## PP07 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

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<td>Entity relating to</td>
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<td>Reference to HESG &amp; SNR:</td>
<td>F. C Clause 12 F. C Schedule 1, Clause 1.5</td>
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<td>Related Documents:</td>
<td>PP02 Fees &amp; Charges PP03 Student Engagement PP04 Training &amp; Assessment PP08 Quality Management PP10 Governance and Administration PP13 Issuing AQF Certification &amp; Statement of Attainment Student Handbook Complaints and Grievance Register</td>
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<td>Statutory References</td>
<td>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 Standards for RTO’s – SNR 6</td>
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1. Purpose

Stirling Institute of Australia has a defined and transparent Complaints and Appeals process sufficiently broad to cover its activities. Stirling Institute of Australia will ensure students’ Complaints and Appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly. The procedure provides the mechanisms for students to have their Complaints and Appeals addressed efficiently and effectively, and by an independent party if necessary. This Complaints policy is also publicly available.

2. Policy Statements

Stirling Institute of Australia has a Complaints Policy to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of its Trainers, Assessors or other staff and students enrolled in a training program with Stirling Institute of Australia.

Stirling Institute of Australia has an Appeals Policy to manage requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions made by Assessors.

Stirling Institute of Australia Complaints and Appeals policy ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process and;

a. Are publicly available;

b. Set out the procedure for making a complaint or requesting an appeal;

c. Ensure complaints and requests for an appeal are acknowledged in writing and finalised within 60 days.

Stirling Institute of Australia will provide the option for review by an appropriate independent party at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal if the process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal.

Stirling Institute of Australia will securely maintains records of all Complaints and Appeals and their outcomes, and identify the potential cause of Complaints and Appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

3. Definitions

3.1 Complaint

Complaints arise when a student is not satisfied with any aspect of Stirling Institute of Australia for example:

a. The Procedures;

b. The Quality of a product or service provided by Stirling Institute of Australia;

c. The Facilitators, staff or other students.

3.2 Appeal

Appeals arise when a student is not satisfied with the decision made as a result of the complaint.

a. Stirling Institute of Australia recognises the differences between Complaints and Appeals. A quick resolution of the matter is in the best interest of all parties concerned.

b. Appeals may also arise when a student is not satisfied with an assessment outcome.
This procedure is also included within the Student Handbook.

3.3 Non-academic matters

Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the Student. Non-academic grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider.

3.4 Academic matters

Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a VET course of study.

4. Academic Grievance Process

If a student was to make an academic complaint, they would follow the below process:

- **Student wishing to appeal an assessment decision, have 14 days to notify their assessor after receiving the results**
- **Where appropriate the assessor may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable assessment decision was made**
- **If the student is not satisfied, the student must lodge an appeal in writing using the Complaints form to the Operations Manager.**
- **The assessor will complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why the assessment was competent or not & submit to the Operations Manager**
- **The written report will be documented in the Complaints and Appeal Register**
- **The Operations Manager will document the appeal in the Complaints and Appeals Register**
- **The Operations Manager shall seek details from the Assessor involved & make a decision regarding the appeal. The decision will indicate if the assessment decision stands or request a reassessment by a suitably qualified 3rd party assessor appointed by the Operations Manager**
- **The student will be notified in writing within 20 business days from the initial lodgement of their appeal regarding the outcome & the reason for the decision. The Complaints and Appeals Register is updated.**
- **The student will be provided with the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome.**
5. Non-Academic Grievance Process

5.1 Informal Grievance Procedure
Stirling Institute of Australia seeks to foster communication and co-operation and to provide an environment in which all issues can be satisfactorily resolved. The preferred approach is the informal resolution of a grievance.

In the first instance a student or prospective student is encouraged to raise the matter with the staff member or responsible person concerned. Where this is not considered appropriate then the student is encouraged to discuss the matter with Stirling Institute of Australia.

If the student is satisfied with the outcome of the discussion, it would mean that the matter is resolved. Records of the outcome shall be maintained by the Operations Manager, who will update the Complaints and Appeals Register accordingly.

5.2 Formal Grievance Procedure
General principles apply to all stages of this grievance procedure which will be adhered to by Stirling Institute of Australia. These include:

- The complaintant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure
- The complaintant and/or the respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire
- The complaintant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised. At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the complaintant and/or respondent if requested
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored in the office of the senior manager
- A complaintant shall have access to this grievance procedure at no cost.

Below is a step by step process for making a formal complaint:

**Stage One**
If a Formal grievance is made, the student must complete our Complaints Form and send it to:

- Operations Manager
- Stirling Institute of Australia
- 223 Park Street
- South Melbourne, Vic 3205

The Operations Manager within the Stirling Institute of Australia will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint.
The Complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

**Stage Two**

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One, they may lodge an appeal in writing to:

Anthony Walsh  
Chief Executive Officer  
Stirling Institute of Australia  
223 Park Street  
South Melbourne, Vic 3205

The Complainant’s appeal will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer (the Reviewer). The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

**Stage Three**

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two, they may request the matter be referred to an external dispute resolution process by a body appointed for this purpose by the Stirling Institute of Australia.

The details for the external body and contact person are:

Dispute Assessment Officer  
Disputes Settlement Centre of Victoria  
Level 4, 456 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Tel: 1300 372 888  
Fax: 8684 1311

Stirling Institute of Australia will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within 10 working days of the receipt of the recommendations.

**Stage 4**

Continuous improvement and action on substantiated complaint/appeal

Stirling Institute of Australia will take appropriate actions to implement changes/improvements where necessary in accordance with the outcome of substantiated complaints.
Any improvement action arising from a student grievance or appeal will be recorded in accordance with the Stirling Institute of Australia Continuous Improvement process.

6. Responsibilities

All staff and clients adhere to Stirling Institute of Australia Policies and Procedures. The Operations Manager with direct access to the CEO, has the responsibility to ensure that Stirling Institute of Australia complies with all of the statements and processes included in this document and maintains these standards across all of the areas of operation of Stirling Institute of Australia.