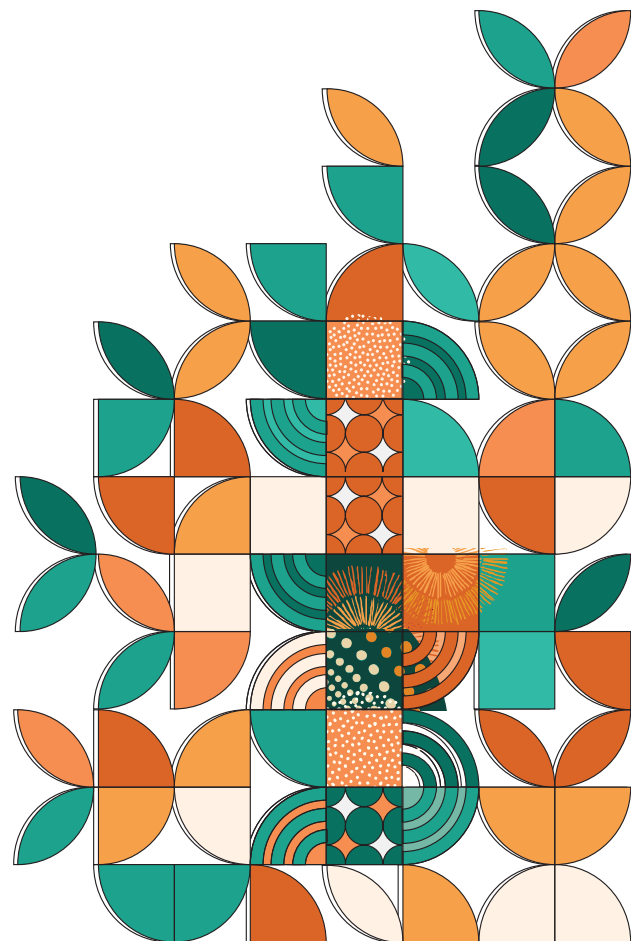


Student Complaint Guide

How to Submit, Track & Appeal Your Complaint



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Section 1

What is the Complaint Management System?

The IHNA Student Complaint Management System is an online platform that gives you - the student - a formal, structured, and fair way to raise concerns about your experience at IHNA Australia. Whether your complaint is about academic matters, staff conduct, campus facilities, or any other issue that affects your studies, this system ensures your voice is heard and your concern is handled professionally.

Why Use the System?

Using the complaint system means:

- Your complaint is officially recorded with a unique reference number.
- You receive a written acknowledgement confirming IHNA has received your complaint.
- A staff member is assigned specifically to investigate and resolve your case.
- You can track the progress of your complaint online at any time.
- You are kept informed through notifications at every important stage.
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to appeal.

IHNA Australia is committed to resolving all complaints fairly and within a reasonable timeframe. Submitting a complaint will not negatively affect your enrolment or standing at the institution.

Types of Complaints You Can Submit

You can use this system to raise concerns about, but not limited to:

- Academic issues - assessment results, grading disputes, course delivery concerns
- Staff conduct - unprofessional behaviour, discrimination, or unfair treatment
- Administrative issues - enrolment errors, fee disputes, documentation problems
- Campus facilities - learning environment, safety concerns, equipment access
- Student support - inadequate support services or accessibility concerns
- International student matters - visa-related support, ESOS Act entitlements

Before submitting a formal complaint, IHNA encourages you to first try to resolve the issue informally by speaking directly with the relevant staff member or your student coordinator. If that does not resolve the matter, you should then proceed with a formal complaint.

Section 2

How to Submit a Complaint (Step by Step)

Submitting a complaint takes only a few minutes. Follow the steps below to ensure your complaint is received correctly and processed without delay.

1. Log In to the System

Open the IHNA Student Complaint Management System in your web browser and log in using your registered student email address and password. If this is your first time, you will need to register an account using your student ID, course, campus, and student type (domestic or international). After registering, check your email and click the verification link to activate your account.

Tip: If you have forgotten your password, click 'Forgot Password' on the login page and a reset link will be sent to your email.

2. Go to Your Dashboard and Click 'Submit a Complaint'

Once logged in, you will see your Student Dashboard. Click the 'Submit a Complaint' button to open the complaint form. You can also find this option in the navigation menu under 'Complaints'.

3. Select Your Complaint Category

Choose the type of complaint that best describes your issue from the dropdown list (for example: Academic, Staff Conduct, Administrative, Facilities, or Student Support). Selecting the right category helps ensure your complaint is sent to the correct team for investigation.

Tip: If you are unsure which category to choose, select the one that most closely matches your situation. The investigating staff member can adjust it if needed.

4. Describe Your Complaint in Detail

Fill in the description field with a clear and detailed account of your complaint. Include:

- What happened and when it happened
- Who was involved (if applicable)
- Where the incident took place
- How it has affected you or your studies

Be as specific as possible. The more detail you provide, the easier it is for staff to investigate and resolve your complaint promptly.

5. State the Outcome You Are Seeking

In the 'Outcome Sought' field, describe what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint. For example: an apology, a review of a grade, a change in policy, or a refund. This helps the investigator understand what a resolution looks like from your perspective.

6. Describe Any Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

If you have already tried to resolve this matter informally (for example, by speaking to a teacher, coordinator, or manager), briefly describe what you did and what the outcome was. This field is optional but helps demonstrate that you have made a good-faith effort to resolve the matter before submitting a formal complaint.

7. Attach Supporting Documents (Optional)

If you have any documents that support your complaint, you can attach them here. Accepted file types are: PDF, Word documents (.doc, .docx), images (JPG, PNG), and plain text (.txt). You can attach up to 5 files, with a maximum size of 10 MB per file. Examples of useful attachments include: emails, screenshots, assignment feedback, receipts, or medical certificates.

Tip: Make sure your documents are clearly named so the investigator can easily identify them.

8. Review and Submit

Before submitting, read through your complaint to make sure all the details are correct. When you are satisfied, click the 'Submit' button. You will immediately receive a confirmation message on screen, and a unique Complaint Reference Number will be assigned to your case. An acknowledgement email will also be sent to your registered email address.

Important: Once submitted, you cannot edit your complaint. If you need to add information, you may be contacted by the investigating staff member, or you can reference your complaint reference number when contacting student services.

Section 3

What Happens After You Submit

After you submit your complaint, the system handles several things automatically to make sure your case is picked up quickly and fairly. Here is what happens at each stage:

Complaint Status Journey

Your complaint will move through the following stages:



Stage 1: Submitted

As soon as you click Submit, your complaint is recorded in the system with a timestamp and a unique Complaint Reference Number (e.g. CMP-2026-001). The system sends you an acknowledgement email confirming your complaint has been received. The status on your dashboard will show 'Submitted'.

Stage 2: Assigned

The system automatically reviews your complaint type and assigns it to the most appropriate staff member based on their role and area of responsibility. This process is designed to be fair and balanced, ensuring no single staff member is overloaded. Once assigned, the staff member is notified and begins reviewing your case. Your dashboard status changes to 'Assigned' and you will receive a notification. An expected resolution date is also calculated and displayed this is the working-day deadline by which IHNA aims to resolve your complaint.

Stage 3: Investigating

The assigned staff member begins formally investigating your complaint. During this stage they may gather evidence, review records, speak with relevant people, and schedule meetings. Your dashboard status will update to 'Investigating'. You may receive notifications when visible progress updates are added to your case - for example, when a meeting is scheduled or when the investigator makes a note that you are allowed to see.

Stage 4: Resolved

Once the investigation is complete, the staff member records a formal decision - the outcome will be one of the following: Upheld (your complaint was found to be valid), Dismissed (the complaint was not substantiated), or Partial (some elements were upheld, others were not). The decision includes the reasoning and any recommended next steps. Your status changes to 'Resolved' and you are notified with the outcome details.

Stage 5: Closed

After the resolution has been communicated and any required actions have been taken, your complaint is marked as 'Closed'. This is the final stage. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may lodge an appeal before the case is fully closed - see Section 5 for details.

Resolution Target: IHNA aims to resolve complaints within a set number of working days from the date of assignment. If your complaint is not resolved by the expected resolution date, it is automatically flagged as overdue and escalated for priority attention.

Section 4

The Investigation Process

During the investigation stage, the staff member assigned to your complaint will work through a structured process to understand the full picture and reach a fair decision. Here is what the investigation typically involves:

Gathering Information

The investigator will review the details you submitted, including your complaint description, the outcome you are seeking, and any documents you attached. They may also review relevant records held by IHNA (such as academic records, correspondence, or policy documents).

Contacting You

The investigator may contact you to ask for clarification or additional information. This could be through a scheduled meeting (in person, by phone, or online). You will receive a notification when a meeting is scheduled with the date, time, and format. It is important that you respond promptly to any requests from the investigator, as delays can slow down the resolution of your complaint.

Procedural Fairness

IHNA follows the principle of procedural fairness throughout the investigation. This means:

- You have the right to know what your complaint is about and to put your case forward.
- Any person your complaint is about also has the right to respond.
- Decisions are made by people who are impartial and not directly involved in the matter.
- You are informed of the outcome and the reasons for the decision.

Progress Updates

Some investigation notes and updates may be made visible to you through your dashboard. These could include status updates, meeting notes, or other progress entries that the investigator has chosen to share. Not all internal working notes will be visible - only those that the investigator has marked as appropriate for student viewing.

The Decision

At the end of the investigation, the staff member records a formal final decision with the outcome (Upheld, Dismissed, or Partial), the reasoning behind it, and any next steps recommended. You are notified of the outcome through the system and by email.

Confidentiality: All information provided in your complaint is handled confidentially. Details of your complaint will only be shared with those directly involved in investigating and resolving it, in accordance with IHNA's privacy policy.

Section 5

How to Lodge an Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you have the right to lodge a formal appeal. An appeal is a request for your complaint to be reviewed by an independent Appeal Committee - a group of staff members who were not involved in the original investigation.

When Can You Appeal?

You can lodge an appeal after your complaint has been resolved (status shows 'Resolved'). Typical grounds for an appeal include:

- You believe the investigation was not conducted fairly or impartially.
- New evidence has come to light that was not available during the original investigation.
- You believe the outcome was not consistent with IHNA's policies or procedures.
- You believe the decision was based on incorrect information.

How to Submit an Appeal

1. Go to Your Complaint and Click 'Lodge an Appeal'

Log in to the system and go to your complaint details page. If your complaint has been resolved, you will see a 'Lodge an Appeal' button. Click it to open the appeal form.

2. State Your Grounds for Appeal

Clearly explain why you are appealing. Be specific about what you believe was wrong with the original decision or process. Vague appeals are harder to assess - the more detail you provide, the stronger your case.

Tip: Refer to specific aspects of the investigation or decision that you believe were incorrect or unfair.

3. Attach Additional Evidence (Optional)

If you have new evidence that was not available during the original investigation, you can attach it here (PDF, DOCX, JPG, PNG, or TXT, up to 5 files at 10 MB each).

4. Submit Your Appeal

Click Submit. Your appeal will be assigned a unique Appeal Reference Number and an acknowledgement will be sent to your email. The system will assign your appeal to an independent Appeal Committee.

The Appeal Process

Once submitted, your appeal moves through the following stages:



The Appeal Committee reviews all the information from the original complaint and investigation, plus any new grounds or evidence you have provided. They will make an independent decision - Upheld, Dismissed, or Partial - with full reasoning. You will be notified of the outcome through the system and by email. The appeal committee decision is the final internal decision available through this system.

External Review: If you are still not satisfied after an internal appeal, you may have the right to refer your complaint to an external body, such as the relevant state ombudsman or TEQSA (for domestic students) or the Overseas Students Ombudsman (for international students). Speak to your student services team for guidance on this process.

Section 6

Tracking Your Complaint & Staying Informed

You do not need to chase staff to find out what is happening with your complaint. The system keeps you informed automatically.

Your Student Dashboard

After logging in, your dashboard shows all your complaints and their current statuses at a glance. Click on any complaint to see its full details, including the assigned staff member, the expected resolution date, any progress updates visible to you, attached documents, and the current status of any appeal.

Notifications

The system automatically sends you notifications when important events occur. You will be notified when:

- Your complaint status changes (e.g. from Submitted to Assigned, or to Resolved).
- The investigator adds a progress update that is marked visible to students.
- A meeting is scheduled as part of your investigation.
- Your appeal status changes or a final appeal decision is recorded.

Notifications appear in two places: as an in-app alert (look for the bell icon in the top navigation bar - it shows the number of unread notifications) and as an email sent to your registered email address. Click the bell icon to see all your notifications, or visit the Notifications page from the menu for your full notification history.

Your Complaint Reference Number

Every complaint has a unique reference number (e.g. CMP-2026-001). Keep this number safe as you will need it if you contact student services about your complaint. Similarly, appeals have their own unique reference number.

If you have not received any notifications or updates within the expected timeframe, check your spam/junk email folder first. If you still cannot find any communications, contact your campus student services team with your complaint reference number.

Section 7

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long will it take to resolve my complaint?

A. IHNA will acknowledge your complaint or appeal in writing within 5 working days after it is received. IHNA aims to resolve complaints and appeals fairly and equitably within 30 working days.

If the matter is complex and requires additional time, IHNA will notify you in writing, explain the reason for the delay, and provide regular updates on the progress of your complaint or appeal

Q. Will submitting a complaint affect my enrolment or relationship with IHNA?

A. No. Submitting a complaint or appeal will not negatively affect your enrolment, academic progress, access to services, or relationship with IHNA.

IHNA is committed to ensuring that all students can raise concerns safely and fairly without fear of discrimination, victimisation, or disadvantage. All complaints and appeals are handled confidentially and in accordance with the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Q. Can I submit a complaint anonymously?

A. The system requires students to log in to submit a complaint; therefore, completely anonymous complaints are not supported. However, if you have concerns regarding confidentiality, you may contact the Student Services team for assistance and support.

Q. What if I want to add more information after submitting?

A. Once submitted, you cannot directly edit your complaint. However, during the investigation the assigned staff member may contact you for additional information. You can also contact student services and reference your complaint number to provide supplementary details.

Q. Can I withdraw my complaint?

A. If you wish to withdraw a complaint, contact your student services team with your complaint reference number. Staff will be able to close the complaint on your behalf if appropriate.

Q. What happens if my complaint is not resolved within the expected timeframe?

A. If your complaint passes its expected resolution date without being resolved, it is automatically flagged as overdue in the system and escalated for priority attention by administration. You will continue to receive notifications as the situation progresses.

Q. I am an international student - are there special considerations for me?

A. Yes. International students have additional rights and protections under the ESOS Act and the National Code of Practice. If your complaint relates to your visa, course progress, or any matter covered under ESOS, make sure to mention this in your complaint description. If unsatisfied with the internal outcome, international students can refer their complaint to the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO).

Q. What is the difference between a complaint and an appeal?

A. A complaint is a formal grievance you raise about an issue or experience at IHNA. An appeal is a request to have the outcome of a complaint reviewed by an independent committee because you believe the original decision was unfair or incorrect. Appeals can only be lodged after a complaint has been resolved.

Q. Who reviews my appeal?

A. Your appeal will be reviewed by the IHNA Appeal Committee. A panel will be convened to investigate the appeal and make a fair and unbiased decision. You will also have the opportunity to formally present your case and may bring a support person, such as a family member, friend, or counsellor, if you wish. IHNA will notify you of the outcome of the appeal within 30 working days of receiving the appeal.

Q. How do I contact student services for help with my complaint?

A. You can contact Student Services for assistance with your complaint or appeal through email, phone, Student Hub, or by visiting your campus. The Student Services team can guide you through the complaints and appeals process, help you submit supporting documents, and provide information about the progress of your matter.