

Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Policy

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that RTO provides all learners, including international students, with a clear, fair, and accessible process to provide feedback, make complaints, or appeal decisions. It supports continuous improvement and ensures compliance with:

- Standards for RTOs 2025 – Outcome Standards 2.7 and 2.8
- National Code of Practice 2018 – Standard 10 (CRICOS)
- Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)

2. Scope

This policy applies to all current, prospective, and former students, as well as RTO staff and third-party providers. It relates to:

- Informal and formal feedback
- Formal complaints
- Appeals of academic and non-academic decisions
- Course progress
- RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- Education agent
- Any third-party providing services on RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- Assessment/RPL outcome;
- Fees and refunds/re-crediting

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Feedback	Informal input (positive or negative) regarding RTO services or experiences
Complaint	A formal expression of dissatisfaction about a decision, service, behaviour, or policy
Appeal	A formal request to review a decision that affects the student
Procedural Fairness	Ensures decisions are unbiased, evidence-based, and all parties are heard
Support Person	A nominated person who may accompany a student to any complaint or appeal meeting
Independent Reviewer	A third party not involved in the original decision who may review the appeal
CI Register	Continuous Improvement Register used to log and follow up systemic issues
RTO	In this policy, the term 'RTO' (Registered Training Organisation) refers to Australian Vocational Education Pty Ltd T/A Grandford College Australia (RTO Code: 46358, CRICOS Code: 04343M), except where otherwise stated in legislative references.

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4. Legislative References

- Standards for RTOs 2025 – Outcome Standards 2.7 & 2.8
- National Code of Practice 2018 – Standard 10 (CRICOS)
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- Australian Privacy Principles (Privacy Act 1988)

5. Policy Statement

RTO values feedback and takes complaints and appeals seriously. The RTO:

- Encourages informal feedback and resolution
- Provides a transparent, fair, and timely complaints and appeals process
- Ensures all decisions are made with procedural fairness
- Respects student privacy and protects against victimisation
- Maintains appropriate records of all feedback, complaints, and appeals
- Ensures international students are informed of their right to internal and external appeal pathways at no or minimal cost

International students are additionally protected under the National Code 2018 and are provided full written outcomes, external review options, and support to contact the Department of Home Affairs if needed.

RTO acknowledges that students may raise concerns or be dissatisfied with decisions, services, behaviours, or policies affecting their study or welfare. To uphold the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, RTO provides a structured complaints and appeals process that includes both internal resolution and external review options.

Specifically, RTO ensures that:

All overseas students have access to a documented, free, and accessible internal complaints and appeals process, outlined clearly in the Student Handbook, website, and orientation materials.

If a matter cannot be resolved informally, students may formally submit a complaint or appeal using the appropriate form, with assistance from staff if required.

Complaints and appeals may relate to any dealings with the RTO, its staff, education agents, or third-party providers delivering services on its behalf.

The assessment of any formal complaint or appeal begins within 10 working days, and is finalised as soon as practicable with all due consideration of evidence and circumstances.

Students are provided the opportunity to formally present their case and may be accompanied by a support person of their choice at no cost during any meeting or hearing.

All complaints and appeals are handled in a professional, fair, and transparent manner by appropriately trained and impartial staff.

Students are issued with a written statement of the outcome, including detailed reasons for the decision, at the conclusion of the internal process.

A written record of each complaint or appeal, including the outcome and reasons, is maintained securely and retained for a minimum of two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student.

If the internal process does not result in resolution to the student's satisfaction, the RTO will provide information about accessing an appropriate external complaints or appeals body, such as the Overseas Students Ombudsman or ASQA, within 10 working days.

If any internal or external process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the student, the RTO will immediately implement the outcome and advise the student of the corrective or preventive action taken.

Students are advised to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs where their complaint or appeal outcome may affect their visa conditions.

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This policy ensures overseas students can raise and resolve issues in a safe, respectful environment, free from disadvantage or retaliation. It is a core part of RTO's commitment to student welfare, quality assurance, and continuous improvement.

6. Step-by-Step Procedure

Feedback Procedure

Step	Action	Responsible
1	Provide access to Feedback Form via website, orientation, and PTR	Compliance Manager / Admin
2	Encourage students to submit feedback informally through class discussions or surveys	Trainers / Student Support Officer
3	Collect and review all feedback submissions (positive or constructive)	Compliance Manager
4	Record feedback in the Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Register	Compliance Manager / Delegate
5	Use feedback insights to inform the Continuous Improvement Register and adjust services or operations	Compliance Manager / CEO

Complaint Procedure

Step	Action	Responsible
1	Make Complaint and appeal Form accessible via website, orientation, and Student Handbook	Compliance Manager / Admin
2	Encourage informal resolution of concerns before formal complaint submission	Trainers / Student Support Officer
3	If unresolved, student completes and submits the Complaint and appeal Form	Student
4	Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 10 working days	Compliance Manager / Delegate
5	Register the complaint in the Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Register	Compliance Manager / Delegate
6	Investigate the complaint with fairness and transparency, involving relevant staff	Compliance Manager / Relevant Manager / Delegate

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7	Offer student the opportunity to present their case with a support person	Compliance Manager / Delegate
8	Issue written outcome within 20 business days, including reasons	Compliance Manager
9	Log outcome and systemic insights in CI Register	Compliance Manager / Delegate
10	Inform student of appeal rights if not satisfied	Compliance Manager

Appeal Procedure

Step	Action	Responsible
1	Student completes and submits the Appeal Form within 20 working days of decision	Student
2	Acknowledge receipt of appeal in writing within 10 working days	Compliance Manager / Delegate
3	Log the appeal in the Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Register	Compliance Manager / Delegate
4	Review appeal impartially with all evidence and consultation	Compliance Manager / CEO
5	Provide opportunity to student to present their case with support person	Compliance Manager
6	Appoint independent reviewer if required	CEO
7	Issue formal written outcome within 20 business days	Compliance Manager / CEO
8	If appeal denied, inform of external appeal option and provide contact details	Compliance Manager
9	If external appeal favours student, implement decision immediately	Compliance Manager / CEO
10	Record all appeal actions and systemic issues for review	Compliance Manager / CEO

External Appeals

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal complaints and appeals process, they have the right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process at minimal or no cost. The external appeal cost must be paid by the student.

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The RTO must advise the student of this right within 10 working days of concluding the internal review and provide the contact details of the appropriate external complaints and appeals body.

The external appeal bodies available are:

Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) (for international students)

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au>

Phone: 1300 362 072

OSO provides a free and independent service to investigate complaints about education providers.

Implementation of External Review Recommendations:

The RTO will immediately implement any recommendations arising from the external review within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

7. Additional CRICOS-Specific Provisions (National Code Standard 10)

RTO ensures the following additional protections for overseas students:

- No cost or minimal cost for internal or external appeal processes
- Right to have a support person attend meetings
- Information on how to contact the Department of Home Affairs if enrolment is affected
- Written records kept of every step
- Outcome and reasons are always communicated in writing