



**IHNA**<sup>®</sup>  
*Institute of Health and Nursing Australia*

# **Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

### Purpose

1. This procedure sets out a clear process for students to register and record formal complaints and appeals. It also ensures all parties involved in the complaints and appeals process are kept informed of the resulting actions and outcomes. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

### Scope

2. The objective of this procedure is to ensure that staff of the Institute of Health and Nursing Australia (IHNA) act in a professional, fair, transparent and equitable manner at all times in dealing with student complaints. This procedure applies to all (domestic and international) students of IHNA.

### Responsibility

3. 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 in regard to the principles of access and equity.
4. The Chief Operations Officer (COO) has overall responsibility for monitoring and ensuring correct and consistent implementation of this procedure.
5. For Academic Complaints or Appeals, Course Coordinators, in coordination with the Director of Studies and the National Training Manager, have responsibility for implementing the process.
6. For non-academic complaints or appeals, the Campus Manager has responsibility for implementing the procedure.

### Definitions

7. Refer to the definitions outlined in the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.

### Procedure

#### 8. Informal Process

- 8.1 Students are encouraged to resolve issues informally by speaking to their trainer/assessor or student administration and support officer before making a formal complaint.
- 8.2 If not satisfied students are further encouraged to speak to the Course Coordinator for their enrolled course and discuss their complaint. The Course Coordinator will review the issue and attempt to come to a satisfactory solution.
- 8.3 A student may lodge a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome of an informal process.

#### 9. Formal Complaints Process

- 9.1 Students should complete a 'Student Complaints and Appeals Form' available from the IHNA website, the student portal or IHNA campuses. Paper forms are submitted to the Registrar or Course Coordinator.
- 9.2 Complaint is recorded in the student profile on Knowledge Hub.
- 9.3 IHNA will acknowledge a complaint or appeal within five (5) working day.



- 9.4 If the matter is particularly complex and requires more time to resolve, the complainant or appellant will be advised including the reasons additional time is required. IHNA will attempt to resolve a complaint or appeal fairly and equitably within 10 working days
- 9.5 Regular updates about the progress of a complaint or appeal will be provided.
- 9.6 IHNA will convene a panel comprising the Campus Manager and the Course Coordinator who will investigate the complaint and make a decision.
- 9.7 If a complaint directly involves one of the panel members, or where there is a clear conflict of interest with the nominated authorities, an alternate complaint resolution process will be provided. The COO has the authority to appoint an alternative delegate who is more senior to lead the panel.
- 9.8 A decision made by the panel will be recorded and will be reviewed by the Compliance team for opportunities for continuous improvement. The decision will be reviewed by the COO.
- 9.9 During review of a complaint the complainant will be given an opportunity to formally present their case and has the option to be accompanied or assisted by a nominee (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire. If a student chooses to use a paid nominee, this will be at the student's own cost. The nominee must present their photo ID while accompanying the student to appointments at IHNA.
- 9.10 Students will be informed by email of the outcome of a complaint and this outcome will be recorded in the student portal.
- 9.11 Students may use the Formal Appeals Process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution process.
- 9.12 IHNA will ensure the same person is not involved in assessing both the complaints and appeals of decision.
- 9.13 IHNA will securely maintain records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes.
- 9.14 IHNA will also maintain a Complaints Register that includes:
  - 9.14.1 details the staff undertaking assessment of a complaint;
  - 9.14.2 how IHNA ensures the assessment of the complaint is undertaken in a professional, fair and transparent manner;
  - 9.14.3 that complainants received a written statement of the outcome;
  - 9.14.4 provision of evidence that that complaints were resolved in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 9.15 IHNA will identify potential causes of complaints and appeals and take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

## **10. Formal Appeals Process**

- 10.1 IHNA will maintain the enrolment of a student until the complaints and appeals process is completed.
- 10.2 Students should complete a 'Student Complaints and Appeals Form' available from the IHNA website, student portal or the IHNA campuses. Paper forms are submitted to the Course Coordinator.



- 10.3 The Appeal is recorded in student profile on Knowledge Hub.
- 10.4 The appellant will be given an opportunity to formally present their case to the panel and have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a nominee (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire.
- 10.5 IHNA will convene a panel comprising the Training Manager, Director of Studies and/or COO (someone more senior and not previously involved in the case added to the panel for appeals) who will investigate the appeal and make a decision.
- 10.6 The students are informed by email of the outcome of the appeal and the outcome will be recorded in the student portal.
- 10.7 Students may use an Independent Mediator if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal process.

## **11. External Review by an Independent Mediator**

- 11.1 IHNA is committed to providing students with a fair and equitable process for resolving any complaints or appeals. This includes 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.
- 11.2 Contact details for Resolution Institute:  
Address: Level 1, 13-15 Bridge Street Sydney NSW 2000, Phone: 02 9251 3366, Fax: 02 9251 3733  
Email: [infoaus@resolution.institute](mailto:infoaus@resolution.institute), Website: [www.resolution.institute](http://www.resolution.institute)
- 11.3 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.
- 11.4 International students and students availing VET Student loan can contact Commonwealth Ombudsman for mediation services. (<http://www.ombudsman.gov.au>)
- 11.5 An external appeals procedure will be determined by the Ombudsman, who will also notify all parties of the relevant steps, actions and outcomes.
- 11.6 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 documentation on the student file and undertake improvement actions arising from the complaint.
- 11.7 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.
- 11.8 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.
- 11.9 If an appeal is 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.



## 12. Managing and Recording of Complaints, Appeals and External Review Outcomes

- 12.1 A summary of the complaints appeals, and external review procedures followed, recommendations and outcomes are recorded in the student profile on Knowledge Hub.
- 12.2 The Complaint Register should include:
- 12.2.1 details the staff that undertook the assessment of a complaint;
  - 12.2.2 how IHNA assures itself that the assessment of the complaint is undertaken in a professional, fair and transparent manner;
  - 12.2.3 that complainants have received a written statement of the outcome;
  - 12.2.4 provision of evidence that the complaint was resolved within the time prescribed in the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 12.3 If the complaint or appeal is against a staff member then it is to be recorded in the staff's HR files. The Course Coordinator will inform the Human Resources Department of the details of a complaint and/or appeal and the outcome(s).
- 12.4 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.
- 12.5 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 requested is made in writing to the Campus Manager.
- 12.6 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.
- 12.7 If a student is still not satisfied after third party mediation, they can contact higher regulatory bodies.
- 12.8 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 provide a 'consumer protection' service for students and cannot contact the provider and request for them to take action 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.

## Associated information

<b>Related Internal Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure</li><li>• Access and Equity Policy</li><li>• Student Participation and Progress Policy</li><li>• Student Participation and Progress Procedure</li><li>• Student Handbook</li></ul>
<b>Related Legislation, Standards, and Codes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Australian Qualifications Framework 2013</li><li>• National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)</li> <li>• National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 10</li> <li>• ESOS Regulations 2019</li> <li>• Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTO) 2015, Clauses 1.7, 5.4 and 6.1 to 6.6</li> <li>• ANMAC Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017</li> <li>• Relevant State and Territory funding contracts and eligibility documents</li> <li>• VET Student Loans Rules 2016</li> </ul>
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### Change History

<b>Version Control</b>	Version 3.0	
<b>Change Summary</b>	Date	Brief description of the change, incl version number, changes, who considered, approved, etc.
	10/03/2021	Separated Procedure document from Policy, revised and updated with pertinent sections