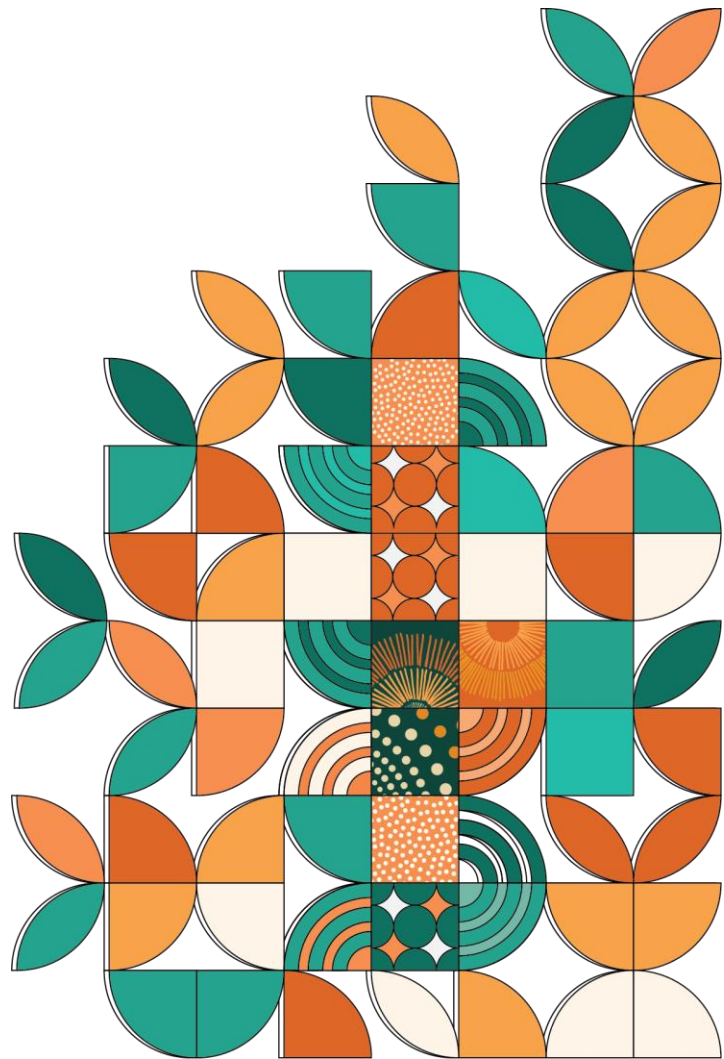


Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure



SECTION 1

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the Institute of Health and Nursing Australia(IHNA) responds to complaints by its students in a timely, appropriate, fair and equitable manner and to outline the steps for handling complaints and appeals received from students.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all current and prospective students of IHNA. Complaints may be related to IHNA, IHNA's staff, Education Agents, and any other external stakeholders that student has engaged through IHNA during their enrolment with IHNA.
- 2.2 Any complaint of an alleged criminal nature will be reported to the Police or other relevant authority.

3. Objective

- 3.1 The objective of this procedure is to ensure that IHNA staff always act in a professional manner and deal with student complaints in a fair, transparent and equitable manner. This procedure provides a clear process to register and record a complaint or appeal. It also ensures all parties involved in a complaint or appeal receive regular updates regarding subsequent actions taken and the resulting outcomes.

4. Definition

- 4.1 Refer to IHNA's [Glossary of Terms](#).

SECTION 2

5. Procedure

5.1 Access

- 5.1.1 IHNA will ensure that all students can easily access information about how to make complaints and appeals on the website in accordance with relevant regulatory standards.
- 5.1.2 IHNA will provide all students with a Student Handbook containing information on complaints and appeals prior to enrolment, and this information will be reiterated during orientation.

5.2 Informal Complaints

- 5.1.1 Students should resolve issues informally by speaking to their trainer/assessor, student administration and support officer, or course coordinator before proceeding with a formal complaint.

5.1.2 IHNA staff will support students in lodging a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process.

5.1.3 Students may lodge a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process.

5.3 Formal Complaints

5.1.1 Complainants must lodge formal complaints in writing using a 'Student Complaints and Appeals Form' available online on the IHNA website (<https://ihna.edu.au/student-complaints-appeal/>), the Student Portal (Student Hub), and the Knowledge Hub. IHNA also provides a paper form at the campus.

5.1.2 If a student chooses to lodge their complaint in paper form, they can obtain the necessary form at any IHNA campus, complete it, and submit it to their Course Coordinator

5.1.3 Complaints will be recorded in the Student Profile on Knowledge Hub (KH). All information about the complaints and appeals process will be kept confidential.

5.1.4 IHNA will send a written acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint to the complainant within five (5) working days.

5.1.5 IHNA aims to resolve complaints or appeals fairly and equitably within 30 working days, providing regular updates about the progress when required.

5.1.6 IHNA will convene a panel comprising the complaints committee to investigate the complaint and decide.

5.1.7 During the investigation, the complainant will have the opportunity to formally present their case and may choose to have a support person accompany them.

5.1.8 If a complaint directly involves one of the panel members or if a clear conflict of interest arises, IHNA will provide an alternative complaint resolution process. The Chief Operations Officer (COO) has the authority to appoint a more senior alternative delegate to lead the panel.

5.1.9 The panel will discuss the complaint with all parties involved to ensure a procedurally fair hearing and an unbiased decision.

5.1.10 If the matter is particularly complex and requires more than 60 calendar days to resolve, IHNA will advise the complainant or appellant, including the reasons for the additional time.

5.1.11 IHNA will inform the complainant by email of the outcome of the complaint and any actions agreed upon by all parties. This outcome will be recorded in the Complaints and Appeals register.

5.1.12 IHNA will inform the appellant in writing of the further actions to be taken by either party.

5.1.13 Complainants can use the Formal Appeals Process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution process.

5.1.14 Regardless of the outcome all decisions will be reviewed by the Senior Management team for opportunities for continuous improvement. Any opportunities identified will be recorded in the continuous improvement register and will be actioned and reviewed by the Management team.

5.4 Formal Appeal

5.1.1 Students who are not satisfied with their complaint's resolution may submit an appeal within 20 working days after IHNA communicates the original decision or finding to them.

5.1.2 Appellants must lodge formal appeals in writing, using a 'Student Complaints and Appeals Form' available online on the IHNA website (<https://ihna.edu.au/student-complaints-appeal/>), the Student Portal (Student Hub), and the Knowledge Hub. IHNA also provides a paper form at the campus

5.1.3 Paper forms must be submitted to the Registrar or Course Coordinator.

5.1.4 Appeal is recorded in the Student Profile on Knowledge Hub (KH) as a continuation of the original complaints. All information about the complaints and appeals process will be kept confidential.

5.1.5 IHNA will send a written acknowledgment of receipt of the appeal to the complainant within five (5) business days.

5.1.6 The appellant will have the opportunity to formally present their case to the panel and may choose to bring a nominee (such as a family member, friend, or counsellor) for assistance if they desire.

5.1.7 The IHNA Appeal Committee will convene a panel to investigate the appeal and decide.

5.1.8 IHNA will notify the appellant of the outcome of the appeal within thirty (30) working days after receiving the appeal via email, and IHNA will record the outcome in the Complaints and Appeals register.

5.1.9 If the appeal succeeds, IHNA will inform the appellant in writing of the further actions to be taken by either party.

5.1.10 If the appeal is unsuccessful, IHNA will advise the appellant in writing that they may seek an independent mediator if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal.

5.1.11 The appellant must contact IHNA in writing within 20 working days after receiving the unsuccessful outcome letter to arrange for external mediation with Resolution Institute, a mediation service.

6. External Review by an Independent Mediator

- 6.1 IHNA is committed to providing students with a fair and equitable process for resolving any complaints or appeals. This includes the provision of an independent mediator. If a student is dissatisfied with the resolution proposed by IHNA, they can access the Student Mediation Scheme provided by the Resolution Institute.
- 6.1.1 Contact details for Resolution Institute:
- Address:
- Suite 602, Level 6, Tower B, Zenith Centre, 821–843 Pacific Highway, Chatswood NSW 2067, PO Box 440, Chatswood NSW 2057, Phone: 02 9251 3366, or 1800 651 650 Fax: 02 9251 3733 Email: infoaus@resolution.institute , Website: www.resolution.institute
- 6.1.2 Charges and costs for the Student Mediation Scheme will be shared between IHNA and the student, and IHNA is committed to implementing mutually agreed recommendations from an external review.
- 6.1.3 International students and students availing of VET Student loans can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman for mediation services. (<http://www.ombudsman.gov.au>)
- 6.1.4 An external appeals procedure will be determined by the Ombudsman, who will also notify all parties of the relevant steps, actions and outcomes.
- 6.1.5 Following receipt of the outcome of an external appeal, IHNA must immediately implement the decision and convey the outcome to the student. IHNA will place a copy of the documentation on the student portal and undertake improvement actions arising from the complaint.
- 6.1.6 IHNA will maintain the student's enrolment (and will continue to monitor course progress for international students) whilst an external appeal is in progress. The enrolment will remain until the external appeals process is complete and the outcome is communicated to all parties.
- 6.1.7 If the result of the appeal or complaint is favourable to the student, IHNA will immediately implement any decision and or corrective or preventative action. The student will be advised in writing of this outcome through Email or Student Portal.
- 6.1.8 If an appeal is related to course progress and the outcome goes against IHNA's decision to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress (for international students), IHNA must maintain the student's enrolment (i.e., not report the student for unsatisfactory progress) until the external appeals process is complete and has supported IHNA's decision to report.

7. Managing and Recording of Complaints, Appeals and External Review Outcomes

- 7.1 A summary of the complaints, appeals, and external review procedures followed, recommendations and outcomes are recorded in the student profile on Knowledge Hub.
- 7.2 The Complaint Register should include:
 - a. details the staff that undertook the assessment of a complaint.
 - b. how IHNA assures itself that the assessment of the complaint is undertaken in a professional, fair and transparent manner.
 - c. that complainants have received a written statement of the outcome.
 - d. provision of evidence that the complaint was resolved within the time prescribed in the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 7.3 If the complaint or appeal is against a staff member then it is to be recorded in the staff's people and culture department files. The Course Coordinator will inform the People and Culture department of the details of a complaint and/or appeal and the outcome(s).
- 7.4 Complaints and Appeals are seen as opportunities for improvement. All outcomes of complaints and appeals and the tasks generated consequently will be logged in the Action Plan Register.
- 7.5 The outcomes and details of appeals will be saved for record-keeping purposes in the IHNA Student Complaints and Appeals section in the IHNA Knowledge Hub and in the student profile for at least 7 years. The complainant or appellant shall have appropriate access to these records when a request is made in writing to the Campus Manager.
- 7.6 If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, IHNA will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.
- 7.7 If a student is still not satisfied after third-party mediation, they can contact higher regulatory bodies.
- 7.8 Students may choose to make a complaint to the regulator, Australian Skills and Quality Authority (ASQA), via their online form. However, students should note that ASQA does not provide a student advocacy service or provides a 'consumer protection' service for students and cannot contact the provider and request for them to act on the student's behalf. Before students submit a complaint to ASQA about the training provider, they should complete the provider's formal complaints process and confirm that ASQA can consider their complaint.

8. Anonymous or Unidentified Complainants

- 8.1 Anonymous or unidentified complaints may be investigated at IHNA's discretion.

8.2 The decision to investigate will depend on the nature of the complaint and the availability of sufficient information to proceed.

8.3 IHNA is not obligated to respond to anonymous or unidentified complainants.

9. Responsibility

9.1 The Executive Management Committee is accountable for ensuring that this procedure meets the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 and is consistent with the IHNA obligations regarding the principles of access and equity.

9.2 The Chief Operations Officer has overall responsibility for monitoring and ensuring correct and consistent implementation of this procedure.

9.3 For Academic Complaints or Appeals, Course Coordinators, in coordination with the National Training Managers, have responsibility for implementing the process.

9.4 For non-academic complaints or appeals, the Campus Manager has responsibility for implementing the procedure.

SECTION 3

10. Associated Information

Related Internal Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Complaints and Appeals Policy • Student Complaints and Appeals Process • Policy Against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment • Access and Equity Policy • Access and Equity Procedure • Anti-Discriminatory, Bullying, and Harassment Resolution Policy • Anti-Discriminatory, Bullying, and Harassment Resolution Procedure • Student Support Services Policy • Student Support Services Procedure • Academic Participation and Progress Policy • Academic Participation and Progress Procedure • Student Code of Conduct Policy • Student Code of Conduct Procedure • Student Handbook • Student Complaints Register • Student Appeals Register
Related Legislation, Standards, and Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Qualifications Framework 2013 • National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 • Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) • National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training

	<p>to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOS Regulations 2019 • Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRT0)2015, Clauses 1.7, 5.4 and 6.1 to 6.6 • ANMAC Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017 • Relevant State and Commonwealth contracts and eligibility documents (VET Student Loans, Skills First Program, Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD), Smart and Skilled)
Date Approved	01/09/2023
Date Endorsed	01/09/2023
Date of Effect	01/09/2023
Date of Review	01/09/2026
Approval Authority	Academic Board (and endorsed by Board of Directors)
Responsibility for Implementation	Learning and Teaching Committee
Document Custodian	Chief Operations Officer
IHNA DocID	IHNA-SCAP1-4.1
Department	Quality Assurance
SRT02015 Stds and sub-standards	<p>Standards for RTOs 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Standard 1, Clauses 1.7, 5.4 -Standard 6, Clauses 6.1 to 6.6

11. Change History

Version Control	Version 4.1	
Version No.	Date	Brief description of the change, including version number, changes, who considered, approved, etc.
V.3.1	05/12/2022	Minor edit for acknowledgement of student complaint/appeal to be in writing in 5 working days.
V.4.0	26/06/2024	Updated in the new template and logo, moved the definitions into the Glossary of Terms.
V4.1	26/12/2024	<p>Updated the logical flow of the policy statement and principles. Added clauses related to external appeals, as well as provisions addressing vexatious, false, or frivolous complaints, and clarified areas that fall outside the scope of this policy.</p> <p>Added Responsibility for Implementation in Section 3.</p>