

**AHETI**Transforming Aspirations into
Australian Health Careers

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 AHETI Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure outlines the steps for putting into action AHETI Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 1.2 AHETI aims to:
 - i. Promote an environment that embraces student complaints and appeals as valuable chances to enhance organisational and academic procedures, the student experience, or training courses.
 - ii. Ensure the swift and equitable resolution of student complaints and appeals, with attention to privacy and confidentiality by the staff member overseeing the complaint.
 - iii. Integrate the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness into the complaint resolution process to guarantee fair and rational decision-making.
 - iv. Observe natural justice when it impacts the rights, interests, or legitimate expectations of individuals.
 - v. Take measures to prevent the recurrence of problems.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 The Procedure offers complainants and appellants a transparent framework for initiating a complaint or appeal and ensures that all relevant parties are kept informed of the actions taken and the outcomes throughout the resolution process.

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3 MAKING A COMPLAINT

- 3.1 For a complaint to be addressed, it must be submitted in written form. Complaints can be lodged by individuals who are prospective, current, or former students, or by client organisations when the complaint relates to a student. There are no time constraints for individuals wishing to make a complaint.
- 3.2 AHETI Student Complaints and Appeals Policy is accessible to the public. Information on how to access the policy is provided on AHETI's website and in the Student Handbook.
- 3.3 All complaints should be directed to the AHETI Director. It is advisable for complainants to use the Student Complaints form, which can be found on AHETI's website.
 - i. The person making the complaint should receive a written acknowledgment within two (2) business days after the complaint is received. This acknowledgment will be sent using a standardised email template. It will inform the complainant that they can expect a written response within fifteen (15) business days. Additionally, it will provide information on the complaint handling process, as well as the individual's rights and responsibilities. Detailed information on the complaints handling process can be found in AHETI Student Handbook.
 - ii. The complaint needs to be recorded in the Student Complaints and Appeals Register, which is securely stored on the shared drive and maintained by the Student Administration Officer.
 - iii. The Student Complaints and Appeals Register includes information about the person making the complaint, any parties affected, their relationships or roles with AHETI, the nature of the complaint, the results or outcomes, any connections to the Continuous Improvement report, as well as the dates when the complaint was received and resolved.



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- 3.4 It is the responsibility of the AHETI Director to decide if the complaint necessitates additional inquiry or discussion.
- 3.5 Complaints are a regular topic on the weekly AHETI Operations meeting to ensure that they are appropriately addressed and resolved, with the appropriate measures taken to maintain confidentiality where necessary.
- 3.6 When a complaint involves allegations concerning another individual, such as a trainer, AHETI is obligated to notify the person in question about the complaint or allegation and afford them the opportunity to respond and provide relevant information in response to the issues raised.
- 3.7 If a complaint is received and it pertains to allegations of potential criminal behavior, the AHETI Director recommends that the complainant considers referring the matter to the relevant Police Service.
- 3.8 In cases where the AHETI Director deems a complaint to be of a serious nature, such as posing a reputational risk to AHETI, a significant compliance breach, or when impartiality on the part of the AHETI Director is in question, the matter is escalated to the attention of the External Academic Chairperson. The External Academic Chairperson will, when necessary, refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer of AHETI (CEO). If deemed necessary, the CEO may seek guidance from the Complaints Resolution Unit at AHETI regarding the matter.
- 3.9 If the investigation requires more time beyond the initial fifteen (15) business day decision period, the AHETI Director reviews the outcomes of the investigation or consultation and establishes a response within a reasonable timeframe. The complainant and all affected parties are informed within the initial fifteen (15) business day period that the investigation will take longer. The Complaints Response letter template is used to communicate the findings and outcomes to the complainant. Section 5 details the records retained by AHETI.



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- 3.10 For issues of a non-criminal nature, AHETI maintains the enrollment of the complainant throughout the complaint handling process. In cases of a criminal nature, AHETI seeks guidance and direction from the relevant authority. Complaints regarding AHETI staff members are addressed in accordance with The Complaint Management Policy.
- 3.11 Decisions or outcomes of the complaint handling process that favour the complainant will be promptly implemented.
- 3.12 The complainant and all parties affected have the right to present their case and access all pertinent information available in AHETI Misconduct documents. Complainants are granted the opportunity to respond, ensuring that natural justice and procedural fairness are upheld throughout every stage of the complaint process.
- 3.13 When deemed necessary, an independent panel, known as the Student Complaints and Appeals Panel, will be convened to review the complaint or appeal. The panel will consist of three members from AHETI Committee, with attention to ensuring diversity in the selection. Panel members should not have had prior involvement with the complaint. The selection of panel members will be determined and communicated by the AHETI Director, subject to approval by the CEO. The panel membership will include a representative who is unaffiliated with AHETI.
- 3.14 AHETI requests written acknowledgment from the complainant once the complaint has been resolved.
- 3.15 The procedures for handling complaints conclude with an evaluation of the circumstances to identify potential areas for improvement, as outlined in AHETI Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy.
- 3.16 The outcome of the complaint must be accurately updated and recorded in the Student Complaints and Appeals Register by the AHETI Director or the Student Administration Officer.

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- 3.17 After the internal complaint handling process has concluded, if the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be informed of their right to refer the matter to any external authority or agency that might be relevant to their complaint.
- 3.18 If the internal process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal, the complainant may request a review conducted by an appropriate independent party not affiliated with AHETI. Such services can be arranged through the Australian Mediation Association (<http://www.ama.asn.au>). AHETI will cover the cost of one mediation session, which can last up to two hours. If further mediation is needed, any subsequent costs will be borne by the complainant or appellant.

4 MAKING AN APPEAL

- 4.1 AHETI Student Complaints and Appeals Policy is readily accessible to the public, and you can find information on how to access it on AHETI website and in the Student Handbook.
- 4.2 Students have the option to appeal decisions made by AHETI in the following areas:
- i. Academic appeals;
 - ii. Decisions related to deferral, suspension, or cancellation of a student's enrollment; OR
 - iii. Any other determinations or conclusions reached after an initial formal complaint has been addressed by AHETI, provided that reasonable grounds can be established.
 - iv. To initiate an appeal, students must submit the Appeals Form, which is available on AHETI website.
- 4.4 The student will provide a brief summary of the reasons for their appeal and why they believe the initial decision was unjust.



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- 4.5 All appeals should be directed to the AHETI Director.
- i. Upon receiving the appeal, the appellant will receive a written acknowledgment within two (2) business days. This acknowledgment will use a standard email template and inform the appellant that they can expect a written response within fifteen (15) business days. It will also explain the appeals handling process and the individual's rights and responsibilities, which are detailed in AHETI Student Handbook.
 - ii. The appeal is to be recorded in the Student Complaints and Appeals Register, securely maintained on the shared drive by the Student Administration Officer. The Student Complaints and Appeals Register includes information about the appellant, the nature of the appeal, the findings or outcomes, any connections to the Continuous Improvement report, as well as the dates when the appeal was received and closed.
- 4.6 It is the responsibility of the AHETI Director to determine if the appeal necessitates further investigation or consultation.
- 4.7 AHETI maintains the enrollment of the appellant throughout the appeal handling process.
- 4.8 In cases of academic appeals, where a student seeks to appeal an assessment decision, an alternative Assessor is designated to re-evaluate the student's submission.
- 4.9 If the appeal investigation extends beyond the initial fifteen (15) business day decision period, the AHETI Director reviews the outcomes of the investigation or consultation and decides on a response within a reasonable timeframe. The appellant is informed within the initial fifteen (15) business day period that the review will require more time. The Appeals Response letter template is used to communicate the findings and outcomes to the appellant.

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- 4.10 If deemed necessary, an independent panel, known as the Student Complaints and Appeals Panel, will be convened to review the appeal. The panel will consist of three members from AHETI Committee, with attention to ensuring diversity in the selection. Panel members should not have had prior involvement with the appeal. The selection of panel members will be determined and communicated by the AHETI Director, subject to approval by the CEO.
- 4.11 The procedures for handling appeals conclude with an evaluation of the circumstances to identify potential areas for improvement, as outlined in AHETI Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy.
- 4.12 The outcome of the appeal must be accurately updated and recorded in the Student Complaints and Appeals Register by the AHETI Director or the Student Administration Officer.
- 4.13 After the internal appeal process has concluded, if the appellant remains dissatisfied, they will be informed of their right to refer the matter to any external authority or agency that might be relevant to their complaint.

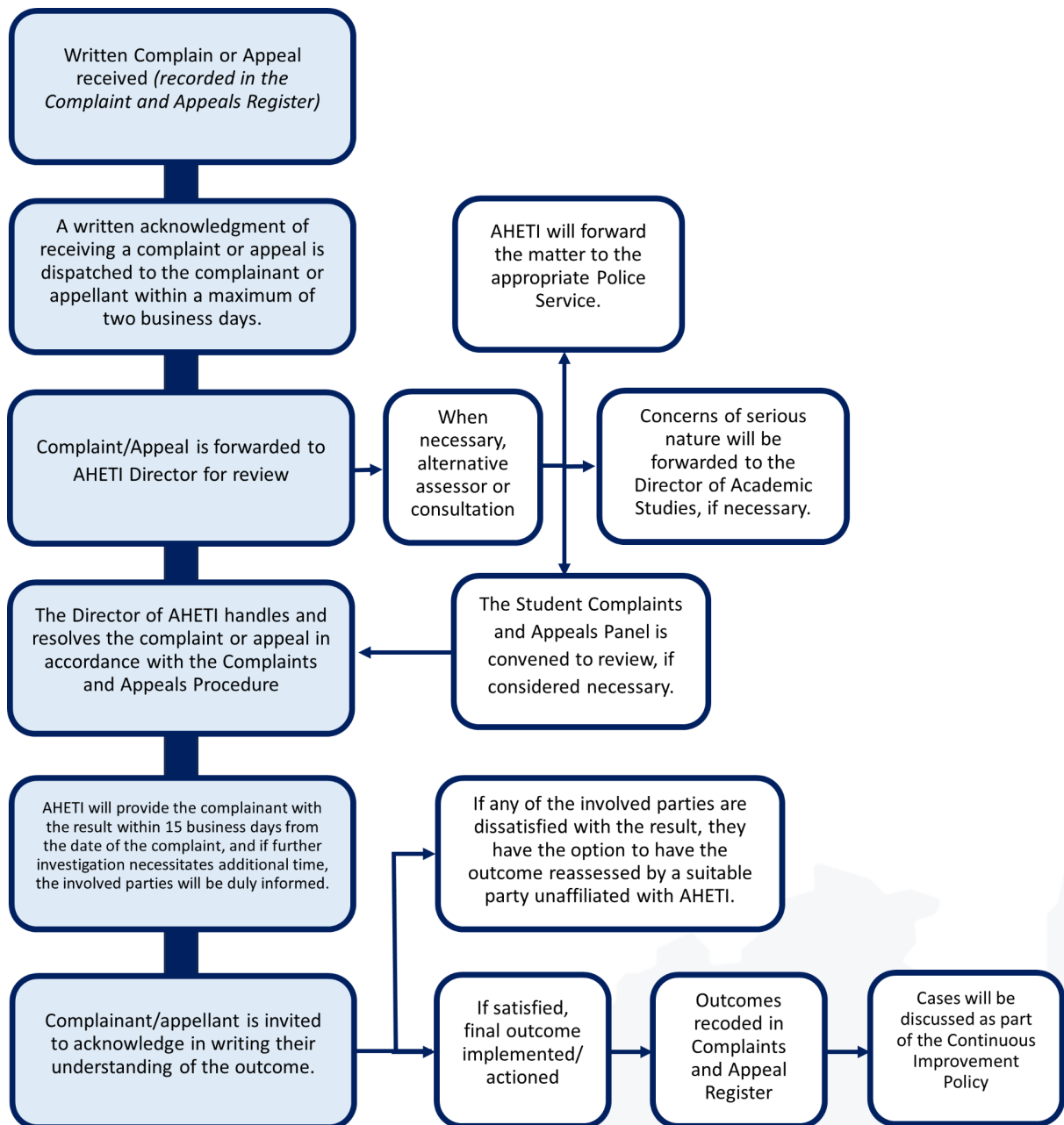
5 RECORD KEEPING

- 5.1 All records are maintained in accordance with AHETI's Records Policy and Procedure.
 - i. Records are kept for every complaint and appeal, containing the names of all those involved, a description of the complaint or appeal, any supporting documents, immediate actions taken, and records related to the investigation.
 - ii. All records, regardless of their original format, are stored in a digital format within a secure folder on AHETI common drive file storage. Access to this folder is restricted to the AHETI Director and the Student Administration Officer. Each file is to be clearly labelled with the document title or subject and the date it was received or generated.



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For more information		
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