

1. PURPOSE:

This policy is based on Quality Training & Hospitality College Pty Ltd, trading as Quality College Australia (QCA) 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 QCA website <http://qca.edu.au>.

2. SCOPE:

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

2.1 QCA is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential complaints and appeals handling procedure for all students (Domestic and Overseas).

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

2.3 This policy relates to both Academic Matters and Non-Academic Matters.

Academic Matters relate to a student's academic progress, assessment, curriculum, the quality of course delivery, academic achievement in a course and awards in a course. Examples include results of review or 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.

2.4 This Policy and Procedure shall apply over all QCA operational sites, where QCA 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 QCA.

3. POLICY:

QCA 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. QCA will treat complaints seriously and ensure that all processes are clear, confidential and fair to all parties.

3.1 During the complaints and appeals process, QCA will maintain the student's enrolment.

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

3.3 Students are entitled to access the complaints and appeals procedures set out in this policy and 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 QCA staff involved in the complaint resolution process
 - v. Details will only be disclosed to third parties when QCA 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 / student 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
- 3.4 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
- 3.5 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
- 3.6 QCA will provide the student with a written statement on the outcome including details of the outcome.
- 3.7 If the complainant / student is not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal complaint handling process, they may initiate an internal appeal. Internal appeals must be initiated within Ten (10) business days of the response provided in relation to their complaint.
- 3.8 If the complainant / student is then not satisfied with the result of the internal appeal, they can initiate an external appeal process. External appeals must be initiated within ten (10) business days of the conclusion of the internal appeal and the complainant / student must notify QCA's Managing Director that they are initiating an external appeal.
- 3.9 The complainant / student will be responsible for any associated costs for the external agencies services.
- 3.10 If the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant / student, QCA will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant / student of the outcome.

4. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS (Domestic and Overseas Students)

4.1 **Complaints Stage 1 (Verbal)** In the first instance, complaints should be discussed with the person/people involved. If this is impractical, the complainant / student should communicate with one of the staff listed below. The verbal complaint will be dealt with free of charge and within a reasonable timeframe, normally within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint.

The complainant / student should speak with one of the following staff members:

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

Upon verbal discussion which addresses their complaint, the complainant / student then has three (3) options for proceeding:

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

4.2 **Complaints Stage 2 (Written)** If unsatisfied with the response from a verbal complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter in Stage One, the complainant / student may submit a written complaint via email to admin@gca.edu.au or complete the QCA Complaints and Appeals/Compliance Corrective Action Form. This form is available online at www.qca.edu.au or from head office and should be forwarded to the Operations Manager, who will discuss the complaint with the person who is the subject of concern.

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

4.4 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 / student
- iii. Avoid any behaviour that might reasonably be interpreted as interrogative or judgemental
- iv. Endeavour to find a resolution

4.5 Upon receiving a response from their submission of a written complaint, the complainant / student then has three (3) options for proceeding:

- i. Take no further action
- ii. Make comments or suggestions
- iii. Activate the internal appeals process in accordance with internal appeals process 5.1

5. PROCEDURE FOR AN INTERNAL APPEAL (Domestic and Overseas Students)

5.1 To appeal the outcome of a written complaint, the complainant / student must submit their appeal in writing to admin@gca.edu.au and address their communication to one of the following management staff member:-

- Managing Director
- Operations Director
- Vocational Compliance Manager
- Compliance Officer

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- 5.2 The complainant / student should provide any additional information or documentation to support their appeal and include it with the email.
- 5.3 Acknowledgement will be made in writing to the complainant / student within 10 working days of the written appeal submission.
- 5.4 QCA will conduct an assessment of the appeal in a professional, fair and transparent manner.
- 5.5 QCA may request a meeting with the complainant / student to assist with the assessment of the appeal. The complainant / student may bring a support person with them to the meeting.
- 5.6 The complainant / student will be given a written statement of the outcome of the appeal, reason for outcome and any action required.
- 5.7 If the appeal process concludes with a decision in support of the complainant / student, QCA will promptly take action on the decision.
- 5.8 If the complainant / student appeal is not successful, they will be advised within 5 working days of their right to access the external complaints and appeals process. Refer to 6.1 External complaints and appeals process.

6. EXTERNAL APPEALS PROCESS

- 6.1 If unsatisfied with the response to the written complaint and internal appeal or the time taken to resolve the matter, the complainant / student 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.
- 6.2 The complainant / student may appoint an external agency of their choice or access one of the options as listed below. The complainant / student will be responsible for any associated costs for the external agencies' services.

Details for external bodies and contacts are:

Commonwealth Ombudsman – Overseas Students

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

This service is free.

Phone 1300 362 072

Website: [Commonwealth Ombudsman - Overseas Student Complaints](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/overseas-student-complaints)

The National Training Complaints Hotline – Domestic and Overseas 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.

Phone: 13 38 73

Website: [National Training Complaints Hotline – Department of Employment & Workplace Relations](https://www.nth.gov.au/)

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

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

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

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.

Website: [Resolution Institute - Student Mediation Scheme](#)

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) – Domestic and Overseas 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/>

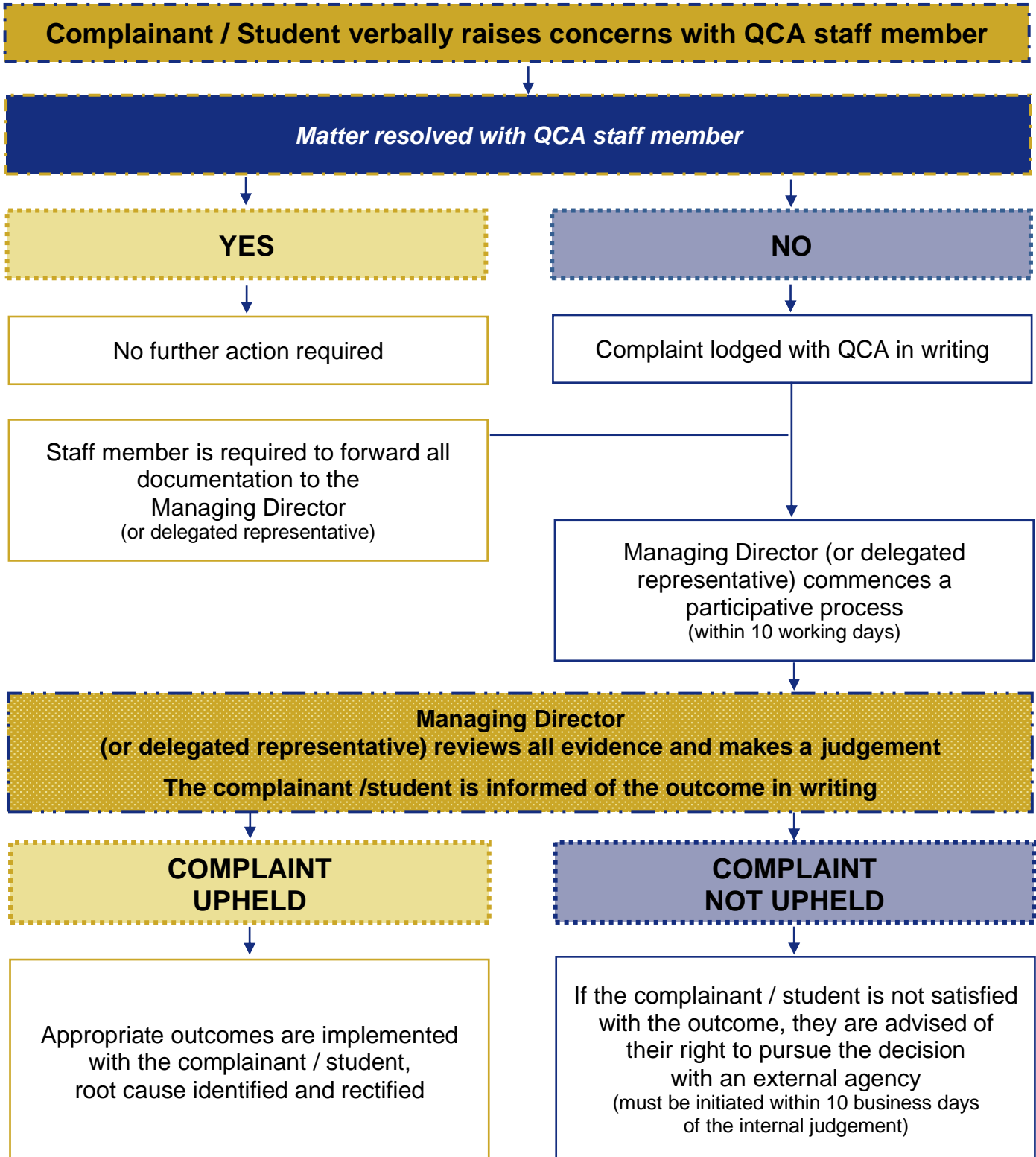
7. REMEDIAL ACTION

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

8. RECORDS

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

**DOMESTIC & OVERSEAS STUDENTS
COMPLAINTS POLICY – FLOW CHART**



OVERSEAS STUDENT APPEALS PROCESS

REGARDING RECEIPT OF AN INTENTION TO REPORT LETTER

9. APPEAL A CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT – INTENTION TO REPORT LETTER

- 9.1 Where a written notice of its intention to report to the Department of Home Affairs for breaching their student visa (Visa 500) conditions has been issued to the student, the student is provided 20 working days to access the complaints and appeals process.
- 9.2 To appeal QCA's Intention to report, the student must submit their appeal in writing to admin@gca.edu.au and address their communication to one of the following management staff member:-
- Managing Director
 - Operations Director
 - Vocational Compliance Manager
 - Compliance Officer
- 9.3 The student should provide any documentation to support their appeal and attach documents to the email.
- 9.4 QCA will conduct an assessment of the appeal in a professional, fair and transparent manner.
- 9.5 Acknowledgement will be made in writing to the student within 10 working days of the written appeal submission and will advise the outcome as soon as practicable.
- 9.6 QCA may request for the student to provide additional information to assess the validity of the appeal and may request a meeting with the student. The student may bring a support person with them to the meeting.
- 9.7 The student will be given a written statement of the outcome of the appeal, reason for outcome and any action required.
- 9.8 If the appeal process concludes with a decision in support of the Overseas student, QCA will promptly action the decision or recommendation into effect and inform the overseas student about the necessary preventive or corrective measures to be taken as a result of the decision.
- 9.9 If the overseas students appeal is not successful, the student will be advised within 5 working days of their right to access the external complaints and appeals process via the ombudsman refer to 6 External Appeals Process
- 9.10 QCA will only report a student to Department of Home Affairs through provider Registration and Overseas Student Management System - PRISMS after:-
- Internal and external complaints process have been completed and the breach is upheld.
 - The overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within 20 working days as stipulated in the Intention to Report Letter
 - The overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process.
- or
- The overseas student withdraws from the internal or external complaints process, by notifying QCA in writing.

Overseas Students ONLY

