

# Appeals Policy and Associated Procedures

## 1. Purpose

This policy provides students with the right to appeal decisions made by IOIS, ensuring a fair and transparent review process. It meets **SRTOs 2025 – Standard 2.6** and **National Code 2018 – Standard 8**.

## 2. Definitions

- **Appeal** – A request by a student to review a decision made by IOIS, particularly relating to assessments, enrolment, deferrals/suspensions, or course progress decisions.
- **Appellant** – A person lodging an appeal.
- **Assessment Appeal** – An appeal against an assessment decision (e.g., a grade or competency judgement).
- **Independent Assessor** – A qualified person not previously involved in the decision, appointed to review an assessment appeal.
- **Decision** – The outcome of a formal process, including assessment judgements, enrolment decisions, or disciplinary actions.

## 3. Policy Statements

- Appeals may relate to:
  - Assessment outcomes.
  - Enrolment decisions.
  - Course progress or attendance reporting.
  - Deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment.
- Appeals must be lodged within **20 working days** of the decision.
- IOIS maintains enrolment during appeals, except where suspension/cancellation relates to misbehaviour.
- An independent assessor will be appointed for assessment appeals.
- Appeals are handled at no cost to the student.

## 4. Procedures

### Step 1: Lodging an Appeal

- A student who wishes to appeal a decision made by IOIS must complete an **Appeal Form**. This form is available from **Student Support** or on the website.

- The form must be submitted within **20 working days** of the date the decision was communicated to the student. Appeals received outside this timeframe may not be considered unless there are compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- On receipt of the Appeal Form, the **Student Support Officer** will:
  - log the appeal,
  - confirm that the form is complete, and
  - acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing within **3 working days**.
- The acknowledgement will include the next steps, the staff member managing the appeal, and the expected timeframe for resolution.

## Step 2: Review

- The **RTO Manager** is responsible for overseeing the review of the appeal.
- If the appeal relates to an **assessment decision**, the RTO Manager will appoint an **independent assessor** who:
  - has not been involved in the original assessment,
  - holds the required vocational competencies and training/assessment credentials, and
  - is impartial and objective.
- If the appeal relates to other types of decisions (e.g., course progression, deferral, suspension, cancellation), the RTO Manager will review relevant records, policies, and evidence, and may interview the student and any relevant staff members.
- The review or investigation will commence within **5 working days** of receiving the appeal.
- During the process, principles of **natural justice and procedural fairness** will be upheld. This means the student will have the opportunity to present their case, no one with a conflict of interest will make decisions, and all evidence will be considered fairly.

## Step 3: Decision

- Following the review or independent reassessment, a decision will be reached.
- A **written outcome** will be provided to the student within **20 working days** of receipt of the appeal. The written response will include:
  - a summary of the appeal,
  - the steps taken to review the appeal,
  - the decision made,

- the reasons for the decision, and
- information about external appeal options if the student is not satisfied with the outcome.
- If, due to exceptional circumstances, the appeal cannot be finalised within **20 working days** IOIS will inform the student in writing, explain the reasons for the delay, and provide **regular updates**. In any case, the process will not exceed **40 working days** unless agreed with the student.

#### Step 4: External Appeal Options

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal, they may escalate the matter to external agencies for independent review:

- **Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO)** – for international students only.
  - Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)
  - The OSO investigates complaints about private education providers, including appeals about assessment decisions, course progress, and enrolment matters.
- **Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)** – for compliance-related issues.
  - Website: [www.asqa.gov.au/complaints](http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints)
  - ASQA does not advocate for students but investigates systemic non-compliance with the Standards for RTOs or the National Code.
- **National Training Complaints Hotline** – a national service for lodging VET-related complaints.
  - Phone: **13 38 73** (Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm nationally).
  - Email: [ntch@education.gov.au](mailto:ntch@education.gov.au)

## 5. Responsibilities

- **Student Support Officer** – Provides appeal forms and explains rights.
- **RTO Manager** – Oversees appeals process and ensures fairness.
- **Independent Assessor** – Reviews assessment appeals impartially.
- **CEO** – Reviews process integrity and approves final decisions.

## Document Version Control

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