

Standard 1.5

The RTO must document and implement policies and procedures for dealing with customer complaints and appeals in a constructive and timely manner

Policy

Cambridge International College has a documented procedure, the *Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure* by which it ensures that student complaints and appeals are addressed in a timely and transparent manner. The College undertakes to ensure that:

- (i) All disputes Complaints and Appeals will be handled professionally, equitably, confidentially, and in a timely manner, with a view to achieving satisfactory resolution;
- (ii) All parties will have a clear understanding of the steps involved in the *Student Complaints and Appeals* procedure, prior to, and during the carrying out of the procedure;
- (iii) Prospective students are provided with a copy of the *Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure* document before making a contract to enrol, and again at course commencement;
- (iv) Relevant staff members are familiar with the *Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure*

Procedure

Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Stages of the Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Stage 1: Students are encouraged, in the first instance, to resolve the concern or difficulty with the staff member(s) and/or students concerned.

Stage 2: Where satisfactory resolution is not reached as Stage 1, the matter is referred to the Head of Studies (academic and attendance issues) or the Student Support Officer/Student Counsellor (personal or other/general concerns).

Stage 3: If the Head of Studies or Student Support Officer/Student Counsellor is unable to resolve the situation at Stage 2, then, the student may submit a *Student Complaint Notification Form* to their Head of Studies (academic and attendance issues) or the Deputy Principal (personal or other/general concerns). It is noted, at this stage, that a formal serious complaint has been lodged.

Stage 4: The Complaints committee is convened in response to the formal notification of a serious Complaint. The Complaints committee will consist of the student, and the student's representative (if requested), the Head of Studies or Deputy Principal, the Principal, and an independent chairman agreed to by all parties.

Stage 5: Where the Complaints committee is unable to resolve the issue at Stage 4, and the student lodges an Appeal, then the Principal must appoint an external mediator to conduct the Appeals process. The Principal will contact ACPET, the peak Private Education Providers' industry body to provide a list of counsellors who may conduct the Appeals Process. The student's agreement is necessary at this stage, as the College and the student are required to share the cost of engaging an external mediator.

Stage 6: If the student is unsatisfied with the outcome of the Appeal, then the Principal will suggest the student contact other Authorities or agencies for assistance or advice. See point 5 in the *Details relevant to the Complaints and Appeals Procedure* section.

- ❖ The stages of this procedure are also outlined in diagrammatic form at the end of this document.

Details relevant to the Complaints and Appeals Procedure:

1. Students may raise any matters of concern relating to teaching/training delivery, assessment, certification, compliance, student amenities, discrimination, harassment and any other issues that may arise.
2. Description of types of Complaints:
 - 2.1 An academic matter – something to do with teaching, learning, or assessment issues in a student's course (see the relevant teacher/teachers or Head of Studies)
 - 2.2 An administrative matter – anything to do with the management of the College and/or the administration of a student's enrolment at the College (see the Student Administration Manager or Deputy Principal)
 - 2.3 A more general matter – anything to do with a student's comfort, safety and general well being whilst attending the College (see the Student Support Officer/Student Counsellor or Deputy Principal)
3. Cambridge International College commits to address and, if possible, to resolve any Complaint fairly and equitably within five (5) working days of the matter being brought to the attention of CIC.
4. Cambridge International College will encourage the parties to approach a Complaint with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation. Where a Complaint cannot be resolved, the need for an appropriate external and independent agent to mediate between the parties is acknowledged.
5. English Language Students are referred to Appendix I and Appendix II to ensure that lower-level English language users have access to the Student Complaints and Appeals procedure.
6. Nothing contained in this Complaints and Appeals procedure prevents a student from exercising their rights to other legal remedies or obtaining advice from other authorities or agencies:
 - 6.1 The Chief Executive Officer of the *Office of Employment, Training and Tertiary Education* (OTTE) has the power under legislation, to suspend or cancel the registration of a provider or a course. Students may make a complaint by contacting officers at OTTE, on 9637 2333.
 - 6.2 Contact the *Law Institute of Victoria* on 9607 9550 or go to www.liv.asn.au/ for referral to a solicitor
 - 6.3 Contact *Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)* on 1300 55 8181, or go to www.Complaintline.com.au
 - 6.4 Contact the *Department of Education & Training (DE&T)* on 9637 2222 (Education Line) or 1800 809 834, or go to www.det.vic.gov.au
 - 6.5 Contact the *Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria* on 9 281 7100 (Complaints Line), or go to www.eoc.vic.gov.au

Who is Responsible

- Principal

Documentation Required

- **Stage 1:** Record of interview, signed and dated by interviewer and student
- **Stage 2:** As Stage 1
- **Stage 3:** (i) As Stage 1
(ii) Student Complaint Notification form
(iii) Notation in student electronic file record
- **Stage 4:** Written record of meeting signed and dated by the Principal and the student
- **Stage 5:** (i) Written record of lodged Appeal signed and dated by Principal and student
(ii) Written record of outcome of the Appeals process signed and dated by Principal, the independent mediator, and student

Diagram of Complaints and Appeals Procedure at Cambridge International College

