

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 This policy is based on Quality Training & Hospitality College (QTHC) providing appropriate mechanisms and services for students to have complaints and appeals addressed efficiently, effectively and in a confidential manner. A copy of this Policy and Procedure is also available on the QTHC website <http://qthc.edu.au>.

2. SCOPE:

2.1 This policy applies to all QTHC staff members involved in the appeals process and all students who make an appeal or wish to lodge a complaint against QTHC.

2.2 QTHC is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential complaints and appeals handling procedure for all students.

2.3 This policy is made available to students at pre-enrolment and enrolment.

2.4 This policy relates to both Academic Matters and Non-Academic Matters;

Academic Matters relate to student academic progress, assessment, curriculum, the quality of course delivery, academic achievement in a course and awards in a course. Examples include results of review of remark against assessment results, exclusion from study, results of credit transfer or RPL applications, findings of allegations of cheating; quality of course delivery.

Non-Academic Matters include sexual harassment, racial or sexual discrimination, unfair treatment, physical or verbal abuse, behavioural issues, breach of personal information, concerns about campus facilities, environment, health and safety or equipment.

2.5 This Policy and Procedure shall apply over all QTHC operational sites, where QTHC is registered to deliver training and assessment as a Registered Training Organisation for both accredited and non-accredited training programs. This Policy and Procedure shall apply to all employees, students and those seeking to enrol with QTHC.

3. POLICY:

3.1 QTHC is committed to the continuous improvement of its services for staff and students and aims to provide adequate and easily activated procedures to deal with complaints. QTHC will treat complaints seriously and ensure that all processes are clear, confidential and fair to all parties.

3.2 During the complaints and appeals process, QTHC will maintain the student's enrolment.

3.3 If a student lodges a formal complaint or appeal, the process for resolving the matter will commence within ten (10) business days.

3.4 Students are entitled to access the complaints and appeals procedures set out in this policy. The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against at any stage of the process. When making a complaint, students have a right to:

- i. be present or make written presentation to any committee convened to hear the complaint;
- ii. be accompanied and assisted by a third party (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person) at any or each stage of the process;
- iii. receive and respond to any documentation, as appropriate, that is submitted in connection with a complaint;
- iv. have a complaint treated confidentially with details only disclosed to staff involved in the complaint resolution process.
- v. details will only be disclosed to third parties when QTHC has reasonable grounds to believe that failure to disclose the information will cause a threat to the life or health of any person, or the use is authorised by law;
- vi. at all stages of the process, reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures must be given if requested by the complainant and/or respondent;
- vii. have records of complaints and appeals and their outcomes be kept strictly confidential. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records.

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3.5 Possible outcomes for making a complaint

- i. A written undertaking or apology
- ii. Written agreements in regard to future behaviours or actions;
- iii. Remedial action;
- iv. The issuing of new or updated internal procedures or guidelines;
- v. Conciliation/mediation between two parties under the guidance of a mutually accepted impartial third party;
- vi. Independent external mediation.

3.6 The person who is the subject of concern must know all the allegations in relation to their behaviour.

- i. they must have a full opportunity to put their case forward;
- ii. all parties to the complaint have the right to be heard;
- iii. all relevant submissions and evidence must be considered;
- iv. matters which are not relevant will not be considered;
- v. a decision must be based on evidence;
- vi. the right to impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process;
- vii. the right to an absence of bias in the decision maker.

3.7 QTHC will provide the student with a written statement on the outcome including details of the outcome.

3.8 If the student is not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal complaint handling and appeals process, the student may initiate an external appeal. External appeals must be initiated within Ten (10) business days of the conclusion of the internal appeal and the student must notify QTHC's Managing Director that they are initiating an external appeal.

3.9 If the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, QTHC will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Stage One (Verbal)

In the first instance, complaints should be discussed with the person/people involved. If this is impractical, complainants should communicate with one of the staff listed below. The verbal complaint or appeal will be dealt with free of charge and within a reasonable timeframe, normally within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint.

Students should email admin@qthc.edu.au and address their communication to one of the following staff members:

- i. Managing Director
- ii. Operations Director
- iii. Vocational Education Manager
- iv. Compliance Officer

Students have three (3) options for proceeding:

- i. Take no further action;
- ii. Make comments or suggestions
- iii. Make a written complaint or appeal in accordance with Stage two.

4.2 Stage 2 (Written)

If unsatisfied with the response to the complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter is Stage One, the complainant may complete QTHC Complaints and Appeals Forms, available online at www.qthc.edu.au or from head office and forward to the Operations Manager, who will discuss the complaint with the relevant QTHC staff member.

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The written complaint or appeal will be dealt with free of charge and within a reasonable timeframe, normally within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint.

Once a decision has been reached, the student will be notified of this decision in writing.

Staff handling the complaint will ensure they:

- i. Listen and understand the nature of the complaint;
- ii. Explore all the options and possible implications for resolving the issue with the complainant;
- iii. Avoid any behaviour that might reasonably be interpreted as interrogative or judgemental;
- iv. Endeavour to find a resolution.

Students then have three (3) options for proceeding:

- i. Take no further action;
- ii. Make comments or suggestions;
- iii. Activate the external appeals process in accordance with Stage three.

4.3 Stage 3 (External)

If unsatisfied with the response to the written complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter, the complainant may request that the matter be dealt with through an external dispute resolution process. This external appeal must commence within 10 business days of the conclusion of the internal appeals process.

The complainant may appoint an external agency of their choice or access one of the options as listed below. The complainant will be responsible for any associated costs for the external agencies' services.

Details for external bodies and contacts are:

Commonwealth Ombudsman – International Students

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman investigates complaints that international students have with private education providers. A private education provider can be a school, college or university in Australia. This service is free.

Hours: 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday

Phone: 1300 362 072

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>

Online Complaint Form: <https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=oco-complaint-form>

The National Training Complaints Hotline – International and Domestic Students

The National Training Complaints Hotline is a joint initiative between the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments.

Anyone with a complaint or query about the training sector has one number to call, so they can report a complaint, and have it referred to the right authority for consideration.

Hours: Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm Nationally

Phone: 13 38 73 (Select option 4)

Email: Information on how to submit an email complaint to the National Training Complaints Hotline are detailed on the following webpage <https://www.education.gov.au/email-complaints>

Website: <https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH>

Resolution Institute – External Student Mediation Scheme - International and Domestic Students

QTHC holds an annual membership with the Resolution Institute (external mediation service). This service allows QTHC or our students to refer to the Resolution Institute as the external review body if the QTHC internal grievance system has been exhausted.

If a QTHC student utilises this mediation service, there may be an associated fee which is the responsibility of the student. Likewise, if QTHC utilises this mediation service the associated fee would be the responsibility of QTHC.

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Further information about the Student Mediation Scheme, along with the information kit, table of fees and application forms can be downloaded from the Resolution Institute website.

<https://www.resolution.institute/resolving-disputes/tertiary-student-au>

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) – International and Domestic Students

asqaconnect is a dedicated portal for the ASQA stakeholder community. asqaconnect provides information to people experiencing issues with a provider and their training. The portal also allows users to make a complaint about a provider, based on the type of problem they are facing.

ASQA Info Line: 1300 701 801

Website: <https://asqaconnect.asqa.gov.au/>

VET Student Loans Ombudsman (VLSO) – Domestic Students

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman investigates complaints about problems that VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans students have with their provider in Australia. This service is free, independent and impartial.

Hours: 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday

Phone 1300 362 072

Website: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/vslo>

Online Complaint Form: <https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=oco-complaint-form>

Face to Face: by appointment only – call 1300 362 072 to book

Adelaide Office

Level 11
25 Grenfell St
Adelaide SA 5000

Sydney Office

Suite 2, level 16
580 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Services available to assist:

If you are a non-English speaking person, help is available through the Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS) on 131 450.

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact the National Relay Service <https://relayservice.gov.au> for assistance with your complaint.

- TTY users' phone 133 677 then ask for 1300 362 072
- Speak and Listen users' phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 362 072
- Internet Relay users connect to the National Relay Service <https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au> then ask for 1300 362 072

Office of Fair Trading – NSW

<http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>

Consumer and Business Services SA

<http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au>

4.4 Remedial Action

If the outcome of a student's appeal through the internal or external complaints and appeals handling process is favourable to the student, QTHC will immediately advise the student of this and implement a decision and/or corrective and preventative action required.

4.5 Records

QTHC will file records of all informal and formal discussions regarding complaints, concerns and appeals and will record such evidence on the student file. If required, a corrective Action will be raised and actioned, then filed in the QTHC corrective action folder and detailed in the Corrective Action Register for future reference.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY – FLOW CHART

