

Complaints and Appeals

References: SRTO Standard 6
National Code Standard 10

1.0 Purpose

This policy provides the framework to give any learner the opportunity to put forward a complaint or appeal against any perceived unfair treatment or assessment. It is available on the QAT website.

QAT will ensure that students have a fair, inexpensive means of appealing decisions, procedural matters or any issues that directly relate to the successful completion of their course.

2.0 Background

QAT will provide an effective complaints and appeals policy as referenced in Standard 6 from the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and National Code 2018 Standard 10. QAT will ensure their overseas students have the right to natural justice protected through access to professional, timely, inexpensive and documented complaints handling and appeals processes.

Standard 6. Complaints and appeals *Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively*

RTOs must implement a transparent complaints and appeals policy that enables learners and clients to be informed of and to understand their rights and the RTO's responsibilities under the Standards

National Code 2018 Standard 10: *The registered provider must have and implement a documented internal complaints handling and appeals process and policy, and provide the overseas student with comprehensive, free and easily accessible information about that process and policy*

3.0 Definitions

Complaint - A cause or reason for complaining; a grievance.

Appeal - Where a student is not satisfied with the outcome of an assessment, or wishes to dispute a QAT decision, he/she may 'appeal' or question the decision. The assessment may be reviewed and possibly be changed if deemed necessary. In the case of more serious concerns, such as being reported to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DHA), the appeal may be upheld or rejected.

DHA - Department of Home Affairs

4.0 Policy

4.1 Context

It is in the interest of the college and the students to resolve any student grievances or disputes quickly and judiciously. In order to inform the students of the grievance processes, this policy will be made available on the QAT website, the QAT International Student Handbook, and reiterated during Orientation.

Questions relating to refunds, money or visas which are not able to be dealt with by the Student Contact Officer will be passed on immediately to the Executive Director. However, if the grievance is related to class work, the student's first stop will always be the classroom teacher or trainer. All student grievances will be dealt with in a timely and courteous manner. At all times, the student has the option of registering a formal complaint at reception.

5.0 Procedures

5.1 Appeals

Students have the right to appeal decisions they believe are unfair, whether educational or administrative in nature. If there is a dispute about an assessment or grade, the teacher or trainer/assessor will meet with the student to explain the reasons for the outcome. If, after this meeting, the issue is still unresolved, the teacher or trainer will seek a second opinion from another teacher, or the program coordinator, and will advise the student of the outcome. This right is available to both VET and ELICOS students

Where a decision cannot be resolved satisfactorily through informal negotiation, the student can lodge a written appeal with the Program Coordinator or Head of English within seven days of being notified of the decision.

5.2 Appeals Timeframes

The QAT appeal period for results is 5 working days from the return of the assessment item to the student. Where a student is not satisfied with the treatment or assessment provided, they are required to put their complaint in writing to Queensland Academy of Technology (QAT) within 5 working days of the incident and to provide examples where possible.

QAT will ensure that the re-assessment and determination occur within 1 month of receiving an appeals letter.

The QAT appeal timeframes for attendance and course progress matters are outlined in 5.4 below.

5.3 Appeals Procedure – Assessment Results

QAT will arrange for the assessment to be marked by a second teacher or assessor. The Director (or their representative) will then review the two assessment results and make a determination.

If a VET student is still not satisfied, then QAT will, by request, set up an appeal panel, made up of a minimum of two people who are external to the organisation from the following areas to review the assessment:

- VET facilitators, and
- Industry representatives.

The learner will also be invited to attend Panel and to have a representative present.

QAT will advise the learner of the determination (including reasons for the conclusion) in writing.

QAT will maintain a log of all appeals received and the outcomes.

5.4 Appeals Procedure – Reporting to DHA

- If a student does not agree with a decision made by QAT which results in the student being reported to DHA, they are informed of the following procedure via an attachment to their final warning letter. This policy is also available on the QAT website.
- The student contacts the QAT Appeals Officer, who will make an appointment to speak to the Attendance Administrator or Program Coordinator to discuss the appeal.
- At the appointment, the student has the opportunity to discuss their reasons for failing to meet course requirements and raise any concerns or ask any questions they may have. In addition, the Attendance Administrator or Program Coordinator will explain any further stages in the appeals process.
- The student is asked to submit a letter of appeal that outlines all of the reasons why they believe they should not be reported to DHA. They are advised to attach any documentation to this letter that they believe will support their appeal.
- The student is advised that the appeal deadline is within 20 working days of the reception of their final warning letter. The Attendance Administrator or Program Coordinator then reviews the appeal and makes a decision whether to accept or reject it as soon as practicable. A written decision will then be provided to the student in a timely manner.
- If their internal appeal is rejected and the student still disagrees with QAT's decision, they are advised on how to make an external appeal (see 5.5).

5.5 External Appeals

Any student who requires independent advice or mediation can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman or the Brisbane Counselling Centre (BCC).

Overseas Students Ombudsman contact details are:

Address: Level 22, 215 Adelaide Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

Phone: 1300 362 072

BCC's contact details are:

Address: Level 7, 87 Wickham Tce, Brisbane QLD 4000

Phone: +61 7 3831 4452
E-mail: admin@brisbanecounsellingcentre.com.au

If the internal or external complaint or appeals process results in a decision that supports the student, QAT will immediately implement that decision and/or corrective and preventative action as required.

5.6 Complaints Procedure

Complaints may be made over the telephone or in person. QAT Staff will attempt to address these problems on the spot. If this is not possible, the complainant will be asked to submit their complaint in writing. Students are required to submit their complaint in writing after an unsuccessful attempt has been made to deal with the complaint over the telephone or in person. A copy of the letter of complaint is to be filed on the relevant learner's file. Alternatively, students have the right to formally present their case to the appropriate managerial agent, at no charge. At this meeting, students may elect to be accompanied and assisted by a support person of their own choosing. Afterwards, a written summary of the student's case will be drawn up and kept on his or her file.

All written complaints or summaries of formal presentations are to be logged in the Complaints Log. The log will include the following information:

- Date received.
- Brief description of complaint.
- Staff member dealing with the complaint.
- Date of response, solution or referral.
- Brief description of response, solution or referral (i.e. how the complaint was solved and or the action taken).
- Evidence present in student admin file (note from telephone conversation, copy of letter of complaint etc)

5.7 Timelines

- A response, solution or referral will be completed within 5 working days

5.8 Outcomes

The complainant will be given a written statement of the outcomes, including the reasons for the decision.

A summary of the complaints received and the actions taken is to be presented and discussed at relevant departmental team meetings by the Program Coordinator or Director of Studies.

Any complaints which have led to a change in policy, procedure or other aspect of the college are to be recorded in the relevant department's Continuous Improvement Log.

6.0 Forms

Complaints Log
Warning and Appeals Process Tracker
Continuous Improvement Log

7.0 References

[Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#)

[National Code 2018](#)

Version history

Date	Version	Author	Status	Reviewers
25/03/2013	1	H Briggs/J Hunt/W Fitzgerald	Implemented and drawn from pre-existing policies.	M Wang
19/06/2013	2	A Black	Revised	M Wang
6/8/2013	2.1	A Black	Revised	M Wang
09/10/2013	2.2	A Black	Added footer and Appeals Process from external doc.	J Hunt
22/10/13	3	A Black	Amended with reference to Standard 8.1 (b) and (c)	J Hunt
16/07/18	3.1	J. Hunt	Amended Background with reference to Standard 10 and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) 2015 and updated some minor details.	R. Campbell