

Complaints & Appeals Policy and Procedure

1. APPLICATION

IVET Group owns and operates two Registered Training Organisations;

- IVET Institute - RTO # 40548
- TAE Academy - RTO # 32413

Unless stated otherwise herein, this document applies to both of the above and any reference to IVET, IVET Institute, TAE, TAE Academy, the 'institute' or the 'academy' should be considered a reference to these respective trading names.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the IVET Group staff, prospective and current students, and clients, including third-party partner providers.

This policy and procedure refers to all types of Complaints and Appeals with the exception of **Assessment Outcomes**. Students are to refer to the T/P/003 Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure regarding any academic appeals.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Appellant refers to the person who is lodging an appeal with IVET Group and may include prospective or current students, external clients or third party partner providers.

Academic matters include those matters, which relate to student progress and assessment in a training course of study. For example: students may have decisions on their assessments reviewed if they feel an assessment outcome decision has been made in error. If the complaint relates to an academic outcome, the T/P/003 Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure should be followed.

Complainant refers to the person who is lodging a complaint with IVET Group and may include prospective or current students, external clients or third-party partner providers.

Non-Academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress and assessment in a training course of study and includes (but is not limited to) complaints in relation to the handling of student personal information, the provision of facilities and

associated equipment, the behaviour or actions of an IVET Group team member and the behaviour or actions of another student.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

IVET Group is committed to providing training and assessment services to the highest quality standard, however acknowledges that despite all efforts to provide a satisfactory service, complaints may occasionally arise that require formal resolution.

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline IVET Group's approach to ensuring all Complaints and Appeals are addressed in a fair, efficient and confidential manner, in compliance with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*. This policy and procedure does not negate the right of any student or client to take other action under Australian laws.

The following procedures provide students, clients and third party partners the opportunity to have any issues relating to a substantiated complaint or appeal resolved and resolutions reached that attempt to satisfy all parties involved.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 Informal Complaint

- 5.1.1 Students and clients are encouraged to approach any member of IVET Group staff and make an informal complaint about any issue relating to the provision of services provided by IVET Group.
- 5.1.2 Where possible IVET Group staff members will utilise advice, discussions, and general mediation in relation to the issue/ complaint. All parties are encouraged to approach a complaint or appeal with an open view and attempt to resolve problems in a fair, unbiased and equitable manner through discussion and conciliation.
- 5.1.3 Any IVET Group staff member can be involved in the informal process to resolve issues. Complainants will be forwarded a letter (by email or post) acknowledging the receipt of their informal complaint and a copy of this policy and procedure within 2 working days of IVET Group receiving the notification.
- 5.1.4 IVET Group staff members may refer clients to the General Manager - Education (IVET) or the Manager - Training & Special Projects (TAE) if they feel they cannot or it is not appropriate for them to try and resolve the complaint/issue. The General Manager - Education and Manager - Training & Special Projects may seek advice from or delegate the handling of the complaint to any other Manager of Coordinator, depending on its nature.

- 5.1.5 IVET Group staff may arrange a future meeting with the client if further investigation is required.
- 5.1.6 The outcome of the informal complaint will be communicated to the client within 10 working days of IVET Group receiving notification of the complaint.
- 5.1.7 Students or clients who are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process are encouraged to lodge a formal complaint.
- 5.1.8 All informal complaints and outcomes will be recorded in the Complaints & Appeals register for continuous improvement purposes.

5.2 Formal Complaint

- 5.2.1 Students and clients wanting to make a formal complaint about any issue relating to the services of IVET Group will be advised to complete and submit the IVET Group Complaints & Appeals form.
- 5.2.2 Complaints & Appeals are submitted to and the responsibility of:
 - i. the General Manager - Education for IVET Institute; or
 - ii. the Manager - Training and Special Projects for TAE Academy; or
 - iii. the Chief executive Officer for all other complaints.
- 5.2.3 Complainants will be notified via email of the acknowledgement of their formal complaint and a copy of this policy and procedure within 2 working days of IVET Group receiving the formal Complaints & Appeals Form.
- 5.2.4 The responsible Manager will investigate the complaint and liaise with appropriate parties (if/ when appropriate) to ensure all the facts are considered prior to making any decision.
- 5.2.5 The responsible Manager may arrange a meeting with the complainant during the investigation process if appropriate.
- 5.2.6 The complainant has the right to seek advice from and be represented by external parties at any time during the complaints and appeals process. The cost of this will be borne by the complainant.
- 5.2.7 The responsible Manager will investigate and provide a response and resolution to the complaint within 15 business days of lodgement of the Complaints & Appeals Form.

- 5.2.8 The responsible Manager will provide the complainant with a written statement of the outcome of the complaint which outlines the details of the decision.
- 5.2.9 The complainant will be notified of their right to appeal any decision within 20 business days of receiving notification if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the process. They will be provided with details of how to access the Appeals process.
- 5.2.10 All formal complaints and outcomes are recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register.
- 5.2.11 All relevant documentation relating to the complaint may also be stored in the student or client's file.
- 5.2.12 Where IVET Group considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint, they will inform the complainant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and regularly update the complainant on the progress of the matter.

5.3 Appeals

- 5.3.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their original complaint, they may appeal by accessing the Appeals process. They will be advised to submit their appeal within 20 business days of receiving notification of the complaint outcome.
- 5.3.2 Students and clients must have reasonable grounds for an appeal and include all supporting evidence with the Complaints & Appeals Form.
- 5.3.3 Appeals must be submitted to and are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer of the IVET Group.
- 5.3.4 Appellants will be notified via email of the acknowledgement of their formal appeal and a copy of this policy and procedure within 2 business days of IVET Group receiving the formal Complaints & Appeals Form.
- 5.3.5 The CEO will investigate the appeal and liaise with appropriate parties (if/ when appropriate) to ensure all the facts are considered prior to making any decision.
- 5.3.6 The CEO may arrange a meeting with the appellant during the investigation process if appropriate.
- 5.3.7 The appellant has the right to seek advice from and be represented by external parties at any time during the Appeals process. The cost of this will be borne by the appellant.
- 5.3.8 The CEO will investigate and provide a response and resolution to the appellant within 15 business days of lodgement of the Complaints & Appeals Form.
- 5.3.9 The CEO will provide the appellant with a written statement of the outcome of the appeal which outlines the details of the decision.

5.3.10 All formal appeals and outcomes are recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

5.3.11 All relevant documentation relating to the appeal may also be stored in the student or client's file.

5.3.12 Where IVET Group considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the appeal, they will inform the appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and regularly update the appellant on the progress of the matter.

5.4 External Appeals

5.4.1 There are no further avenues within IVET Group for complaints or appeals after the internal appeals process has been completed, however an external appeals process is available.

5.4.2 Clients must notify IVET Group within 10 days of receiving notification of their intent to submit an external appeal.

5.4.3 External appeals for IVET Group will be administered by an independent third party engaged by IVET and on a case by case basis.

5.4.4 Clients must submit all relevant evidence of the Complaint & Appeal to the CEO of IVET Group, who will submit the request to an independent party within five business days of receipt of the appeal.

5.4.5 The engaged independent party will advise the client that in general, the purpose of the external appeals process is to determine whether IVET Group has followed its own policies and procedures.

5.4.6 The engaged independent party will not review the evidence or make a decision in place of the one made by IVET Group.

5.4.7 Clients will not incur costs in accessing the external appeals process unless they seek external representation.

5.4.8 The engaged independent party will provide a written statement of the outcome including reasons and details for the decision to the client and IVET Group at the completion of the external appeals process.

5.4.9 If the outcome of the external appeals process results in a decision favouring the client, IVET Group will immediately implement any corrective action, decision or measures required as indicated in the written response provided by the external appeals body. The client will be advised as to the course of action taken by IVET Group as per the engaged independent party's advice.

- 5.4.10 The client will be contacted within 48 hours of IVET receiving notification of the decision from the engaged independent party.
- 5.4.11 The client may access and receive the outcome of only one external appeals process.
- 5.4.12 If the client wishes to make an official complaint to the regulator, they can complete the *Complaint about a training organisation operating under ASQA's jurisdiction* form provided by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) on their website.

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/about/complaints/complaints-about-training-providers>

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Q/F/001 - Complaints & Appeals Form.
- Q/R/001 - Complaints & Appeals Register.