

Complaints Policy and Associated Procedures

1. Purpose

This policy ensures students and stakeholders can raise complaints about any aspect of IOIS operations in a fair, transparent, and timely manner. It meets **SRTOs 2025 – Standard 2.7 - 2.8**

2. Definitions

- **Complaint** – An expression of dissatisfaction about services, facilities, decisions, actions or behaviours of IOIS, its staff, students, or third parties acting on its behalf.
- **Complainant** – A person lodging a complaint.
- **Natural Justice / Procedural Fairness** – Ensuring decisions are fair, unbiased, and both parties are given a chance to present their case.
- **Third Party** – Any organisation or individual providing services on behalf of IOIS (e.g., education agents, training partners).

3. Policy Statements

- Complaints may be made against IOIS, trainers, assessors, other staff, students, or third parties.
- Complaints may relate to: services, facilities, communication, behaviour, or external providers.
- IOIS ensures all complaints are managed with natural justice, transparency and timeliness.
- Complaints may be resolved informally or through a formal written process.
- Complaints are handled at no cost to the student.
- Complaints will be acknowledged within **3 working days** and resolved within **20 working days** unless extended with written notice.

4. Procedures

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- Wherever possible, complainants are encouraged to first attempt to resolve the issue informally with the person directly involved. This may include having a respectful conversation to clarify misunderstandings, raise concerns, and seek a mutually agreeable solution.

- If the complainant does not feel comfortable approaching the person involved, or if the issue is not resolved at this stage, they may seek assistance from the RTO Manager or an appropriate senior staff member who may facilitate an informal mediation.
- If the issue remains unresolved after informal discussions, or if the complainant prefers not to pursue informal resolution, the matter should proceed to the formal complaints process.

Step 2: Formal Complaint

- To lodge a formal complaint, the complainant must complete a Complaint Form, which is available from Student Support or the IOIS website.
- The Complaint Form must be submitted within **20 working days** of the incident or issue arising. Exceptions may be made where there are compassionate or compelling reasons for a delay in submission.
- The completed Complaint Form should be submitted to the Student Support Officer, who will ensure the complaint is logged and acknowledged.
- IOIS will provide a written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint within **3 working days**. This acknowledgement will include confirmation that the complaint has been received, the name of the person managing the complaint, and an estimated timeframe for resolution.

Step 3: Investigation & Outcome

- The RTO Manager will commence an investigation within **5 working days** of receiving the formal complaint.
- The investigation will involve gathering relevant evidence, which may include:
 - written statements from the complainant and any other involved parties,
 - interviews with staff, students, or third parties,
 - review of records, policies, and other documentation relevant to the complaint.
- Throughout the process, principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be applied. This means:
 - each party will have the opportunity to present their perspective,
 - decision-makers will remain impartial and unbiased, and
 - decisions will be based on evidence, not assumptions.
- Once the investigation is completed, IOIS will provide the complainant with a written outcome within **20 working days**. This written notice will include:
 - a summary of the complaint,

- the steps taken to investigate the complaint,
 - the findings of the investigation,
 - the decision made,
 - the reasons for the decision, and
 - information about how to access external options if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved within **20 working days**, the complainant will be advised in writing of the delay, the reasons for it, and provided with regular updates until the matter is finalised.

Step 4: External Options

If the complainant is not satisfied with IOIS's resolution, they may escalate the complaint to external agencies for independent review. These include:

- National Training Complaints Hotline – a national service that registers complaints related to vocational education and training.
 - Phone: 13 38 73 (Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm nationally).
- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) – the national VET regulator. ASQA investigates issues relating to compliance with the Standards for RTOs and the National Code but does not resolve individual disputes.
 - Website: www.asqa.gov.au/complaints
- Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) – for international students. The OSO investigates complaints about problems that overseas students have with private education providers.
 - Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

5. Responsibilities

- **Student Support Officer** – Receives complaints and assists students with forms.
- **RTO Manager** – Investigates complaints and determines outcomes.
- **CEO** – Reviews process integrity and signs off outcomes.

6. Related Documents

- Complaint/Appeal Form
- Complaints & Appeals Register
- IOIS Student Handbook

- IOIS Assessment Policy
- IOIS Deferral, Suspension, Withdrawal & Cancellation Policy
- IOIS Continuous Improvement Policy

Document Version Control

Document Title	IOIS Complaints Policy and Associated Procedures	
Reviewed By	Compliance Manager	
Approved By	Chief Executive Officer	
Version	Changelog	Created / Modified Date
1.0	IOIS Complaints Policy and Associated Procedures <i>V1.0</i>	July 2025