



QUANTUM INSTITUTE
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Purpose	3
Scope	3
1. Policy Principles.....	3
2. Complaints.....	3
3. Appeals.....	5
4. Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting	6
5. Privacy and Records Management	7
Appendix I – External Complaints and Appeals Assistance.....	8
Appendix 2 – Flowchart of Complaints and Appeal Management Poces	10
Glossary.....	11
Version Control.....	12

Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure ('the Policy') outlines the process and procedures for managing students' complaints and appeals at Quantum Institute of Higher Education ('QIHE' or 'the Institute') in accordance with TEQSA Standards and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018. QIHE is committed to ensuring a fair, transparent and accessible framework for resolution that upholds a positive learning environment and fosters continuous improvement of institutional practices.

Scope

This Policy applies to all students and staff involved in managing complaints and appeals at QIHE.

I. Policy Principles

QIHE upholds the following principles in managing complaints and appeals:

- i. **Transparency and Impartiality.** Ensuring that all processes are undertaken in a transparent, fair and impartial manner;
- ii. **Uphold Student's Rights.** All students have equal right to express their complaints, grievances and seek appeals without fee;
- iii. **Fair Process.** All complaints and appeals will be handled in accordance with the principles of natural justice, based on individual circumstances and ensuring no conflict of interest will impede on the fairness of the process. Unreasonable complaints and appeals that lack substance will be dismissed;
- iv. **Prompt Management.** Committing to a prompt process of complaints management and appeals with sensitivity and confidence;
- v. **Continuous Improvement.** The outcome of the complaints and appeals processes are to be recorded for analysis and continuous improvement of the Institute's operations.

2. Complaints

2.1 Areas of Complaints

Complaints refers grievances or dissatisfaction towards any aspect of the student's experience in the educational journey with the Institute and/or individuals associated with the Institute.

QIHE identifies 3 main areas of complaints which constitutes but are not limited to:

- i. Academic Matters and Decisions

This may include complaints regarding, but are not limited to:

- a. Student results;

- b. Teaching quality;
 - c. Academic staff professionalism;
 - d. Classes and timetabling matters;
 - e. Academic integrity breaches;
 - f. Learning and teaching resources or facilities.
- ii. Behaviour of Others

Refers to complaints regarding the behaviour of other students or staff as well as external parties that are associated with the Institute. Where the behaviour constitutes misconduct, the matter will be processed formally in line with the applicable policies and procedures, such as the *Staff Code of Conduct*, *Student Code of Conduct* or *Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy*.

- iii. Administrative Process

Refers to complaints regarding the processes and administrative matters at the Institute. Complaints may arise from the application and enrolment process, classes administration, fee payment administration, or other program administration or process.

2.2 Informal Complaints

Students are encouraged to resolve matters and grievances informally, which can be done by discussing the issue directly with the relevant parties and/or staff members. Should students not be comfortable in communicating to the involved student or staff, students can informally raise the matter with the Student Services Manager or respective Course Director. For matters regarding teaching and learning in class, students are encouraged to raise the matter directly towards their teaching staff for assistance.

2.3 Procedures on Formal Complaints

i. Stage I: Formal Lodgement of Complaint

If informal approaches fail to resolve a grievance, students have the option to escalate the matter by lodging a formal complaint. To initiate this process, students must complete the Complaints and Appeal Form, accessible on the Institute's website or provided by the Student Services team upon request. No fee is required for submitting a complaint.

In the Complaints and Appeal Form, students are required to include details of:

- a. Full name and contact information of the student initiating the complaint.
- b. If applicable, the full name of the individual(s) involved in the complaint.
- c. A detailed account of the situation, including relevant dates, location of the issue, and any witnesses, if available.
- d. Any documentation that might support the complaint.
- e. Description of any prior efforts made to resolve the matter informally.

The formal lodgement of the complaint must be lodged within twenty (20) working days of the issue arising, however should there be extenuating circumstances that prevent the student from lodging the complaint within the timeframe, the details and reason for the late lodgement should be included in the Form for effective resolution. The Form can then be submitted to the Student Services via email for further processing. All details disclosed in the formal complaint will remain confidential and will only be used for the process of assessment and investigation of the complaint.

ii. Stage 2: Assessment and Investigation of Complaint

Upon the submission of the formal complaint, a dedicated Student Services staff will send an acknowledgement of receipt to the complainant. All complaints will be assessed within ten (10) working days from the date of receipt. Should the Institute require more time to properly assess the complaint, the student will be notified in writing, along with a *Complaints and Appeal Outcome Form*. Following the assessment of the complaint, the student will be informed of the outcome and the suggested resolution.

Resolution may include:

- a. Issuance of apologies and correction to the error;
- b. Administering penalties to the parties that have been found at fault;
- c. Convening a meeting between the complainant, relevant parties, the Student Services and the Dean.

No parties will be victimised or discriminated against during the process. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the complaint can either be resolved immediately in accordance with the applicable Institute policies or processed further (proceed to Stage 3: Further External Process and Resolution). The Institute seek to resolve the matter in the most reasonable and appropriate way possible. Students who are dissatisfied with the solution provided at this stage can submit an appeal.

Outcomes will be sent to the complainant and properly documented.

iii. Stage 3: Further External Process and Resolution

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the matter may not be able to be resolved after the assessment and initial suggested resolution for the complaint. In that case, the matter could be referred to an external process. Students may contact relevant external parties or organisation to assist them in the resolution process. Please refer to the Appendix of this Policy for an indicative list of external groups and organisations that students can contact to assist them. During the whole process, the student or complainant will remain enrolled within the Institute.

3. Appeals

3.1 Appeal of Decision

An appeal refers to the process where students request for reassessment of a decision made by the Institute. This may include but not limited to disputing decisions regarding admission decisions, assessment decisions, penalties on misconducts, or resolutions provided for complaints.

3.2 Procedures on Appeal

- i. Should a student wish to appeal a decision, they are required to complete the Complaints and Appeal Form. Similar to the formal lodgement process for complaints, the complainant should include details of:
 - a. Full name and contact information of the student initiating the complaint;
 - b. The situation and their reasoning for appeal;
 - c. Other supporting information and/or documentation to support their appeal.
- ii. The Form should then be submitted to Student Services via email for further processing. Upon the submission of the Form, Student Services will send an acknowledgement of receipt to the student to indicate that it is received.
- iii. The appeal will be assessed in a transparent and fair manner by the appropriate staff member, assuring the decision maker is independent to the original complaint. Appeals regarding academic matters will be assessed by the Learning Support and Academic Integrity Manager, respective Course Director alongside the Dean. Other appeals such as regarding administrative matters are to be assessed by the Student Services Manager alongside the Dean. Other parties may be called to assess the appeal should it be required by the nature of the appeal.
- iv. Interview with the student may be convened to allow the student to present their case and defence for their appeal.
- v. All parties who are involved in the assessment of the appeal are required to assess the case impartially and with fairness, abiding by the relevant policies and procedures in place. The decision must be based on appropriate reasoning and the principles of natural justice.
- vi. Once a decision has been made, the student will be given a written statement of outcome on the appeal alongside a *Complaints and Appeal Outcome Form*. The outcome will include the details and rationale behind the decision as well as advice regarding their right to access external appeal handling process.
- vii. During the appeals process, the student will remain enrolled within the Institute except in circumstances where the students pose a health or safety concern to others.
- viii. For appeals that are relating to cancellation of enrolment for international students, the Institute will not report to PRISMS before the process is completed.

4. Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

To ensure fairness, consistency and accountability, the process of complaints and appeals management will be thoroughly monitored and documented. The outcomes of complaints and appeals should be reported to the Executive Management Team, the Academic Board and the Governing Council at their regular meeting to ensure that areas of improvement could be identified and actioned. This Policy and the procedures on complaints and appeals management will be regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness and continuous compliance.

This Policy is to be made accessible to all students in the Institute's website alongside with the Complaints and Appeal Form. Students will be advised regarding this Policy and the procedures during their orientation. During any process of the complaint or appeal process, the student or complainant may choose to withdraw their complaint or appeal in writing to Student Services. The Institute may still investigate and assess the complaint and appeal for improvement purposes and ensuring the continuous maintenance of a safe and comfortable learning environment for students.

5. Privacy and Records Management

Documentation of the process and outcomes are to be kept in QIHE's records. All records will be kept in accordance with the *Records Retention Policy*.

Furthermore, QIHE upholds the importance of everyone's privacy through the process of complaints and appeals management. All records and information of students will remain confidential within the Institute's database and no information should be disclosed except with the permission of the parties involved and/or should it be required by the relevant authorities.

Appendix I – External Complaints and Appeals Assistance

Provided are the indicative list of external groups and organisations that students can contact to assist them for the complaints and appeals process should they be dissatisfied with the internal resolution process. QIHE covers all fees charged by the external groups and organisations.

Commonwealth Ombudsman

(For overseas students)

Provides free service to assist current or former overseas students of private higher education providers in their complaints should they be dissatisfied with the provider's internal resolution process.

Business Hours: 9:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday

Phone: 1300 362 072

Website: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/making-a-complaint/overseas-students>

Resolution Institute

(For domestic students or matters that are not covered by the Commonwealth Ombudsman)

Offers specialised expertise and assistance in resolving disputes related to higher education, providing an additional avenue for recourse and redress for individuals who seek resolution beyond the scope of the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Address: Level 1 and 2, 13-15 Bridge Street, Sydney, NSW 2000

Phone: + 61 2 9251 3366

Fax: + 61 2 9251 3733

Email: infoaus@resolution.institute

Website: www.resolution.institute

Administrative Appeals Tribunal (ATT)

(For all students)

For reviewable decisions, students have the right to seek the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for a review. The Tribunal will charge for appeals. The list of reviewable decisions can be found in the following: <https://www.aat.gov.au/resources/legislation-and-jurisdiction>

Phone: 1800 228 333

Level 6 83 Clarence St Sydney NSW 2000

The Australian Human Rights Commission

Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure
Page 8 of 12

(For all students)

The AHRC provides a free and accessible complaint process, ensuring that individuals have recourse and support when facing issues of discrimination and human rights abuses. Students can seek the AHRC to address grievances relating to equality or human rights.

Phone: 1300656419

Website: <https://humanrights.gov.au/complaints#maincontent>

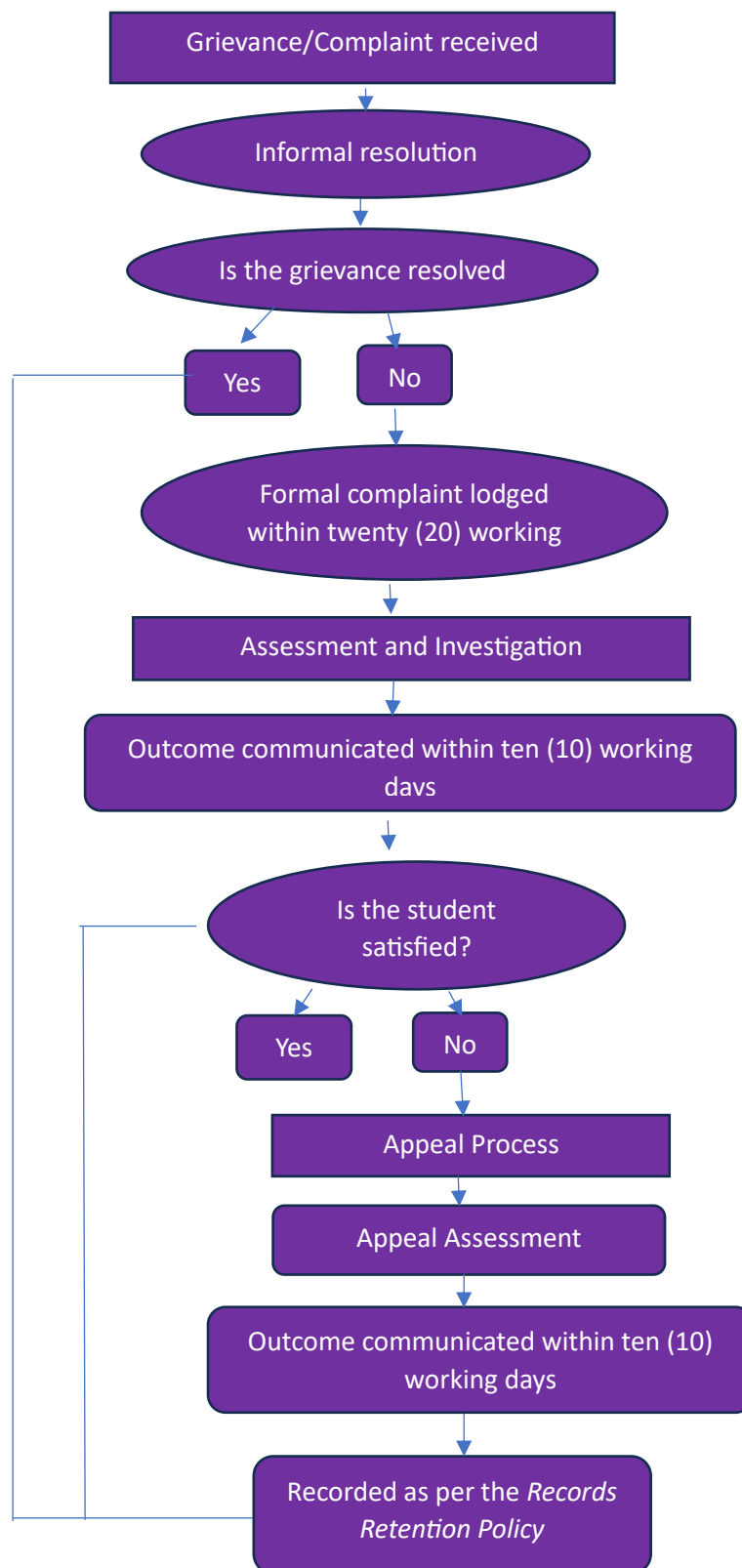
The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACC)

(For all students)

For matters regarding a breach of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010, students can seek the assistance of ACCC.

Website: <https://www.accc.gov.au/>

Appendix 2 – Flowchart of Complaints and Appeal Management Process



Glossary

Assessment refers to a process used to determine a student's achievement of expected learning outcomes (AQF 2013 p.92).

AQF refers to the Australian Qualifications Framework, the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training.

Course refers to QIHE's units of study or subjects.

Governing Body refers to all the functional bodies QIHE.

Members of the Committee refers to all members of QIHE's Governing Body, including members of the Governing Council, Academic Board, Course and Industry Advisory Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Risk Committee. and Executive Management Team.

Program refers to the Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Information Technology degree that QIHE is preparing to establish.

TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) refers to the independent national regulator for the higher education sector in Australia.

Version Control

Version	1.0
Last Review	1 May 2024
Policy Category	Academic Board
Related Documents	<i>Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure</i> <i>Equity and Diversity Policy</i> <i>Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy</i> <i>Staff Code of Conduct</i> <i>Student Code of Conduct</i> <i>Records Retention Policy</i>
Legislation References	TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 AS/NZS 10002:2014 Australian/New Zealand Standard, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations
References	Holmes Institute Lincoln Institute of Higher Education Kent Institute Australia The University of Adelaide College UNSW College