

POLICY: COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS	
Policy Name	Complaints and appeals
Policy No	STU32A
Associated Policies	STU32B Complaints and appeals
Associated Procedures	STU32B Complaints and appeals
Associated Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints and Appeals Register
Standards	Guide to Standards 2015 for RTO's: Marketing and Recruitment: Support and Progression / Clauses 1.7, 5.4 and 6.1 to 6.6—supporting and informing learners; managing complaints and appeals National Code of Practice 2018: Standard 10
<p>Overview</p> <p>Sydney Design School is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential academic and non-academic complaint handling procedure for all students.</p> <p>Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, attendance, course content in a CRICOS approved course of study.</p> <p>Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that Sydney Design School holds in relation to the student.</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>The General Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff members are fully trained in its operation and students are made aware of its availability.</p> <p>Guidelines</p> <p>The general principles that apply to all stages of this complaints and appeals procedure, which will be adhered to by Sydney Design School are:</p> <p>All complaints and appeals will be managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.</p> <p>The student and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.</p> <p>The student 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.</p> <p>The student and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.</p>	

The written complaint must be recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

At the meeting the student complaints and appeals form may be amended (if both parties agree) or a new form will be completed and signed by both parties during the meeting.

At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints 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 student and/or respondent if requested.

Records of all complaints will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored in the School records management system. The student shall have appropriate access to these records. The student shall have access to this complaint procedure without charge.

The School has arrangements in place for an independent and external person or body to hear complaints or appeals arising from the School's internal complaints and appeals process or refer students to an existing body where that body is appropriate for the complaint or appeal.

If the student is not satisfied with the result or conduct of the internal complaint handling and appeals process, the school will advise the student of his or her right to access the external appeals process at minimal or no cost.

If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, the School will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

This policy will ensure that if there is any matter arising from a student complaint or appeal that is a systemic issue which requires improvement action, this will be reported to the School's General Manager, and managed and implemented as part of the School's continuous improvement process to take corrective actions to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence. This will all be noted on the School's Continuous Improvement Register.

Where the School considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, it will:

- / Inform the complainant in writing as to why more than 60 calendar days are required; and regularly update the complainant on the progress of the matter.

Stage One

1. Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to the Student Registrar, who will confirm receipt of and process the complaint or grievance.
2. The Student Registrar within Design Schools Australia Pty Ltd trading as Sydney Design School will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within 5 business days.
3. 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: Appeal

1. If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the General Manager of Design Schools Australia Pty Ltd trading as Sydney Design School.
2. The Complainant's appeal will be determined by an independent and impartial officer of Design Schools Australia Pty Ltd trading as Sydney Design School. The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal.
3. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision, within five (5) business days. 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: External Support

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may lodge a complaint with the Overseas Students Ombudsman:

Overseas Students Ombudsman
 Telephone (in Australia): 1300 362 072 (9 AM to 5 PM AEST, Mon-Fri)
 Telephone (outside Australia): +61 2 6276 0111
 GPO Box 442
 Canberra ACT 2601 AUSTRALIA

The purpose of the external appeals process, in most cases, is to ensure that Sydney Design School has followed its policies and procedures.

Mediation

Sydney Design School is a member of the Resolution Institute: Student Mediation Scheme

www.resolution.institute

International Students

Sydney Design School will not report the overseas student through PRISMS for unsatisfactory course progress or attendance until the international student has accessed the internal and external complaints and appeals process and a decision or recommendation support the School.

External Appeals

If the international student is not successful with the registered providers complaints handling and appeals process, Sydney Design School will advise the student of their right to access an external complaints handling process at minimal or no cost.

This advice will be given to the student within 10 working days of the completion of the internal complaints handling and appeals process

The external appeals procedure will be determined by the independent mediator and all parties will be notified by the relevant Ombudsman of the steps, actions and outcomes.

Following the receipt of the outcome of the external appeal the School must immediately implement the decision and convey the outcome to the student, place a copy of the documentation on the student file and undertake any improvement actions arising from the complaint

The School will maintain the student's enrolment (and will continue to monitor the course progress for international students) whilst the external appeal is in progress. This enrolment will remain until the external appeals process is complete and the outcome is communicated to all parties.

Reporting in PRISMS

Sydney Design School will only report a student for unsatisfactory course progress or attendance in PRISMS after:

- / The internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the breach has been upheld;
- / The overseas student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20 working day period;
- / The overseas student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process; or
- / The overseas student with draws from the internal or external appeals process, by notifying Sydney Design School in writing

Further Complaints and Appeals

If an International student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal or external appeals process, they can access multiple external appeals. However, Sydney Design school is not obliged to assist the student further.

Authorised by	Nicole Watts
Date and Version	V1 25/8/2018 Lowri Evans