

## Complaints & Appeals Policy

(Including Overseas Student Requirements)

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a **transparent, fair, and accessible process** for handling complaints and appeals from students, ensuring that:

- All complaints and appeals are handled promptly and objectively
- Procedural fairness and natural justice are upheld
- Domestic and overseas students are treated equitably
- Contempo College complies with the **Standards for RTOs 2025, National Code 2018**, and **Australian Consumer Law**

### 2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and complies with:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 10)
- Australian Consumer Law

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All current and prospective students (domestic and overseas)
- Complaints and appeals relating to:
  - Training and assessment
  - Academic decisions
  - Administrative services
  - Fees and refunds
  - Deferrals, suspensions and cancellations
- All staff, contractors, and agents of Contempo College

### 4. Definitions

#### **Complaint:**

An expression of dissatisfaction about services provided by Contempo College.

#### **Appeal:**

A request by a student for review of a decision made by the RTO.

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## 5. Principles of Complaints and Appeals Handling

Contempo College ensures that all complaints and appeals are:

- **Accessible** – no cost to the student
- **Fair and unbiased** – free from victimisation or discrimination
- **Transparent** – processes and outcomes are clearly communicated
- **Confidential** – privacy is respected at all times
- **Timely** – handled within reasonable timeframes

Students may be accompanied or assisted by a support person at any stage.

## 6. Complaints Process

### 6.1 Lodging a Complaint

- Complaints should be submitted in writing using the Complaints Form or via email
- Complaints may be lodged by or on behalf of a student

### 6.2 Acknowledgement and Review

- Complaints are acknowledged in writing within **10 working days**
- An investigation is conducted by staff independent of the matter where possible

### 6.3 Outcome

- The student is advised in writing of the outcome
- Reasons for the decision are provided
- Any corrective actions are implemented

## 7. Appeals Process

### 7.1 Lodging an Appeal

- Appeals must be lodged in writing within **20 working days** of the initial decision
- The appeal must state the grounds for review

### 7.2 Appeal Review

- Appeals are reviewed by an appropriately qualified and independent decision-maker
- The student is given an opportunity to present their case

### 7.3 Appeal Outcome

- The outcome is communicated in writing
- Reasons for the decision are provided
- The decision is implemented promptly

## 8. Overseas Student Appeals (National Code 2018)

For overseas students:

- Access to the complaints and appeals process is **free of charge**
- If the student is dissatisfied with the internal outcome, they may access an **external appeals body** at no cost

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During the appeal process:

- The student's enrolment is maintained until the internal and external processes are concluded, unless the matter relates to identified serious misconduct

## 9. External Complaints and Appeals

Overseas students may access the **Overseas Students Ombudsman** for external review if unresolved internally.

Access to external review **does not limit** the student's right to pursue other legal remedies.

## 10. Records and Confidentiality

Contempo College maintains accurate and secure records of:

- Complaints and appeals received
- Investigations conducted
- Decisions and outcomes
- Corrective actions implemented

Records are retained in accordance with the Document & Records Management Policy.

## 11. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Principal Executive Officer (PEO)**
  - Ensures the integrity of the complaints and appeals system
- **Campus Manager**
  - Oversees complaint and appeal handling
  - Ensures fairness and timely resolution
- **Staff**
  - Inform students of their rights and procedures
  - Cooperate fully in investigations

## 12. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

Complaints and appeals data is used to:

- Identify systemic issues
- Improve services and processes
- Reduce future complaints

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- Following regulatory changes
- After audit findings or repeated complaints

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### 13. Related Policies

- Student Admission & Enrolment Policy
- Fees, Charges, Refunds & Provider Default Policy
- Deferral, Suspension & Cancellation Policy
- Governance, Risk & Compliance Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy

### 14. Status

This policy satisfies:

- **Consumer protection requirements**
- **National Code Standard 10**
- One of ASQA's **most frequently tested compliance areas**



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