Complaints and Appeals Policy

1. Purpose

The *Complaints and Appeals Policy* ("policy") establishes a framework for managing and resolving complaints and appeals from students on academic and administrative matters. The Institution makes a genuine attempt to resolve genuine complaints and appeals, through consistent and fair application of policies and procedures without retribution. This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Complaints and Appeals Procedures*.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all prospective students and currently enrolled students, and to staff administering complaints and appeal requests. This policy also applies to delivery arrangements with other parties, which are quality assured by the Institution.

3. Definitions

See *Glossary of Terms*.

4. Policy statements

4.1 Complaints and appeals processes are equitable, easily accessible to all students, fair, timely, and free from cost to students.

4.2 Complaints and appeals are handled with courtesy, confidentiality and without fear of prejudicial treatment.

4.3 The Institution endeavours to make all prospective students, enrolled students and staff aware of this policy. Students receive information about the complaints and appeals process prior to admission, during orientation programs, and via the Institution's website. A student's right to lodge a complaint or appeal is also outlined in specific policies and procedures published in the Policy Library.

4.4 Students are entitled to lodge a complaint (first step) about any academic or administrative matter, including (but not limited to):

- the conduct and performance of staff;

- services and facilities provided by or managed by the Institution;
- dealings with the Institution's International Representatives (agents), homestay providers, welfare providers or other related parties;
- conduct and performance of other students;
- review of a decision made by the Institution;
- failure to adhere to relevant policies and procedures
- Students are entitled to lodge an appeal (second step) normally in the following circumstances:
- failure to provide natural justice or procedural fairness;
- where the decision is inconsistent with a published policy or procedures;
- where there are new or different grounds and/or supporting evidence to those already considered by the original decision maker;
- the penalty was not commensurate to the incident; and/or
- on other reasonable grounds, as determined on a case by case by the Chair of the Appeals Committee, beyond the above.

4.5 Provision to request a review of an academic matter (e.g. final grade for a subject or assessment) is provided in the *Student Review of Assessment Results Procedures*. Requests of this nature will not be dealt with under this policy unless all avenues within the *Student Review of Assessment Results Procedures* have been exhausted.

4.6 Students are expected to exercise good judgment when deciding whether to lodge a complaint or appeal. These processes should not be used for general feedback or routine queries that arise throughout the trimester (see paragraph 4.16).

4.7 All complaints must be supported by documentary evidence. It is a student's responsibility to engage with the process, provide all necessary documentation to ensure the Institution can investigate the matter adequately. Vexatious or malicious complaints and appeals are examples of non-academic misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the *General Misconduct Policy* and *General Misconduct Procedures*.

4.8 A complaint lodged by a former student more than six months after completing their studies is not normally considered. Exceptions to this rule are made in exceptional circumstances only (e.g. FEE-HELP re-credit). A delay in lodging can affect the Institution's ability to investigate the matter.

4.9 Students who lodge a complaint or appeal will not suffer any reprisal as a result.

4.10 In considering a complaint or appeal, the Institution will ensure the following principles of procedural fairness are adhered to:

- complaints and appeals are appropriately investigated;
- decisions are made and communicated in a timely manner;
- decisions are taken without bias; and
- decisions are based on evidence.

4.11 Students who lodge a complaint or appeal will have their enrolment maintained while the process is ongoing, unless a student's health or safety is at risk, or where the student poses a health or safety risk to others.

4.12 Students are entitled to seek an external and/or legal review of a complaint or appeal at any time.

4.13 A student involved in a complaint or appeal has the right to formally present their case. He/she may be assisted or accompanied by a support person during meetings and interviews, but may not have legal representation.

4.14 A student may withdraw their complaint or appeal in writing at any time. The Institution may opt to investigate or refer nevertheless.

4.15 Students may submit an anonymous report as per the process outlined in the Complaints and Appeals Procedures. When complaints are submitted anonymously, the actions available to the Institution may be limited.

4.16 General feedback, including feedback on the complaints and appeals process, can be provided through various mechanisms throughout the student's enrolment as outlined in the Complaints and Appeals Procedures.

4.17 The Institution may refer complaints of a criminal nature to the NSW Police.

4.18 The Institution uses the outcomes of the complaints and appeals process to generate preventative improvements that aim to prevent the recurrence of similar issues.

4.19 Students are given opportunities to provide feedback on their experience

and this feedback informs the Institution's monitoring, review and improvement processes.

4.20 Records of complaints and appeals are kept in accordance with the retention schedule outlined in the Records Management and Personal Information Procedures.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Board of Directors is responsible for approving and overseeing the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

5.2 The Executive Management Group (EMG) monitors non-academic complaints and appeals and refers matters for improvement to departments. The EMG may make amendments to the procedures as required. The President submits reports from the EMG to the Board of Directors twice per year including an annual report and a trends report.

5.3 The Academic Board monitors academic related complaints and appeals twice per year based on the reporting outlined in paragraph 5.2 and makes recommendations for improvement as required.

5.4 The Chief Quality Officer is responsible for overseeing the administration and convening the Appeals Committee.

5.5 The Associate Vice President (Student Administration) is responsible for maintaining records of student complaints and appeals in the customer relationship management system. The Registrar is responsible for reporting as per paragraphs 5.2-5.4 to the relevant governance committees on the basis of documentation provided by the Associate Vice President (Student Administration) and Chief Quality Officer

6. Related documents

Assessment Policy

Complaints and Appeals Procedures

General Misconduct Policy

General Misconduct Procedures

Sexual Harm Policy

Sexual Harm Procedures

Student Review of Assessment Results Procedures

7. Version history

Summary of changes	Approval date	Approved by
Created	18 March 2019	Board of Directors
	14 September 2020	Board of Directors
	6 October 2021	Board of Directors
	10 September 2024	Board of Directors
Alignment with TEQSA's Statement of Regulatory Expectations & the updated organisational structure	23 June 2026	Board of Directors