



Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

Australian Learning Group Pty Limited (ALG) is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaint and appeals handling process in accordance with Standard 6 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and Standard 10 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline ALG's complaints and appeals system in acknowledgement that from time-to-time students may be dissatisfied with their learning experience or disagree with a decision made by ALG and subsequently seek to complain or appeal.

For the purpose of this policy and procedure, complaints are verbal or written expressions of dissatisfaction with and of ALG's services. Appeals are a submission to dispute a decision made by ALG including decisions concerning complaints.

3. Scope

This policy and procedure apply to all ALG students and all ALG staff involved in the receipt, review, analysis, response of complaints and appeals. Complaints and appeals include but are not limited to complaints and appeals from students related to services provided by ALG, third party services delivered on behalf of ALG, and complaints and appeals from third parties about ALG staff and or students.

4. Policy

- 4.1. ALG ensures a fair, transparent, and accessible complaints and appeals process by informing students of the process in the Letter of Offer, Student Handbook, during orientation, and through publication on the ALG website which is available at all times.



- 4.2. ALG requires all written complaints and appeals to be submitted by completion of the relevant form available on the ALG website.
- 4.3. ALG will respond to any complaint or appeal the student makes regarding his or her dealings with:
 - ALG staff members including trainers and assessors;
 - education agents whom ALG has a third-party arrangement with;
 - other third-party organisations whom ALG has an arrangement with for the delivery of courses or related services; or
 - other students.
- 4.4. Complaints can arise from but are not limited to the following:
 - The quality of the training being delivered
 - Timetable issues
 - Work placement issues
 - Experiences with trainers or ALG staff members
 - Experiences of bullying, harassment, or discrimination on campus.
- 4.5. Appeals can arise from but are not limited to the following:
 - Outcomes of complaints
 - Rejection of requests (e.g., deferrals, suspensions and cancellations)
 - Notice of Intention to Report (ITR) for course progress or non-payment of fees
 - Outcome of academic misconduct or misbehaviour
 - Assessment outcomes.
- 4.6. ALG commences assessment of the complaint or appeal within 10 working days.
- 4.7. ALG's complaints and appeals system ensures the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process. ALG allows anyone subject to a decision or anyone who has allegations made against them, to tell their side of the story before a decision is made.
- 4.8. ALG treats complaints and appeals as strictly confidential. ALG will ensure that privacy and confidentiality are respected throughout the complaint or appeal process for all stakeholders concerned. However, ALG may not be in a position to guarantee confidentiality if a student's complaint or appeal is about another staff or person(s) who also have right to know about any allegations made against them and are to be given an opportunity to respond.
- 4.9. All stakeholders involved in the investigation during the course of the complaint or appeal process, must conduct themselves honestly and courteously and seek to achieve an amicable resolution of the complaint. No complainant will be



intentionally victimised or discriminated against during the course of the complaint or appeal process or as a result of the outcome of the complaint or appeal.

- 4.10. ALG may recommend the immediate escalation of certain complaint and appeal to the relevant regulating bodies, under certain extenuating circumstances.
- 4.11. Where relevant, students must provide appropriate and sufficient supporting evidence when submitting a complaint or appeal. Where further evidence is required for the assessment of a complaint or appeal, students must respond by the date outlined by ALG. Evidence that may be required from students is outlined in Appendix A. If a student elects not to respond to a request for further information or evidence, their case will be closed once the deadline has passed and their complaint or appeal may be automatically rejected.
- 4.12. Complaints or appeals concerning the same issue that are not supported by new supporting evidence will be immediately rejected.
- 4.13. For all formal complaints and internal appeals received, ALG ensures the student is provided a written outcome, including detailed reasons via email.
- 4.14. ALG aims to provide fair and consistent complaint and appeal outcomes by basing decisions on the evidence provided by the student, ALG's policies and procedures, the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.
- 4.15. ALG maintains full records of all formal complaints and appeals and their outcomes in relevant systems in accordance with the Records Retention Policy and Procedure.

5. Procedure

Informal Complaints

- 5.1. Where students experience any grievance, they are encouraged to raise matters informally with the relevant person(s) as the first step towards reaching resolution. At any time, students can engage in an informal complaint process by discussing the issue with relevant person(s) involved via appropriate channels. Students can initiate an informal complaint in various ways including the following:
 - talking to their trainer; or
 - emailing the relevant Course Coordinator; or
 - emailing the Student Experience Team at support@alg.edu.au.



ALG makes every attempt to resolve complaints through an informal process to maintain positive relations between all stakeholders. However, if an informal complaint has been raised and the matter is still not resolved or if it is inappropriate to discuss the issues with the staff or person(s) involved, the student is to submit a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints

- 5.2. Formal complaints must be lodged in writing using the [Complaints and Appeal Form](#), available on the ALG website. At any stage, the student may seek assistance from the Student Experience Team on how to complete the form. The formal complaint cannot be anonymous, and all fields must be completed.

Formal complaints must be submitted in writing within 20 business days of the occurrence or incident taking place. ALG will only review complaints raised after this 20-business day period in exceptional circumstances.

ALG will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within 3 business days and provide an outcome as soon as practicable, upon the completion of the investigation. ALG endeavours to provide a resolution to formal complaints within 15 business days. ALG may require more than 15 business days in cases where the formal complaint is particularly complex or requires further investigation. Where ALG requires more than 30 business days to process and finalise a formal complaint, ALG informs the student in writing, including reasons why the extended period of time is required and continues to provide periodic updates.

If a student complains about a staff member, ALG will ensure another staff member will investigate the complaint to ensure independence. If required, the relevant staff will be informed and given the opportunity to address the complaint through face-to-face meeting and negotiation. All stakeholders required in the face-to-face meeting and negotiation may be accompanied and assisted by a support person. Notes may be taken during this meeting. Following a face-to-face meeting and negotiation, the relevant staff member will follow up with an email that outlines what was discussed.

In the event of serious breaches to policy, practice or professional conduct, either party, being ALG or the affected student, may wish to seek legal advice at either party's own expense.

Student can choose to withdraw their complaint by emailing the Student Experience Team and citing the reasons for withdrawal. Any processes arising out of the complaint handling process may, at the discretion of ALG, continue or discontinue.



All formal correspondence between ALG and the student will continue to be made in writing for record-keeping purposes and clarity.

The student's Education Agent will be included in the outcome if the student indicates that they wish for them to be included in the correspondence.

In the event a student deems the outcome of the formal complaint to be inappropriate or not satisfactory, the student may choose to submit an internal appeal to ALG within 20 business days upon receipt of the outcome.

Internal Appeals

- 5.3. Internal appeals must be lodged in writing using the [Complaints and Appeal Form](#), available on the ALG website. At any stage, the student may seek assistance from the Student Experience Team on how to complete the form. The internal appeal cannot be anonymous, and all fields must be completed. At time of submitting the internal appeal, students must also provide all relevant supporting evidence. ALG reserves the right to reject the internal appeal if no additional supporting evidence is provided.

Internal appeals must be submitted in writing within 20 business days of the occurrence or incident taking place. ALG will only review appeals raised after this 20-business day period in exceptional circumstances.

ALG will acknowledge receipt of the internal appeal within 3 business days and provide an outcome as soon as practicable to the student, upon the completion of the investigation. ALG endeavours to provide a resolution to internal appeals within 15 business days. ALG may require more than 15 business days in cases where the internal appeal is particularly complex or requires further investigation. Where ALG requires more than 30 business days to process and finalise an internal appeal, ALG informs the student in writing, including reasons why the extended period of time is required and continues to provide periodic updates.

If the internal appeal concerns a staff member, the relevant staff will be informed and given the opportunity to address the appeal through face-to-face meeting and negotiation. All stakeholders required in the face-to-face meeting and negotiation may be accompanied and assisted by a support person. Notes may be taken during this meeting. Following a face-to-face meeting and negotiation, the relevant staff member will follow up with an email that outlines what was discussed.

If necessary, consultation with independent external agencies regarding issues raised will occur and necessary action(s) to resolving the issues will be taken.



In the event of serious breaches to policy, practice or professional conduct, either party, being ALG or the affected student, may wish to seek legal advice at either party's own expense.

Student can choose to withdraw their internal appeal by emailing the Student Experience Team and citing the reasons for withdrawal. Any processes arising out of the internal appeal process may, at the discretion of ALG, continue or discontinue.

All formal correspondence between ALG and the student will continue to be made in writing for record-keeping purposes and clarity.

The student's Education Agent will be included in the outcome if the student indicates that they wish for them to be included in the correspondence.

If the internal appeals process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the student, ALG will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision and advise the student of that action.

In the event a student deems the outcome of the internal appeal to be inappropriate or not satisfactory, the student may choose to engage in an external appeal within 10 business days upon receipt of the internal appeal outcome.

External Appeals

- 5.4. If the student is of the opinion that the internal appeal is not adequately resolved, they will be provided with an opportunity to formally submit an external appeal. The external appeals process needs to be initiated by the student. The student is required to inform ALG in writing once they have accessed an external appeal and provide the Case Number within 10 business days of receiving the internal appeal outcome so ALG can update its records to not cancel the Confirmation of Enrolment, if applicable to the student's case.

International students also have the option to engage the Commonwealth Ombudsman (otherwise known as the Overseas Student Ombudsman) in this external appeal process. The Commonwealth Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students who wish to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their training provider. More information is available on the [Commonwealth Ombudsman Website](#).

Whilst the Commonwealth Ombudsman is the first preference, there may be a situation where more suitable mediators are required.

Whereby a situation requires external counselling, mediation or judgement, then the student and ALG must both agree in writing on who this third-party mediator



will be, which will ensure fairness and independence. This third party will make the final judgement that will be binding to both ALG and the student.

In the case where there may be direct costs associated with the third-party mediator e.g., an external counsellor may charge an hourly fee to mediate, then the costs of this mediation process will be shared equally by both ALG and the student. Any expected costs of third-party mediation and the agreement to share these costs will also be outlined and agreed upon in writing.

Maintaining Enrolment of Students

- 5.5. ALG maintains students' enrolment throughout the internal appeals process for all internal appeals regardless of the subject. This means that ALG does not notify the Department of Home Affairs of any change to the student's enrolment status through PRISMS until the internal appeals process is finalised.

Whether ALG maintains the enrolment throughout an external appeals process depends on the subject of the appeal. ALG maintains the student's enrolment until the external appeals process is completed and a decision is made in favour of ALG wherein the external appeal concerns:

- a) Unsatisfactory course progress; or
- b) Attendance.

ALG does not maintain students' enrolment until the external appeals process where the appeal concerns:

- a) Deferral or a suspension of the student's enrolment due to behaviour misconduct or academic misconduct; or
- b) Cancellation of the student's enrolment due to non-payment of outstanding fees.

For appeals concerning the above, ALG only needs to await the outcome of the internal appeals process in favour of ALG before notifying the Department of Home Affairs through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment.

6. Definitions

The definitions of key terms relevant to this document are contained in the ALG Glossary.

7. Related Documents

- i. [Complaints and Appeals Form](#)
- ii. Complaints and Appeals Management Policy and Procedure
- iii. Records Retention Policy and Procedure.



8. Document Information and Review

Version	Date Effective	Approved by	Amendment	Date of next scheduled review
5.0	31 July 2023	Quality Assurance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated expected resolution time to 15 business days• Updated to new ALG template• Editorial changes	31 July 2026
6.0	22 December 2023	General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment with Standard 10 of the National Code 2018• Alignment with ASQA's guidance on complaints and appeals• Insertion of Appendix A• Editorial changes	22 December 2026

Appendices

Appendix A – Compassionate and Compelling Reasons Evidence Matrix

Compassionate and Compelling Reason	Accepted Evidence
Serious illness or injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A medical certificate from an Australian health practitioner covering the whole period that the student is affected and unable to attend class or meet other requirements A medical certificate from an overseas health practitioner in exceptional circumstances where the student is overseas
Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A death certificate in English A death certificate from another country accompanied by an English translation
Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return flight tickets to home country (for deferrals or suspensions) One way flight tickets to home country (for cancellations)
A traumatic experience, which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An official police report that captures the date or period the student is affected A medical certificate from an Australian health practitioner covering the whole period that the student is affected and unable to attend class or meet other requirements
The registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the overseas student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A – ALG will have evidence

This list of compassionate and compelling reasons and relevant evidence is not exhaustive and ALG may use discretion to assess all requests on a case-by-case basis.