

POLICY NUMBER:	2.14.1	VERSION NUMBER:	7.1
DATE LAST REVIEWED:	July 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	July 2026
RELATED POLICIES:	2.15	RESPONSIBILITY: Governing Board	
RELATED PROCEDURES:	2.14.2		

ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

1.0 Purpose

This policy provides a set of principles that regulate the Institute's approach to managing student academic complaints and appeals and utilises information and feedback from appeals to improve the student experience at the Institute.

This policy enables students to request assessment and/or subject/unit results to be reviewed and complaints on academic matters to be submitted for resolution/recourse.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to enrolled and prospective students and to staff involved in managing matters related to complaints and appeals received, and to members of Institute decision-making bodies.

3.0 General Principles

The Institute's approach to student appeals reflects the following principles:

- managing student academic complaints appeals is approached fairly, equitably, reasonably and transparently, and in accordance with principles of natural justice and with relevant state and Commonwealth legislation;
- managing international student academic complaints appeals is compliant with education provider obligations under Standard 10 of the *National Code of Practice for Education and Training to Overseas Students (2018)*;
- appeals are used as an opportunity to develop a culture of improvement at the Institute;
- access to the internal appeals process is free and easily accessible
- access to the internal appeals process is available to students irrespective of their campus location, the mode in which they study, or their place of residence;
- clear and comprehensive information on the academic complaints and appeals process is published in the Student Handbook, which is available on the Institute's website and will be communicated, in particular, to international students as a part of their orientation program.

4.0 Decision-making Principles

4.1 An academic appeal is a formal request made by a student to have a decision, in relation to an academic matter, overturned.

4.2 Academic appeals can include:

- a mark for an essay, exam, or overall mark for a subject/unit;
- a fail grade or removal from a placement;
- a finding of academic misconduct
- a decline of a special consideration application;

- a decline of credit for previous study or work application
- 4.3 An academic appeal cannot be based on:
- disagreement with the approved subject/unit learning outcomes, assessment methodology or the assessment criteria;
 - disparity with grades awarded in other subjects/units;
 - disparity of grade with the effort and time expended on the assessment task;
 - desire to graduate or progress in the course; and
 - general unspecified grievances.
- 4.4 Academic complaints and appeals are resolved promptly, objectively, with sensitivity, and as consistent with relevant privacy legislation.
- 4.5 Assessments of academic complaints and appeals are student-focussed and evidence-based.
- 4.6 Complainants, appellants, and respondents are respected and no party to a complaint or appeal is discriminated against or victimised.
- 4.7 Outcomes to appeals are consistent and help the Institute to take proactive and pre-emptive action to address systemic issues identified through appeals data.
- 4.8 Appeals must be submitted within 15 working days of the release of an academic decision or result. Late appeals may not be considered.
- 4.9 During all stages of the appeals process the Institute will take all steps to ensure that:
- the student has an opportunity to formally present their case and may be accompanied by a support person (other than a lawyer) at any relevant meetings.
 - a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided to the student.
 - where the appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, the Institute will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Students

- Consider attempting resolution of concerns with relevant subject/unit lecturer before initiating appeals process.
- Complete and submit all forms and documentation required to support their application.
- Ensure that the appeal is submitted in writing within the specified deadlines.
- Provide evidence to support their application.

5.2 Lecturers

- Discuss any assessment issues with student.
- Manage student appeals and complaints in accordance with procedural fairness.
- Ensure that student grievances are properly and impartially considered by the relevant decision maker.

5.3 Program Leaders

- Consults with academic staff whose decisions are appealed before notification of appeal decision.
- Ensures students are informed of decisions on appeals and informs lecturer of any required action.

5.4 Provost

- Responsible for final decisions made regarding academic complaints and appeals.
- Monitors and reviews decisions on appeals to aid consistency in decision-making.

5.5 Academic Board

- Responsible for reviewing appeals and responses.
- Responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy.

6.0 Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 Review of, and compliance with this policy is overseen by the Provost, Head of Regulation and Accreditation, and the Academic Board.
- 6.2 All staff responsible for investigating and managing student academic complaints and appeals must follow this policy, and associated procedures.
- 6.3 The Provost and Program Leaders monitor cohort data on academic complaints and appeals to continuously improve and address risk. This report is presented to the Academic Board annually.
- 6.4 This policy will be reviewed annually in accordance with the Quality Assurance Framework.

7.0 Record-keeping and Confidentiality

- 7.1 The Complainant will be given a written statement of the outcome of the complaint, including detailed reasons for the outcome.
- 7.2 The Institute will keep a written record of the complaint or appeal, including a statement of outcome and reasons of the outcome for a period of at least five years to allow all parties to the complaint appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 7.3 These records will be maintained at AIPC Head Office, 47 Baxter Street, Fortitude Valley, Qld, 4006.
- 7.4 Complainants' privacy will be respected at all times of the complaints and appeals process. All records are treated as strictly confidential and stored according to the National Privacy Principles as required by the Commonwealth Privacy Act and to AIPC's Privacy and Personal Information Policy.

8.0 Additional Information

- 8.1 Nothing in this *Academic Appeals Policy* limits the rights of students or persons seeking to enrol with the Institute to act under Australia's Consumer Protection laws.
- 8.2 The procedures set out in the accompanying document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other higher education

provider policies or under statute or any other law. Also, the dispute resolution procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

- 8.3 A student who has exhausted the Institute's internal academic complaints and appeals processes may seek an external review of the matter through the National Student Ombudsman.

9.0 Approval and Training

- 9.1 This Policy and Procedure was agreed to and ratified by the AIPC Governing Board of The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors Pty Ltd 29 August 2022. This Policy and Procedure is included in the Student Handbook and is available for all students on the Institute's website at www.aipc.net.au.
- 9.2 For the purposes of communicating to and training staff, the Policy and Procedure is included in the Policies and Procedures suite and is covered during the staff induction process.

10.0 Relevant Legislative and Regulatory Documents

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 Cth
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Cth
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Cth
- The Privacy Act 1988 Cth

11.0 Version Control History

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	Jun 2007	Head of School	Policy created titled 2.8 Avenue for Review of Decision Making
2.0	Jun 2009	Chief Executive Officer	Major revision of policy to clarify the Institute's overarching commitment and purpose. Amendments include updated policy aims, expanded definitions, and integration of key components: Grievance Handling and Resolution Procedure, Appeals of Results, Record Keeping and Confidentiality, and other grievance-related procedures.
2.0	Jun 2010	Chief Executive Officer	Reviewed and no changes made.
2.0	Jan 2012	Chief Executive Officer	Reviewed and no changes made.
3.0	Nov 2013	Chief Executive Officer	Terminology updated to refer to AIPC as 'the Institute'. Policy intent and scope clarified. Responsibilities of the Institute throughout all stages of the grievance process defined. Appeals of assessment results updated to reference LEADR in place of ACPET. Legal disclaimer added to clarify the policy's limits in relation to external legal rights. Responsibilities for staff communication and training on grievance procedures included.
3.0	Jul 2015	Chief Executive Officer	Reviewed and no changes made.

4.0	Mar 2016	Chief Executive Officer	New content added to reinforce that all grievances are handled with respect and confidentiality. Students may seek independent advice or nominate a third party to act or communicate on their behalf, with written authorisation. External appeals process updated to refer students to the Resolution Institute.
4.0	Nov 2019	Chief Executive Officer	Reviewed and no changes made.
5.0	Nov 2020	Chief Executive Officer	Formatting changes. The Institute now referred to as AIPC/COLAB to include the establishment of the College of Leadership and Business. Contact details added to stage one and two of the grievance procedures.
6.0	Jul 2022	Governing Board	Formatting updated. Policy renamed and renumbered to 2.8 Student Complaints and Appeals. Major revisions include clarified purpose, scope, and guiding principles; inclusion of procedures for both academic and non-academic complaints; and updated contact details for appeals. Responsibility for managing the process assigned to the Provost. External review procedures for international students added, along with updated Resolution Institute contact information. Relevant legislation incorporated.
6.1	Nov 2022	Governing Board	Non-academic complaints removed and new policy created 2.15 Non-Academic Complaints and Appeals
7.0	Jul 2024	Governing Board	Formatting changes. Policy separated into two standalone documents: 2.14.1 Academic Complaints and Appeals Policy and 2.14.2 Academic Complaints and Appeals Procedure. Policy 2.14.1 expanded to include decision-making principles for academic appeals, relevant definitions, and clearly defined staff roles and responsibilities. Provisions for monitoring and review of the policy have also been incorporated.
7.1	Jul 2025		Addition of National Student Ombudsman