

**AHETI**Transforming Aspirations into
Australian Health Careers

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1.1 This Policy aims to establish the fundamental principles and structure for addressing complaints and appeals within AHETI, encompassing both academic and non-academic decisions.
- 1.2 It sets forth the criteria for an equitable, transparent, and efficient process for handling complaints and appeals, with the goal of enhancing the overall student experience.
- 1.3 The Policy ensures that all students, including prospective students and graduates, as well as AHETI staff, have access to clear and readily available information about the process, including their right to escalate a complaint or appeal to an external authority.
- 1.4 This Policy is applicable to all individuals associated with AHETI, such as students, prospective students, graduates, and staff.
- 1.5 It addresses complaints and appeals relating to various aspects of the student experience, which may encompass admissions, academic programs, assessments, student progress, instances of academic misconduct, bullying, discrimination, harassment, administrative procedures, interactions with AHETI staff, or other students. It is worth noting that grievances from AHETI staff members are addressed under the AHETI Staff Complaint Handling and Resolution Policy and are not covered by this Policy.

2 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 In the context of this Policy and its associated Procedures, the following definitions shall apply:



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- i. AHETI – Australia Health Education and Training Institute
- ii. ASQA – Australian Skills Quality Authority, the national regulatory body overseeing vocational education and training for RTOs.
- iii. VET – Vocational Education and Training.
- iv. The Board – The governing body overseeing AHETI.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 AHETI students are entitled to an equitable and unbiased process for addressing appeals and complaints, ensuring:

- i. Principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- ii. Transparency, accountability, and confidentiality.
- iii. Effective, two-way communication and feedback.
- iv. Efforts to resolve concerns through informal means where feasible and suitable.
- v. Timely resolution of issues, preferably at the source of dissatisfaction.
- vi. Regular reviews of procedures.
- vii. Continuous improvement of the appeals process and its outcomes.

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4 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 AHETI ensures that all individuals, including prospective and current students, client organisations, and staff, are well-informed about the AHETI Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and have easy access to it. Information about this policy is provided to students before admission, during orientation, and via the AHETI website.
- 4.2 Complaints and appeals must be made responsibly. AHETI takes such matters seriously and respects the rights of all parties involved. Each complaint should be filed individually. Malicious complaints are considered student misconduct and are handled in accordance with AHETI's Student Code of Conduct.
- 4.3 The rights of all parties participating in a complaint or appeal are safeguarded.
- 4.4 Whenever feasible, complaints are addressed at the local level, involving the parties directly affected. This approach aims to achieve satisfactory outcomes for matters that can be resolved informally.
- 4.5 In cases where informal resolution is not possible, complainants can submit a written complaint or appeal. Written complaints and appeals must be in English. Upon receipt, all complaints and appeals are forwarded to the AHETI Director for review. A written acknowledgment of the complaint or appeal is provided within two (2) business days, and all reasonable efforts are made to conclude the process within 15 business days.
- 4.6 There are no charges for lodging an internal complaint or appeal.
- 4.7 Any party involved in a complaint may have a support person present at relevant meetings. Legal representation may attend with seven (7) business days' notice.



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- 4.8 Requests for privacy and confidentiality will be considered by the staff member managing the complaint. This includes consultations with the support person and/or the complainant, as needed. Staff members seeking guidance on this matter should seek advice from the AHETI Director.
- 4.9 All parties engaged in a complaint or appeal are regularly informed, in writing, about the progress and outcomes, including the reasons for the outcome.
- 4.10 During the complaint or appeal procedure, a student will typically remain enrolled and continue their studies, except in cases where there is a potential health or safety risk to the student or others.
- 4.11 A complainant can withdraw their complaint or appeal at any time. The complainant/appellant should promptly notify the staff member managing the complaint or appeal in writing. Within two (2) business days, the staff member managing the complaint or appeal informs all parties that the complaint or appeal has been withdrawn. AHETI may still choose to investigate the complaint or appeal.
- 4.12 A student has the right to refer a complaint or appeal to a relevant external agency at any time. In such cases, AHETI may take further action in response to the complaint or appeal based on the external agency's determination. External agencies may include, among others, the Office of the Training Advocate, Equal Opportunity Commission, Australian Human Rights Commission, or Police.
- 4.13 Any actions resulting from a complaint or appeal are promptly executed in line with the relevant AHETI policy or procedure, as applicable.
- 4.14 Penalties may be imposed on anyone who victimises or retaliates against a complainant or a support person of either party.



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5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The AHETI Director is responsible for enforcing this Policy and has the authority to delegate some or all of these duties to a member of AHETI's staff.
- 5.2 The AHETI Director, or the appointed delegate, is tasked with:
- i. Creating and upholding suitable procedures for overseeing and supervising the implementation of this Policy and the Complaints and Appeals Procedure.
 - ii. Presenting an annual report to the AHETI Committee concerning Student Complaints and Appeals.
 - iii. Referring complaints with the potential for significant reputational risk to the Senior Management Team.
 - iv. Addressing complaints and appeals brought forth by students related to academic and non-academic issues in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Procedure.
 - v. Ensuring students are informed about and supported in resolving complaints and appeals.



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For more information

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