

# Complaints and Appeals

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## Purpose

This document outlines Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) policy and procedure on managing and responding to complaints and appeals for the Registered Training Organisation (RTO). The policy summaries the AHRI roles and responsibilities as per the RTO Standards 2025.

## Policy

This policy outlines the process for managing and responding to complaints and appeals at AHRI the RTO to ensure they are handled, recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively. This policy relates to responding to complaints about a situation, a process, a person or people (students, Academic Co-ordinators or any other staff), a facility, a service provided by AHRI, the RTO or a third-party providing services on behalf of AHRI/RTO.

AHRI's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is available on the AHRI website, and on Student Portals to inform learners of their rights and what they can expect from AHRI when managing their complaints and appeals.

AHRI will attempt in all instances to identify potential causes of complaints and appeals and take appropriate action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence through its continuous improvement process. A complaints and appeals process exists for both academic and non-academic issues. The student's enrolment will be maintained while the complaint or appeal is undergoing.

The student will have the opportunity to formally present their case at no cost.

## Procedure

AHRI's complaints and appeals management system ensures:

- (i) Procedural fairness is afforded to all parties involved.
- (ii) Reasonable timeframes are established for responding to and resolving complaints and appeals.
- (iii) Avenues for further action are available if complaints and appeals are not resolved.

All complaints or appeals are handled with confidentiality, sensitivity and with respect for privacy.

A formal complaint or appeal must be lodged via an online form available on the AHRI's website and on the LMS. Students can also access the policies and procedures by contacting the AHRI Student Support team.

# Complaint and Appeals Procedure for RTO Academic Matters

## Step 1: Informal Resolution

The individual should first discuss the academic issue/matter with the Academic Coordinator or the AHRI Student Support team to attempt achieving a resolution.

## Step 2: Formal Complaint Submission

If the issue remains unresolved or the individual is dissatisfied with the outcome, the individual may lodge a Complaints and Appeals Form (CAAF). The form can be accessed via:

- AHRI website
- LMS Portals, or
- The AHRI Student Support Team.

The HR Standards and Capability (HRSC) Team Lead, Delivery Coordination will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and or appeal in writing within five (5) working days and formally record the complaint in the Complaints and Appeals Register and notify AHRI HR Standards & Capability Delivery Manager (HRSC). The complaint is assessed by an impartial staff member, ensuring no conflict of interest and who was not involved in the original decision.

## Step 3: Investigation

The AHRI HRSC Delivery Manager will commence the process of investigation within ten (10) working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal. The HRSC Delivery Manager will consult relevant parties such as the Academic Coordinator, student support staff, etc as required.

Investigations are conducted to establish facts and explore potential resolutions. The complainant may be requested to provide further information or attend a meeting. If a meeting is required, the complainant may be accompanied by a support person. The investigation process will be recorded and all findings documented.

## Step 4: Outcome Notification

The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision within twenty (20) working days of formal lodgement. The notification will include:

- The outcome of the appeal,
- Actions taken, and
- Reasons for the decision.

The notification to be sent to the complainant at the contact details provided in the complaint and appeals form via email and registered post (if physical address is provided). The details of the outcome will also be recorded and documented.

## Step 5: Decision Review

If the matter remains unresolved to the individual's satisfaction, they can request to have the decision reviewed to AHRI's General Manager HR Standards & Capability by submitting an appeal in writing within five (5) working days of the date of the Outcome Notification. At this stage, an independent review of the complaint may be initiated, if necessary, where the independent reviewer will assess the case and provide a final internal decision within twenty (20) working days of formal lodgement of the appeal.

The complainant will be notified in writing of the final outcome decision and the reasons for the decision.

## Step 6: External Resolution

If the matter remains unresolved after the AHRI Complaints and Appeals Process has been utilised, they can make a complaint to the RTO regulatory body Australian Skills and Quality Authority (ASQA) [ASQA - Lodge a Complaint](#) or contacting the National Training Complaints Hotline (a referral service).

AHRI's internal process does not prevent students from pursuing further external remedies.

RTO No: 110087

## General Notes

**60-Day Resolution Limit:** If the complaint or appeal takes longer than 60 calendar days to resolve, AHRI will:

- Notify the student of the delay and reasons for it, and
- Provide regular updates on the progress of the matter.

## Special Notes: Assessment Review

If the matter involves a review of assessment results, the student must:

1. Discuss their feedback with the Academic Coordinator before applying for a review.
2. Submit the CAAF within 10 working days of receiving their marked assessment.
3. Provide sufficient grounds for the review and submit the original marked assessment.

**Assessment Review Outcomes may result in:**

- a) No error is found; the existing result is accepted; or
- b) Agreement to amend the result where an error has been found; or
- c) Agreement to an internal or independent external re-assessment of the work

Students are required to provide sufficient grounds on the CAAF to justify their request for review and submit the original and marked assessment as applicable. Where insufficient grounds for re-assessment are given, the application for review may be declined.

All outcomes will be provided in writing, including reasons for the decision. Where a review of assessment result is an internal or independent external re-assessment of the work, a fee of \$50 will apply if the student requests this service.

## Complaint and Appeals Procedure for Non-Academic Matters

### Step 1: Informal Resolution

The individual should discuss the issue with the relevant party such as AHRI Student Support team, or Academic Coordinator, to seek an informal resolution.

### Step 2: Formal Complaint Submission

If the issue remains unresolved or the individual is dissatisfied with the outcome, the individual may lodge a Complaints and Appeals Form (CAAF). The form can be accessed via:

- AHRI website
- LMS Portals, or
- The AHRI Student Support Team.

The HRSC Team Lead, Delivery Coordination will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and or appeal in writing within five (5) working days and formally record the complaint in the Complaints and Appeals Register and notify AHRI HR Standards & Capability Delivery Manager (HRSC). The complaint is assessed by an impartial staff member, ensuring no conflict of interest and who was not involved in the original decision.

## Step 3: Investigation

The AHRI HRSC Delivery Manager will commence the process of investigation within Ten (10) working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal. The HRSC Delivery Manager will consult relevant parties such as the Academic Coordinator, student support staff, etc as required. Investigations are conducted to establish facts and explore potential resolutions. The complainant may be requested to provide further information or attend a meeting. If a meeting is required, the complainant may be accompanied by a support person. The investigation process will be recorded and all findings documented.

## Step 4: Outcome Notification

The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision within twenty (20) working days of formal lodgement. The notification will include:

- The outcome of the appeal,
- Actions taken, and
- Reasons for the decision.

The notification to be sent to the complainant at the contact details provided in the complaint and appeals form via email and registered post (if physical address is provided). The details of the outcome will also be recorded and documented.

## Step 5: Decision Review

If the matter remains unresolved to the individual's satisfaction, they can request to have the decision reviewed to AHRI's General Manager HR Standards & Capability by submitting an appeal in writing within five (5) working days of the date of the Outcome Notification. At this stage, an independent review of the complaint will be initiated, if necessary, where the independent reviewer will assess the case and provide a final internal decision within twenty (20) working days of formal lodgement of the appeal.

The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome decision and the reasons for the decision.

## Step 6: External Resolution

If the matter remains unresolved post-review, the individual can pursue other legal remedies or refer to:

- Consumer Affairs,
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC),
- Australian Human Rights Commission, or
- other relevant external bodies.

AHRI's internal process does not prevent students from pursuing further external remedies.

## General Notes

**60-Day Resolution Limit:** If the complaint or appeal takes longer than 60 calendar days to resolve, AHRI will:

- Notify the student of the delay and reasons for it, and
- Provide regular updates on the progress of the matter.

## Disciplinary procedures

AHRI expects that every student and member of staff will treat fellow students and staff with complete integrity, dignity and fairness. However, it is acknowledged that on rare occasions, where all other resolution processes have failed, there may be a need for disciplinary action to be taken. Accordingly, the AHRI *General Manager, HR Standards & Capability* may, after hearing all sides of the argument, impose disciplinary penalties ranging from a warning through to expulsion (for students). In all instances a disciplinary decision can be appealed through the Complaints and Appeals Process.

## Definitions

- A **working day** is any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time.
- A **student** is a person enrolled in an AHRI education or training program or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age.
- A **support person** is a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance. Please note that lawyers are not acceptable support persons at this stage of the complaints handling process.
- **ASQA** - Australian Skills and Quality Authority
- **CAAF** - Complaints and Appeals Form
- **Academic Co-ordinator** – is the person assigned the role of trainer and or assessor for the RTO

## Related Documents

Fees and Refunds Policy

Program Information Guide

CAAF: Complaints and Appeals Form