Complaints and Appeals Policy

Purpose
This Complaints and Appeals Policy and related procedure are designed to ensure that QIBA responds effectively to individual cases of dissatisfaction. This policy outlines QIBA’s approach to managing complaints and appeals and ensures that all clients, students, employers and other stakeholders are aware of the steps to take to have their dissatisfaction addressed appropriately.

This Policy meets the requirements of Standard 8 of the National Code 2007 'Registered providers’ complaints and appeals processes are independent, easily and immediately accessible and inexpensive for the parties involved.

This Policy meets the requirements of NVR Standard 16.7 The RTO provides appropriate mechanisms and services for learners to have complaints and appeals addressed efficiently and effectively.’

Definitions
Complaint – a person’s expression of dissatisfaction with any service provided by QIBA.
Formal complaint – a written complaint
Appeal – a request to review a decision that has previously been made as a result of a formal complaint.

Policy

NOTE: THIS PROCESS IS TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE
THE STUDENT SUBMITS THEIR CONCERNS TO ASQA, the Professional Bodies or the Ombudsman – dependent on the course and visa type student is on at the time of the complaint being lodged.

1. Complaints and appeals systems
1.1. Despite all efforts of QIBA to provide satisfactory services to its students, complaints may occasionally arise requiring formal resolution.
1.2. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that this Complaints and Appeals Policy is made available to all stakeholders via the website.
1.3. QIBA is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints and appeals system which is easily accessible and offered to complainants at no charge. QIBA aims to:
   1. develop a culture that views complaints and appeals as an opportunity to improve the organisation and how it works
   2. set in place a complaints and appeals handling system that is client focused and helps QIBA to prevent these events from recurring
   3. ensure that any complaints and appeals are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality
   4. ensure that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a complaint or appeal is not discriminated against nor victimised
   5. ensure that there is a consistent response to complaints and appeals.
   6. Both parties may be assisted by a support personal in any relevant meeting.
1.4 All formal complaints and appeals and their outcomes will be recorded on the Complaints and Appeals Register.
2 Nature of complaints
2.1 Complaints and appeals may be made be on any aspect of QIBA’s services, activities and decisions such as:
1. the enrolment, induction/orientation process
2. the quality of education provided
3. training and assessment matters, including student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course of study
4. access to personal records
5. decisions made by QIBA
6. the way someone has been treated.

3 Resolving issues before they become a complaint
3.1 Students are encouraged, wherever possible; to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned to deal with the issue before it becomes a formal complaint. QIBA’s Student Support Officers and other staff members are available to assist students to resolve their issues at this level.
3.2 Students must be made aware of the criticality of exhausting the in-house process for complaints resolution, using the internal and external complaints procedure before taking the matter to ASQA, the Professional Bodies or the Ombudsman.

4 Lodging a complaint
4.1 Formal complaints and appeals are to be made in writing to the Student Support Officer.
4.2 All parties are encouraged to approach matters with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation.
4.3 Where student complaints are discussed, records of the discussion and outcomes are to be recorded and placed on the student file.
4.4 Student complaints that cannot be resolved through discussions with the student support officer may be escalated to the CEO for resolution.
4.5 This escalation will require interaction with the complainant to achieve resolution.
4.6 Where the student is satisfied by the resolution, the matter is closed. Where the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, then they may appeal the decision. Students have the right to make an appeal against the decisions made by QIBA.
4.7 Appeals against any decisions are to be made in writing following this Formal Complaints and Appeals procedure.
4.8 Appeals against assessment decisions and other academic matters must be made within twenty (20) days of the original decision being made.

5 Resolution
5.1 All formal complaints and appeals will be responded to as soon as possible but within twenty (20) days. Resolution may take a longer period of time, depending upon the complexity of the matter.
5.2 Where a student chooses to access this policy and procedure, QIBA will maintain the student’s enrolment while the complaints handling process is ongoing.

6 Record keeping and confidentiality
6.1 A written record of all complaints and appeals handled under this policy and procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of at least two (2) years to allow all parties to the complaint or appeal appropriate access to these records.
6.2 All records relating to complaints and appeals will be treated as confidential and will be covered by QIBA's Privacy and Personal Information Policy.

7 Non-limitation of policy/External Appeals

7.1 This policy and related procedure do not replace or modify those or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this policy and related procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws.

7.2 Students have the right to access the external appeals process. Where this is the case, the matter shall be referred to the external independent mediator at no cost to the student.

8 External Appeals Contact Information - Third party mediation organisations

8.1 Overseas Students Ombudsman
Students studying English or are enrolled in the Diploma Courses

Web: www.oso.gov.au
Email: overseas.students@ombudsman.gov.au
Call 1300 362 072 (Local call charge)
Enquiries 9 am–5 pm Monday to Friday

8.2 Domestic VET and ELICOS
Students (including permanent residents)
Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

It is generally a requirement the student has tried to resolve the complaint using QIBA’s (the Registered Provider) internal complaints and appeals process first.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Web: www.asqa.gov.au
Call 1300 701 801 (Local call charge)
Enquiries 9 am–7 pm Monday to Friday


8.3 Professional Year Program
Contacts for the Professional Bodies overseeing the program on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP).

Accounting Students: info@smipa.org.au
ICT Students: education@acs.org.au
Engineering Students: professionalyear@eeaust.com.au

This policy does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.