

AAHB Policy and Procedure		    	
Standards: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5	NC: 10	Title: Complaints and Appeals	
Rev #: 4	Approved By: Gabriela Rodriguez	Date: 06/06/2024	

REVISION HISTORY			
Rev	Description of Change	Author	Effective Date
1	New	Tina	29/07/14
2	Adapted ACA policy and procedure template.	Marcelo	12/08/20
3	Updated the complaints and appeals processes. Included reference to Queensland Training Ombudsman.	Marcelo	21/08/20
4	Included reference to Domestic Students within the procedural elements. Included procedure for Client/Customer complaints in Section 5.2.	Compliance Officer	06/06/24

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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1** To describe a formal policy and procedure for dealing fairly and consistently with feedback, complaints and appeals received. This policy and procedure also describe how the feedback is monitored and resolved.
- 1.2** To inform students and customers/clients of the route by which they can express a complaint, file an appeal, or provide feedback.
- 1.3** To train staff members on this policy and procedure so that they are aware of the procedural steps to follow when a student or customer submits a complaint, appeals against a decision or provides feedback.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1** This policy and procedure applies to all staff, contractors, students and customers of AAHB.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Complaint – An expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service provided by the College.

- Informal complaint – a person wishing to make a complaint in an informal manner by requesting to speak with any member of the college including trainers, administrative staff or a member of the management team.
- Formal complaint – when a person feel that their grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, they may submit their complaint officially in writing.

3.2 Appeal – A request to overturn a decision made by the College. It includes the following issues but not limited to:

- Outcome of assessment marks/course credit;
- Refusal of leave of absence/release letter/refund;
- Intention to Report (ITR) for unsatisfactory course progress/non-payment/misbehaviour; or
- Late enrolment

3.3 Resolution – Plans to resolve feedback concerns put in place and agreed by Feedback provider.

3.4 Students – An individual has registered and enrolled in a AAHB course.

3.5 Customers and clients – Any individual or organization utilizing the College's services, including those offered by students participating in traineeships and/or apprenticeships.

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3.6 Overseas and Domestic Students Ombudsman – Investigates complaints about problems that overseas and domestic students or intending overseas and domestic students may have with private education and training in Australia. The legal basis for Vocational courses are the VET Quality Framework and the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Regulations 2011; for overseas students are the Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO) and the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Legislation Amendment Act 2011*, passed by the Australian Parliament on 21 March 2011 (Source: OSO website); and for domestic students the Queensland Training Ombudsman.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 All Staff – Responsible for understanding this policy and procedure and knowing what to do when a student and/or customer feedback, complaint or appeal is received.

4.2 General Manager (GM) – Responsible for ensuring that all feedback, complaints and appeals are dealt with fairly and timely.

4.3 Student Services Officer (SS) – Responsible for communicating progress and outcome to students and logging and maintaining all records in student file and also in complaint/appeals login the feedback file.

4.4 Trainer/Assessor (T/A) – Serves as the designated individual responsible for addressing student academic complaints and concerns within the unit/subject. The T/A listens to the complaint, investigates the issue thoroughly, and takes appropriate actions. This may involve providing guidance, facilitating mediation, or implementing corrective measures as necessary.

4.5 Deputy Group Managing Director (DGMD) – Responsible for overseeing the operations of AAHB. DGMD is also responsible for coordinating with the General Manager (GM) to implement all administrative strategies and monitoring that all feedback, complaints and appeals are dealt with fairly and timely manner.

5.0 Procedure

Sometimes students may have a complaint or be unhappy about a particular decision or action of the College or of a trainer or other College staff members.

For Academic complaints students should approach the Trainer or Assessor first. For any other issues, students should contact SS.

Customers with complaint should approach the Trainer or staff in the Hairdressing salon.

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5.1 Student Complaint (A-Academic related and B-Non-Academic)

5.1.1A In the first instance, students should raise the matter with their Trainer or Assessor. There may have inadvertently been a mistake or misunderstanding which they can quickly rectify. Many problems can be resolved by the trainer on the spot and the trainer can give the student information which clears up the problem.

5.1.1B For other non-academic complaints, student must raise the matter to SS.

5.1.2.A If the student is not satisfied with the trainer's response or the matter is more serious, the student completes and returns the Student Grievance Form (available on the College website and at reception) to SS. The student should attach copies of any supporting documents (if applicable).

5.1.2.B If the student is not satisfied with the SS's response or the matter is more serious, the student completes and returns the Student Grievance Form (available on the College website and at reception) to SS. The student should attach copies of any supporting documents (if applicable).

5.1.3.A Upon receiving the Student Grievance Form with supporting evidence, SS immediately logs the complaint in the complaint register within 1 working day. If the matter is very serious or confidential, the student may wish to make an appointment with the GM to give notice of the complaint. The complaint is referred to the GM by the next working day to handle.

5.1.3.B Upon receiving the Student Grievance Form with supporting evidence, SS immediately logs the complaint in the complaint register within 1 working day.

5.1.4 Within 10 working days of the receipt of a formal complaint, the GM will consider the information provided and may contact the student and/or trainer/staff members if further information is required. The GM shall, if they see fit, make a decision on the matter and advise the student and/or trainer in writing the actions/plans, details of the reasons for the outcome and right to access an independent external complaints and appeal process within 10 working days of concluding the investigation of the complaint. A copy of written outcome is forwarded to SS.

5.1.5 If the outcome is in favour of the student, the College immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions

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required and commences continuous improvement process. SS keeps a record of the student complaint in VETtrak as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, the student will choose either to withdraw the complaint or proceed further. If student proceeds, he/she must request SS within 5 working days of the written outcome to refer the complaint to the Deputy Group Managing Director (DGMD). SS refers the complaint to the DGMD by the next working day. If student does not proceed and withdraws the complaint, SS proceeds with the College's decision and keeps a record in VETtrak.

5.1.6 The DGMD commences investigation and finalises outcome within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint from SS. Once the outcome has been finalised by the DGMD, the SS informs the student of the outcome through a written communication including details of the reasons for the outcome.

5.1.7 If the outcome is in favour of the student, the College immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. SS keeps a record of the complaint in VETtrak as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, the student will choose either to withdraw the complaint or for international students, access an independent external appeal process conducted by the Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO). If student proceeds, he/she must contact the OSO within 5 working days of the written outcome and inform SS. If student contacts OSO for external appeal process, GM is informed. If student does not proceed and withdraws the complaint, SS proceeds with the College's decision and keeps a record in VETtrak.

Note all the process to Complaint by OSO:

https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/109308/OSO-flowchart-Nov-2019.pdf

Overseas Students Ombudsman details:

Address: GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: 1300 362 072

Fax: 02 6276 0123

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

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Online form to complaint:

<https://forms.ombudsman.gov.au/prod?entitytype=Approach&layoutcode=ApproachWebForm>

Note: For the domestic students who are unable to resolve the matter with the College, they may contact Queensland Training Ombudsman via info@qto.qld.gov.au

Or complete the online form:

<https://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/QTO-Complaint-Form-Feb-2020.pdf>

Tel: 1800 773 048

Website: <https://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/>

5.1.8 OSO investigates and informs student and the College of outcome. The appeal procedure will be determined by the independent mediator. If required, all documentation from the student and the College related to the appeal will be forwarded to the independent body.

5.1.9 If the outcome of the external appeal is in favour of the student, the College immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. SS then keeps a record of the student appeal in VETtrak as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, SS proceeds with the College's decision and keeps a record in VETtrak.

5.2 Customer/Client Complaint

5.2.1 Customers/clients should raise the matter to the AAHB staff on the Hairdressing Salon. There may have inadvertently been a mistake or misunderstanding which they can quickly rectify. Many problems can be resolved by staff and on the spot and the staff can give the customer information which clears up the problem.

5.2.2 If the customer/client is not satisfied with the staff response or the matter is more serious, the customer completes and returns the Customer Complaint Form (available on the College website and at reception). The customer should attach copies of any supporting documents (if applicable).

5.2.3 Upon receiving the Customer Complaint Form with supporting evidence, the staff and/or SS immediately logs the complaint in the complaint register within 1 working day. If the matter is very serious or confidential, the customer may wish to make an appointment with the

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GM to give notice of the complaint. The complaint is referred to the GM by the next working day to handle.

5.2.4 Within 10 working days of the receipt of a formal complaint, the GM will consider the information provided and may contact the customer/client if further information is required. The GM shall, if they see fit, make a decision on the matter and advise the customer in writing the actions/plans, details of the reasons for the outcome.

5.2.6 If the customer/client is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint the matter is escalated to the DGMD who commences investigation and finalises outcome within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint from SS. Once the outcome has been finalised by the DGMD, the SS informs the customer of the outcome through a written communication including details of the reasons for the outcome.

5.3 Appeal Against an Official Decision Made by the College (Student Compliant)

5.3.1 Student lodges an appeal against an official decision made by the College by submitting an Appeal Form to SS within 20 working days of receiving the notification.

In case of the appeal against the College's intention to report for unsatisfactory course progress, student submit the *Appeal against ITR for Unsatisfactory Course Progress Form* to GM within 20 working days of receiving the notification.

5.3.2 GM commences and finalises investigation within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged. GM will consider the information provided (if applicable) and information about the student in the Student Management System (VETtrak) may contact the student if further information is required. Once the outcome has been finalised the student is informed in writing.

5.3.3 **If the outcome is in favour of the student**, the College immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. SS keeps a record of the student appeal in VETtrak as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, the student will choose either to withdraw the appeal or for international students, access external appeal process with the OSO. If student proceeds, he/she must

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contact the OSO within 5 working days of the written outcome and inform GM. If student does not proceed and withdraws the appeal, SS proceeds with the College's decision and keeps a record in VETtrak.

Note all the process to Complaint by OSO:

https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/109308/OSO-flowchart-Nov-2019.pdf

Overseas Students Ombudsman details:

Address: GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601

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Fax: 02 6276 0123

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

Online form to complaint:

<https://forms.ombudsman.gov.au/prod?entitytype=Approach&layoutcode=ApproachWebForm>

Note: For the domestic students who are unable to resolve the matter with the College, they may contact Queensland Training Ombudsman via info@qto.qld.gov.au

Or complete the online form:

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Tel: 1800 773 048

Website: <https://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/>

5.3.4 OSO investigates and informs student and the College of outcome. The appeal procedure will be determined by the independent mediator. If required, all documentation from the student and the College related to the appeal will be forwarded to the independent body.

5.3.5 If the outcome of the external appeal is in favour of the student, the College immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. SS keeps a record of the student appeal in VETtrak as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, SS proceeds with the College's decision and keeps a record in VETtrak.

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5.5 General Guidelines

- If the College considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise student and/or customer complaint or student appeal, the College will inform student and/or customer in writing the reasons as why more than 60 calendar days are required and will regularly update student on the progress of the matter.
- Nothing in this policy and procedure inhibits student's and customer's rights to pursue other legal remedies under Federal or State law. Students and/or customers are entitled to resolve any dispute by exercising their rights to other legal remedies.
- The College will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process are ongoing.
- Students must also enrol his/her course during the complaint and/or appeal process.
- There is no cost to the complainant and/or appellant for utilising this complaint and/or appeal process.
- At all meetings, the student may have a support person present (at the student's cost).
- Student has the right to appeal a decision made by the College to report his/her unsatisfactory course progress based on the following grounds.
 - I. The College's failure to record or calculate a student's marks accurately,
 - II. Compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
 - III. The College has not implemented its intervention strategy and other policies according to its documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student.

5.6 External Appeal

The student and/or customer will have access and receive the outcome of only **one external appeal process** before the College may report the student to the relevant authorities. Hence the College does not have to await the outcome of multiple external appeal processes which the student and/or customer may wish to access. However, the College will inform students that they could refer to the Ombudsman.

International Students

The OSO offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education or training provider. You can initiate the external appeals

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process to OSO by telephone, in writing, by fax, or using OSO's online complaint form.

Overseas Students Ombudsman
GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: 1300 362 072
Fax: 02 6276 0123
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

Complaint process:

https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/109308/OSO-flowchart-Nov-2019.pdf

Online form to complaint:

<https://forms.ombudsman.gov.au/prod?entitytype=Approach&layoutcode=ApproachWebForm>

Domestic Students

Queensland Training Ombudsman provides a free, confidential, and independent service to review and resolve enquiries and complaints from apprentices, trainees, student, employers and other parties about the vocational education and training system in Queensland.

Queensland Training Ombudsman
PO Box 15090, City East Qld 4002
Tel: 1800 773 048
Email: info@qto.qld.gov.au
Website: <https://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/>
Online form to complaint: <https://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/QTO-Complaint-Form-Feb-2020.pdf>

5.7 Withdrawal of Complaint/Appeal

5.7.1 The student and/or customer may withdraw a complaint or appeal at any time during the resolution process. The student and/or customer must make the withdrawal in writing and submit it to the Student Services. This will then be forwarded to the GM. Alternatively, the student may send an email to the GM using his/her email address that is registered with the College.

5.7.2 GM will send a written acknowledgement of the withdrawal to the student and/or customer. The matter will be concluded and deemed to be resolved.

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5.8 Documenting Complaints/Appeals

5.8.1 The SS must keep records of the following, where applicable:

- Actions taken to address the root cause of complaint/appeal;
- Minutes of meetings at which actions arising from complaint/appeal were agreed on;
- Changes to systems and/or processes to address the inadequacy that led to the complaint/appeal or to improve operations.

5.8.2 SS will record the complaint and its resolution in the College's Complaints Register that will allow identification and detail of the following:

- Submission date of complaint;
- Nature and description of complaint;
- Date/s when cause of complaint occurred;
- Attachments (if applicable);
- Determined resolution including reasons for any decision;
- Date of resolution; and/or
- Date written statement of outcomes was sent to student and/or customer.

5.8.3 The outcome of the complaint/appeal and the reasons for the outcome will be placed in the student file and on VETtrak, and for the customers in the college server.

5.8.4 SS will monitor and annually review the complaints and appeals as part of their continuous improvement process.

6.0 References

- 6.1 National Code 2018
- 6.2 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- 6.3 Fair Trading Act 1989

7.0 Appendices

- 7.1 Student Grievance Form
- 7.2 Appeal Form
- 7.3 Appeal against ITR for Unsatisfactory Course Progress Form
- 7.4 Customer Complaint Form
- 7.5 Complaints Register
- 7.6 Unsuccessful Appeals Letter