

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Policy

This policy governs the process for fair complaints handling to ensure that complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively. This policy relates to responding to complaints about a situation, a process, a person or people, a facility, a service provided by or on behalf of AHRI by a third party.

AHRI's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is available on the AHRI website, Course Information Guides and Student Handbooks to inform learners of their rights and what they can expect from AHRI when managing their complaints and or appeals.

AHRI will attempt in all instances to identify potential causes of complaints and appeals and take appropriate action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

A complaints and appeals process exists for both academic and non-academic issues.

AHRI will investigate and respond to all complaints and appeals lodged by students:

- The process will commence within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and supporting information and all reasonable measures will be taken to manage and finalise the process in the shortest possible time.
- The student's enrolment will be maintained while the complaint or appeal is ongoing.
- The student will have the opportunity to formally present their case at no cost.
- Where a meeting is required regarding the complaint or appeal, the student and the other party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person.
- The student will be given a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- Where AHRI needs to make arrangements for final review by an independent party of the RTO at the individual's request, a fee of \$100.00 will apply.
- Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint can take further action through the Australian Skills Quality Authority at <http://www.asqa.gov.au>

In relation to all complaints or appeals, if the process results in a decision that supports the student, AHRI will immediately implement the decision and/or preventive action required and advise the student in writing of the outcome within five (5) working days.

Definitions

- A *working day* is any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time.
- A *student* is a person enrolled in an AHRI education or training program or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age.
- A *support person* is a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance. Please note that lawyers are not acceptable support persons at this stage of the complaints handling process.

Procedure

At AHRI every effort is made to ensure each student is able to appeal against any decision or incident they feel is unfair or inconsistent with what they were told prior to enrolment. All complaints or appeals are handled with confidentiality and sensitivity and according to the AHRI Complaints and Appeals Process.

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

A complaint or appeal should be lodged in writing on the AHRI Complaints and Appeals Form (see attached). The policy and form are mentioned in the Course Handbook and students can receive the policy and procedure (including the form) by contacting the AHRI Customer Operations Team.

AHRI will investigate and respond to all complaints and appeals lodged by students. The process will commence within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and supporting information and all reasonable measures will be taken to manage and finalise the process in the shortest possible time. Aggregate data sourced from complaints and appeals will be used for quality assurance purposes. (Note: No identifiers or personal information is used in the aggregate data. All complaints and appeals are handled with the utmost confidentiality and respect for privacy.) All complaints are lodged and tracked in a Complaints and Appeals Register which outlines details of specific instances including the complaint, action and outcomes.

Complaint and Appeals Procedure for Academic Matters

Step 1:

Discuss the academic issue/decision with the Academic Coordinator.

Step 2:

If the issue is not resolved, complete a Complaints and Appeals Form (available on the AHRI website or from the AHRI Customer Operations Team) and submit via email to: studentsupport@ahri.com.au

Step 3:

The appeal will be initiated within 10 working days and the case examined by the Senior Manager HR Practice Development and Academic Coordinator. Where a meeting is required regarding the appeal, the student may be accompanied by a support person.

Step 4:

The student will be advised of the outcome of the appeal within 4 weeks of formal lodgement, by the Senior Manager HR Practice Development and any action taken will be recorded.

Step 5:

If the matter remains unresolved, the student can raise the complaint or appeal with the AHRI GM HR Standards and Practice.

The AHRI GM HR Standards and Practice will provide a final opportunity for review by an independent reviewer, if the process has failed to resolve the complaint or appeal.

Step 6:

If the matter remains unresolved to the student's satisfaction, post the outcome of an independent review, they will be referred to ASQA to lodge their complaint, **Getting started—making a complaint about a training provider** <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/getting-started-making-complaint-about-training-provider>

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

AHRI'S internal complaints and appeals procedure for Academic matters

Step 1:

Academic Coordinator assists student with issue/complaint.

Step 2:

If the issue is not resolved, complete a Complaints and Appeals Form (**available on the AHRI website or from the AHRI Customer Operations Team**) and submit via email to: **studentsupport@ahri.com.au**

AHRI Customer Operations representative files Complaints and Appeals Form and lodges the complaint in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

Step 3:

AHRI Customer Operations representative presents formal complaint/appeal within 10 working days of the formal lodgement for examination at QA meeting. Where required, AHRI Education Team consultant to review process.

Step 4:

Senior Manager HR Practice Development advises student of outcome and any action to be taken within 4 weeks of formal lodgement. Records of action to be taken are also updated in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

Step 5:

If outcome of complaint/appeal is not the student's satisfaction, the AHRI GM HR Standards and Practice, will assist in resolving issue. GM HR Standards and Practice will provide a final opportunity for review by an independent reviewer, if the process has failed to resolve the complaint or appeal.

Step 6:

If matter remains unresolved from the student's perspective, post the outcome of an independent review, student will be referred to ASQA to lodge their complaint, **Getting started—making a complaint about a training provider** <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/getting-started-making-complaint-about-training-provider>

Additional Notes Regarding the Process

If the matter pertains to a request for a review of a result for any piece of assessment, the application must be submitted within 10 working days after the return of the assessment. Students may apply for assessment review only after they have discussed their performance with their academic coordinator. Students are required to provide sufficient grounds on the Complaints and Appeals form to justify their request for review and submit the original and marked assessment. Where insufficient grounds for re-assessment are given, the QA team may decline the application for review.

There are a number of options available in regards to the review of an assessment:

- a) No error is found and the existing result is accepted; or
- b) Agreement to amend the result where an error has been found; or
- c) Agreement to an internal or independent external re-assessment of the work; or
- d) Student to complete an Alternative or Supplementary Assessment.

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Depending on the complexity of the assessment review and in the event that the review results in a decision to have the piece re-assessed, it may take up to four weeks from the time the student submits their application to the time they are notified of the outcome. Where an assessment piece is required to be re-assessed, a fee of \$50 will apply.

All outcomes from the Complaints and Appeals Process will be provided to the student in writing and the reasons for any decisions will be given.

Complaint and Appeals Procedure for Non-Academic Matters

Step 1:

Discuss the issue with the AHRI Customer Operations Team.

Step 2:

If the issue is not resolved, complete a Complaints and Appeals Form (available on the AHRI website or from the Manager, Customer Operations) and submit via email to: studentsupport@ahri.com.au

Step 3:

The complaint will be initiated within 10 working days and the case will be examined by the AHRI. Where a meeting is required regarding the complaint, the student may be accompanied and assisted by a support person.

Step 4:

The student will be advised of the outcome of the complaint investigation within 4 weeks of formal lodgement, by the AHRI Manager, Customer Operations and any action taken will be recorded.

Step 5:

If the matter remains unresolved, the student can raise the complaint or appeal with the AHRI GM HR Standards and Practice, will provide a final opportunity for review by an independent reviewer, if the process has failed to resolve the complaint or appeal.

Step 6:

If matter remains unresolved from the student's perspective, post the outcome of an independent review, student will be referred to ASQA to lodge their complaint, **Getting started—making a complaint about a training provider** <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/getting-started-making-complaint-about-training-provider>

AHRI'S internal complaints and appeals procedure for Non-academic matters

Step 1:

Customer Operations representative assists student with issue/complaint.

Step 2:

Customer Operations representative files Complaints and Appeals Form and lodges the complaint in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

Step 3:

Customer Operations representative presents formal complaint/appeal for examination at QA meeting.

Step 4:

Manager, Customer Operations advises student of outcome and any action to be taken within 4 weeks of formal lodgement. Records of action to be taken are also updated in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

Step 5:

If the matter remains unresolved, the student can raise the complaint or appeal with the AHRI GM HR Standards and Practice, will provide a final opportunity for review by an independent reviewer, if the process has failed to resolve the complaint or appeal.

Step 6:

If matter remains unresolved from the student's perspective, post the outcome of an independent review, student will be referred to ASQA to lodge their complaint, **Getting started—making a complaint about a training provider** <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/getting-started-making-complaint-about-training-provider>

AHRI's dispute resolution procedures do not prevent the student from pursuing other legal remedies involving external dispute resolution organisations.

The above complaint and appeal procedure does not remove the right to take further action under Australia's Consumer Protection Laws.

External Complaints Resolution Body

If students are still not satisfied with the quality of service or training provided by AHRI, after the AHRI Complaints and Appeals Process has been utilised, they can then make a complaint to the RTO regulatory body, Australian Skills Quality Authority.

Information regarding the ASQA complaints process is available at:
<http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/making-a-complaint.html>

Disciplinary procedures

AHRI expects that every student and member of staff will treat fellow students and staff with complete integrity, dignity and fairness. However, it is acknowledged that on rare occasions, where all other resolution processes have failed, there may be a need for disciplinary action to be taken.

Accordingly, the AHRI GM HR Standards and Practice, may, after hearing all sides of the argument, impose disciplinary penalties ranging from a simple warning through to expulsion (for students).

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

In all instances a disciplinary decision can be appealed through the Complaints and Appeals Process.

Publishing details

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 | Standard 6: Fair complaints handling Clauses 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 |
| Relevance: | AHRI Customer Operations staff, Standards and Practice staff, Education Team consultants, prospective and current students |
| Relevant Documents: | Complaints and Appeals Form |

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

AHRI Complaints and Appeals Form

Please complete and submit this form by email to the AHRI Customer Operations Team at: **studentsupport@ahri.com.au** or mail AHRI, Level 4, 575 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000. Your complaint or appeal will be examined within 10 working days of the formal lodgment and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise this process within a four (4) week timeframe. You will be notified if more than 60 calendar days will be required to finalise this matter.

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| Date: | | |
| Full Name: | | |
| Student No.: | | |
| Contact details: (Phone, email & address) | | |
| Complaint relates to: (please underline or circle) | Academic matter | Non-academic matter |
| Describe the nature of the issue: | Date occurred: Persons involved: Issue: If this matter relates to a request for Assessment review of results, please outline the reasons for requesting a review of your result and email copies of your original and marked assessment with this form. | |