

## Complaints and Appeals

### Policy and Procedure

**Australian College**  
**RTO91110**

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Responsible Officer	RTO Manager
Approved by	CEO Australian College
Review by	RTO Manager
Last Reviewed	28 June 2021
Next Reviewed	11 June 2022
Approved and commenced	22/08/13

#### REVIEW AND REVISION

The policy and procedure will be revised annually or, amended following continuous improvement strategies implemented by the College.

[australiancollege.edu.au](http://australiancollege.edu.au)

## PURPOSE

This policy and procedure demonstrates Australian College's commitment to providing effective, efficient, timely, fair, and confidential complaints and appeals handling processes for all Students and to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of Australian College, its trainers, and assessors or other staff, or another student.

Through this policy and procedure Australian College ensures that complaints and appeals:

- Are responded to promptly, fairly, objectively, and confidentiality.
- May be resolved with cost to the individual, where the matter is not referred to independent parties for review.
- Are used to identify potential opportunities for continuous improvement and implementation of strategies or systems to prevent the issues from recurring.

## SCOPE

This policy and procedure covers complaints and appeals of both an academic and non-academic nature. A complaint may relate, but is not limited to:

- Marketing or other promotional activity
- Course information and enrolment processes
- Suspension and/or cancellation of enrolment by Australian College
- Course content or assessment processes
- Access and equity issues
- Bullying or harassment
- Fees and charges
- Administrative issues

Appeals generally relate to assessment outcomes including:

- Assessment activities
- Assessment decisions

Academic matters may include those relating to a Student's progress, assessment, or course content.

Non-academic matters are more administrative in nature may include those which do not relate to a Student's progress, assessment, course content, and include complaints concerning personal information that Australian College stores about the Student.

## POLICY - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- These principles are adhered to by Australian College and apply to all stages of the complaints handling process:

- Nothing in this policy limits the rights of an individual to take action under relevant consumer protection laws, nor does it prevent an individual from pursuing other legal remedies.
- Australian College handles all complaints in a fair, constructive, and timely manner, following the principles of natural justice and due process. Before Australian College makes any decision regarding the complaint, the Complainant and any Respondent have the opportunity to present their case.
- Complaints should be made as soon as reasonably practicable after the incident occurring.
- A formal complaint may be submitted at any point, in writing, either via a complaint form on the Australian College website, or other written format that clearly identifies the matter as a complaint to [resolution@australiancollege.edu.au](mailto:resolution@australiancollege.edu.au).
- Assessment appeals must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the original assessment decision. Assessment appeals must be submitted, in writing, to [appeals@australiancollege.edu.au](mailto:appeals@australiancollege.edu.au).
- Some members of the Australian College management participate in the complaints resolution process, as outlined in these procedures.
- All parties to the complaint may have a support person of their choice present at meetings conducted to resolve the issue. The support person may observe but not participate in any discussion relating to the complaint.
- Where the complaint relates to an assessment appeal, an assessor who is independent of the original decision will review the original submission. The outcome of this review will be the result granted for the assessment task. The complainant or appellant is advised in writing of the outcome of the process and the reasons for the findings made.
- Australian College retains written records of discussions relating to complaints.
- The Complainant or any Respondent is provided a written explanation for any decisions or actions taken in response to the complaint, if requested.
- Records of all complaints are retained for a minimum period of two years. These records are kept strictly confidential and stored electronically by Australian College. The Complainant or any respondent may request access to these records by writing to:

**The RTO Manager  
Australian College  
7 70 Croydon St  
Cronulla, NSW, 2230**

- A Complainant can appeal the outcome of their complaint.
- No Student, staff member, contractor other stakeholder is disadvantaged in any way during the complaint and resolution process.

- A Student's progress through their course is not disrupted during the complaint resolution process unless the nature of the complaint itself makes further progress impracticable.

## PROCEDURES

If a complaint is not able to resolved informally and the complainant wishes to escalate their grievance, or the complainant wishes to submit a formal complaint in the first instance, they are advised to email the detail of their complaint to [resolution@australiancollege.edu.au](mailto:resolution@australiancollege.edu.au).

### On receipt of a formal complaint

1. The RTO Manager reviews all formal complaints upon receipt and determines:
  - a. The nature of the complaint
  - b. Any other parties to the complaint
  - c. The outcome the complainant is seeking
  - d. The cause of the issue that gave rise to the complaint – this may require investigation or consultation with other parties
  - e. Any actions required to prevent the issue from reoccurring
2. Australian Colleges acknowledges a formal complaint or appeal in writing, within 3 business days of receipt.
3. The investigations and resolution process will commence within 10 business days of receipt of the written complaint or appeal.
4. Resolution of complaints and appeals are finalised as soon as practicable, or at least within 30 calendar days unless there is a significant valid reason for the resolution to take longer.
5. For complaint resolutions that require additional time, the complainant or appellant is advised in writing of the reasons and will be updated progress of the matter until such a time that the matter is resolved.
6. If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the outcome of the complaints resolution process, they may request an appeal.
7. Where an appeal of the outcome of a complaint is requested, the complaint is referred to the Chief Executive Officer for review and determination. The Chief Executive Officer may request additional information, before making a determination.
8. The Complainant will be advised within 10 business days as to whether the initial complaint outcome is upheld or a different resolution is proposed.

## EXTERNAL COMPLAINT OPTIONS

Where the formal complaints process fails to resolve the complaint, the complainant may choose to escalate the complaint to the following external agencies.

### National Training Complaints Hotline:

The National Training Complaints Hotline is a national service that refers consumer complaints regarding vocational education and training to the appropriate agency/authority/jurisdiction for assistance with their complaint.

Phone: 13 38 73, Monday – Friday, 8.00 am to 6.00 pm nationally.

Email: [ntch@education.gov.au](mailto:ntch@education.gov.au)

Please note the Hotline is unable to investigate complaints or advocate on a Student's behalf.

Prior to lodging your complaint with the Hotline, it is important you follow our internal complaints and appeals process as described above.

### Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA):

Complainants may also complain to Australian College's registering body, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA):

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints-about-training-providers>.

ASQA is not a consumer protection agency and cannot act as an advocate for individual students.

ASQA can investigate complaints about Australian College regarding:

- the quality of our training and assessment
- our marketing and advertising practices

ASQA may not be able to investigate a complaint if evidence is not provided that our formal internal complaints process as above has been followed.

## RECORDS OF COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Australian College maintains records of all complaints and appeals, including their outcomes and any rectifications on the Complaints and Appeals Register, which is securely stored according to the Privacy Policy and Procedures.

## PUBLICATION

This policy and procedure is referenced in the Student Handbook and accessible from the Australian College website.