring at a provider’s premises or from non-academic decisions made by a provider.

Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure applies to all students of IIA, current and prospective, and other affiliations as well as the staff who will deal with complaints and appeals.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following applies:

*Appeal* means the escalation and review of an outcome of a Formal Complaint where a Complainant is not satisfied with the result.

*Complainant* means a student who raises a Complaint and seeks a resolution to that Complaint.

*Complaint* means a problem, concern or feeling of dissatisfaction that a student has with an act, omission, oversight or decision made by another student or any IIA staff or contractor (Respondent) where the student seeks a resolution. A Complaint could be of an academic or personal nature.

*Formal Complaint* means a Complaint made in writing which cannot be resolved through the Informal Complaint mechanism.

*Informal Complaint* mean a complaint that is dealt with directly between the complainant and any other person involved, with the intention of a resolution prior to a Formal Complaint being raised.

*Respondent* means the person or people that a Complaint is made against.

## Policy

IIA is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential academic and non- academic Complaint handling procedure for all students.

All Complaints are taken seriously and will be investigated fully and thoroughly. At the compulsion of such investigation, any and all appropriate action will be taken. Complainants should feel completely comfortable in lodging complaints without fear of any reprisal or untoward consequences of doing so.

The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness underpins how IIA deals with Complaints and Appeals. These principles are adopted at every stage in the process. Complaints will be investigated in an honest and ethical manner to ensure that the outcome is fair and just.

This Policy sets out the framework for the complaints handling system which includes:

- Providing an impartial and fair mechanism for students to make a Complaint
- Providing students accurate information on how to make a Complaint
- Setting timeframes for Complaint resolution
- Providing or allowing support for the student
- Allowing the student to access independent professional advice at their own cost
- Informing students of their options if they are not satisfied with the outcome
- Providing an Informal Complaint and Formal Complaint process for dealing with their concerns
- The student is informed if costs may be incurred for Appeals, and these costs are reasonable

IIA maintains a Complaints and Appeals Register. This Register will include details of all Formal Complaints lodged, details of outcomes and any other relevant information. All Complaints will be dealt with in a manner which ensures privacy, and where necessary confidentiality, of the parties involved.

## Responsibility

The CEO along with the VET Manager is responsible for implementation of this Policy and Procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation and students and complainants are made aware of its availability.

## Procedure

### Informal Complaint

IIA may receive complaints from students, employers, staff and other stakeholders through a variety of means, for example: verbally (by phone or in person), written documentation or electronically (email).

Where possible all non-formal attempts shall be made to resolve the issue within the shortest timeframe. This may include advice, discussions, and general negotiation in relation to the issue.

For training and assessment-related issues, IIA recommends students to speak to their

Trainer/ Assessor in the first instance to resolve any concerns. If a satisfactory outcome cannot be reached, the student can then approach the VET Manager.

If no resolution can be reached, the student/complainant has the option to lodge a formal complaint.

## Formal Complaint

The following procedure is to be applied to a formal complaint:

- The Complaint and Appeals form must be fully completed
- The complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure
- The complainant and the respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire
- The process will be free of discrimination or victimisation
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this Procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or the Respondent if requested
- Records of all Complaints will be kept for least five (5) years from the time Complainant ceases to be a student. These records will be kept strictly confidential

### Stage One (Internal)

Formal Complaints must be submitted in writing to the VET Manager via the following methods by

By electronic copy via email: [admin@ii.edu.au](mailto:admin@ii.edu.au)

By hardcopy posted or delivered to: 22 Somerton Road Somerton VIC 3062

A copy should also be sent to the responsible trainer who taught the course.

VET Manager will assess the Complaint and determine the outcome. The Complainant will be advised of the decision in writing within 5 business days of the decision being made. The Complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this Procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

If the Stage One decision requires an action to be performed, it should be implemented within ten (10) business days of Complainant being informed of the decision. If this is not possible, the reasons for a longer period must be given to the affected parties.

### Stage Two

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One, the complaint and the initial outcome determined by the VET Manager will be referred to the CEO of IIA for Stage 2 -Appeal. In this instance, the student will be requested to lodge an Appeal in writing with the CEO of IIA. Complainants must lodge an Appeal in writing within twenty (20) business days of receiving the written decision for Stage One.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer via the following methods:

By electronic copy via email: [mosfeka.jomaraty@ii.edu.au](mailto:mosfeka.jomaraty@ii.edu.au)

By hardcopy posted or delivered to: 22 Somerton Road Somerton VIC 3062

The CEO will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons (VET Manager/trainer/ assessor and/or other staff involved) and once in receipt of their recommendation will decide the outcome of the Appeal. The Complainant will then be advised in writing of the outcome of their Appeal, including the reasons for the decision, within five (5) business days of the decision being made.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the Complaints and Appeals Procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

If the Stage Two decision requires an action to be performed, it should be implemented within ten (10) business days of the Complainant being informed of the decision. If this is not possible, the reasons for a longer period must be given to the affected parties.

### **Stage Three (External)**

If the Learner or Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they must advise in writing that they are not satisfied with outcome of Stage Two and that they are escalating the matter to the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or the VET Student Loans Ombudsman.

To lodge a complaint with ASQA, please see the following link:

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/students/complaints>

### **VET Student Loans**

For VET Student Loans students who are dissatisfied with IIA's response having been through the internal two-stage complaints process, students can refer to the VET Student Loans Ombudsman (contact details below). There are no charges from IIA to a VET Student Loans complainant or appellant for Stage Three.

The VET Student Loans Ombudsman will act as the external dispute resolution body to conduct investigations and make recommendations in relation to VET loan assistance (i.e., VET Student Loans and VET FEE HELP).

#### **Contact details**

VET Student Loans Ombudsman (Commonwealth Ombudsman VET Student Loans)

Tel: 1300 362 072

Web: <https://vet.ombudsman.gov.au/>