**Policy: Complaints and Appeals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Number:</th>
<th>AC008</th>
<th>Version:</th>
<th>6.0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Adopted:</td>
<td>19 March 2012</td>
<td>Date Last Reviewed:</td>
<td>2 May 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Next Review:</td>
<td>2 May 2016</td>
<td>Review Frequency:</td>
<td>One year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorized By:</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Reviewed By:</td>
<td>Academic Director</td>
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<td>Responsible for Review:</td>
<td>Academic Director; Director International; Student Support Services Officer</td>
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<td>Review Process:</td>
<td>Academic Director; Director International; Student Support Services Officer</td>
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<td>Document Management:</td>
<td>U:/Policies and Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication:</td>
<td>All relevant staff will be automatically notified by email when the reviewed policy has been authorised</td>
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**Policy Context:** This policy relates to:

- **HE Standards Framework 2011** Chapter 1: 6.4
- **ESOS** 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5
- **Standards for RTO’s 2015** 6.1 – 6.5
- **Legislation or Other Requirements**
  - Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
  - The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
  - National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- **Other Policies**
  - Refund Policy
  - Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation Policy
  - Student Welfare Counselling and Support Policy
  - Student Course Progress Policy
  - Continuous Improvement Policy
- **Forms and Other Documents**
  - Complaints Form
  - Appeals Form
  - Complaint Register
  - Appeals Register
  - Independent Adjudicator Report Form
  - Student Handbook
- **Key Words (Meta Data)**
  - Complaints; Appeals; Ombudsman
COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

DEFINITIONS

**Appeal** – a request to review a decision or outcome relating to any aspect of a student’s results, condition of enrolment or academic progress

**Complaint** – an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality or delivery of service, policy or procedure, or the conduct of another person

**Plaintiff** – a person lodging a complaint or appeal

**External Complaints** – complaints made to an external organisation about the outcome of a complaint/appeal submitted to IIBT and or the process by which it was managed

**Internal Complaints** – complaints made to IIBT relating to academic or non-academic matters

**Respondent** – a person or entity responding to a complaint

**Student Support Services Officer** - SSSO

EVIDENCE

- Complaints Form
- Appeals Form
- Complaints Register
- Appeals Register
- Meeting documents
- Correspondence relating to complaints and appeals
- Independent Conciliator Reports

Policy Information:

IIBT is committed to ensuring that all student complaints and appeals are dealt with in a timely and constructive manner, with impartiality and procedural fairness and at no cost to the plaintiff.

- Attempts will be made to resolve complaints informally and through internal appeals wherever possible.

- Plaintiffs and respondents will not be subject to discrimination or harassment resulting from their participation in the complaints and appeals process.

- During the complaints/appeals resolution process, the plaintiff’s enrolment is maintained and not at risk.

- The plaintiff, at all times, has the right to seek independent external advice.

- All formal complaints and appeals must be submitted on the Complaints form or the Appeals form and completed and signed by the plaintiff.

- Plaintiffs may be accompanied by their nominated support person at any relevant meetings.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Scope</strong></th>
<th>This policy applies to all enrolled students.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Procedures</strong></td>
<td>All students are given information about IIBT’s Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures during orientation, in the Student Handbook and on the IIBT website.</td>
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**Complaints & Appeals Procedure**

1. **Informal Complaints**
   Prior to lodging a formal complaint to IIBT, a plaintiff may contact the relevant academic/teaching or administrative staff to discuss the matter and seek an immediate and acceptable resolution.

   If the plaintiff’s grievances cannot be resolved through informal direct communication with the respondent(s), the formal Complaints and Appeals process is available.

2. **Formal Internal Complaints**
   The first step in this process is for the plaintiff to inform a Student Support Services Officer that they wish to make a formal complaint or appeal.
   - The SSSO will provide the plaintiff with a copy of the Complaints or Appeals Form.
   - On receipt of the signed and completed form, IIBT staff will record the complaint or appeal on the Complaints or Appeals Register.

Within 10 working days, IIBT will:
   Place the complaint or appeal on the agenda for the Management meeting/Academic Director to consider
   - Advise plaintiff
     - of the outcome in writing within 10 working days from the receipt of the complaint
     - of the steps they can pursue if they are not satisfied with the outcome.
   - If the plaintiff believes their complaint or appeal has not been dealt with satisfactorily, they may engage the external appeals process.

**IIBT Management of Complaints and Appeals**

- A student complaint or appeal is dealt with by the Management meeting/Academic Director within 10 working days of receipt of the Complaints or Appeals Form.
• The complaint or appeal will be investigated fully and an acceptable resolution will be sought
• The Management meeting/Academic Director will record the proposed solution(s) and advise the plaintiff in writing within 10 working days, or as soon as is practicable, of the outcome of their complaint or appeal, including details of the reasons for the outcome
• In relation to students studying a VET course, where IIBT considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise a complaint or appeal, the plaintiff will be notified in writing of the reasons why more than 60 days is required and regularly inform the student about the progress of the matter
• The advice to the plaintiff will include information and procedures concerning the plaintiff’s right to access an external complaints and appeals process at no cost
• Should the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process result in a decision supporting the plaintiff, IIBT will promptly advise them of the outcome and implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required
• All issues arising from complaints and appeals reviewed by the Management meeting/Academic Director will be used to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence
• All communications arising from the complaints process will remain confidential except to the extent necessary to give effect to this Complaints and Appeals Policy.
• Records of all complaints/appeals and their outcomes will be securely stored.

Internal Complaints – independent assistance and advice
Students can access independent advice and assistance to resolve a dispute if that cannot be achieved through IIBT’s complaints and appeals process.

International Students
The International Education Conciliator at the Department of Education Services WA is available to assist international students. The Conciliator can be contacted by phoning (08) 9441 1953, sending a fax to (08) 9441 1929 or emailing conciliation@des.wa.gov.au.

Australian Students
Mediation services and referrals for other advice is available through the Citizens Advice Bureau of Western Australia by calling (08) 9221 5711. More information is available on their website www.cabwa.com.au.

3. External Complaints
Plaintiffs who are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint submitted
to IIBT may lodge an external complaint about IIBT, within 10 working days of the decision, with the relevant independent organisations nominated below.

**International Students**

The Overseas Student Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for International students who want to lodge an external complaint about a decision made by their provider. Plaintiffs can access more information on the Overseas Student Ombudsman website [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au) or by phoning 1300 362 072.

Complaints or appeals that may be referred to the Overseas Students Ombudsman for investigation may be about:

- course admission refusals
- fees and refunds
- course or provider transfers
- course progress or attendance
- cancellation of enrolment
- accommodation or work arranged by a provider
- incorrect advice given by an education agent.

The Overseas Student Ombudsman will not investigate complaints:

- about public providers (these are covered by the State and Territory Ombudsman)
- by Australian students
- by students from overseas who are not on a student visa (e.g. students studying on a visitor, working holiday or temporary business visa).

Appeal decisions investigated and found to be in favour of the plaintiff will be implemented by IIBT management as soon as practicable.

**Australian Students**

Complaints can be lodged with Consumer Protection. More information is available by calling 1300 304 054, or emailing consumer@commerce.wa.gov.au or on their website [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consumer-protection/making-complaint](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consumer-protection/making-complaint)