Student Complaints, Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedure  
(Academic and Non-Academic)

Policy

At Sherwood Institute of Australia (here after known as ‘SIA’) we are committed to providing high quality education and training experience. However on occasions students may have concerns and we would like to know if our students are dissatisfied with any element of their study or their overall experience. We consider a complaint as an ideal opportunity to improve our systems, procedures and courses. Students are also encouraged to let SIA know of things that they feel can be done better by providing feedback to staff. SIA also provide our students a mechanism to lodge their grievances, complaints or appeals in relation to academic and non-academic issues. All current and prospective students have access to this policy and related documents though our website (www.sia.edu.au) and through their induction booklet. SIA staff is able to access this policy and related documents though our website and RTO compliance Manager and by staff induction booklet. We find that the best way to resolve an issue is through discussion between the student and an appropriate person (relevant SIA staff). However, if this doesn’t allow an issue to be resolved to the satisfaction of the student, then we encourage students to use our grievance procedure.
There are three stages of the grievance and complaint process. Each internal stage is free of charge. The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against in any of the three stages set out in this policy. All students (either enrolled or considering enrolling) regardless of location or mode of study are entitled to access the procedures set out in this policy.
This policy does not replace or modify policies or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Also, the dispute resolution procedures outlined below in this document do not circumscribe an individual’s rights to pursue other legal remedies.

Scope

This policy applies to all current and prospective students. This policy covers grievance, complaints and appeals of an academic and non-academic nature.
Policy

Step 1: Student concern or complaint
Any student (either enrolled or considering enrolling) that has a concern or complaint should first approach an appropriate SIA Staff. This may be their trainer, SIA’s Compliance Manager or a member of the student services team. This person will either work with the student to resolve the problem, or involve another person who is appropriate for resolving the problem. The complaint must be dealt within a reasonable time. Student Grievance /complaint is logged in to SIA complaints register by the SIA staff member. These details are also entered in the student relationship management software (VETTRACK).

Step 2: Grievance/Complaint Lodgement
If Step 1 does not enable the issue to be resolved to the satisfaction of the student, then the student should complete the ‘Formal Complaint Form’, indicating whether the grievance is related to an academic or non-academic matter. The Formal Complaint Form is located on the SIA website. Please note that it is strongly advised that Step 1 be completed before Step 2 can commence. If this has not been completed SIA staff will suggest this be completed prior to lodging the grievance.
The completed form is to be submitted to Reception at any campus or emailed to Student Support Officer at info@sherwood.edu.au, which will enter the details into the Student Records Management System. It will then be assessed by a relevant staff member, who may be the Student Support Officer. The student must include any supporting documentation to assist the Student Support Officer in understanding the grievance. The student will be issued with a written confirmation of receipt of the formal complaint form within five working days.
The Student Support Officer will investigate the grievance and interview key people where necessary (which may include the student). The student will usually receive a written response by email/mail within 10 working days of their grievance being lodged outlining the outcome and rationale for the decision. The student will be notified of any delays which may occur during the process.

Step 3: Appeals Process

Internal Appeal

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If the student is not satisfied with the response to the grievance, they may appeal the decision within 20 working days of receiving the written response. The appeal should be made in writing to the Compliance Manager – SIA and should include further additional information in order to support the student’s case. The contact details for the Compliance Manager – SIA are:

**Head Office**
Suite 3, 1 Akenside Street
Wacol, QLD 4076
Phone: 07 3271 1101
Email: info@sherwood.edu.au

Written confirmation of receipt of the appeal application will be sent via email / mail within five working days of receiving the appeal.

Upon receipt of the appeal the Compliance Manager – SIA (or delegated nominee) will assess the submission. Compliance Manager – SIA (or delegated nominee) may take one of the two following actions within 10 working days.

**Independently investigate the appeal** – Compliance Manager – SIA (or delegated nominee) will review the student’s submission and assess the further additional information which has been presented. Compliance Manager – SIA (or delegated nominee) may interview and seek information from stakeholders involved in the grievance. The student may be invited to formally present their case and may be assisted or accompanied by a support person when/if being interviewed.

Upon completion of one of the above process; Compliance Manager – SIA (or delegated nominee) will notify the student in writing outlining the outcome of the appeal and the rationale for the decision. The written outcome will be sent to the student in a reasonable timeframe, normally within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. The student will be notified of any likely delays.

**External Appeals**

Students may make a complaint to an external body about SIA. Full details for contacting these external bodies are as follows:

**ACCC**
(Australian Competition & Consumer Commission)
Contact the ACCC Info centre on 1300 302 502 or by use online complaint form available on their website [http://www.accc.gov.au/contact-us](http://www.accc.gov.au/contact-us)
At any point, the student may decide to refer the matter to an external agency; however it is strongly encouraged that the student exhausts all internal processes before they contact an external body.

**Important notes**

SIA is committed to ensuring that all student complaints and grievances are responded to in a timely manner and that all students receive fair and equitable treatment. A student is advised to contact Trainer or Assessor / Reception at any point during the process if they would like further clarity on the process or updates on the progress of their grievance.

Any student who makes a grievance must remain enrolled during the process and is encouraged to continue to attend classes to continue working towards their qualification, unless otherwise advised.

Where the internal or external appeals results in a decision that supports the complainant, SIA will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required. The actions taken will be formally entered in SIA’s ‘Improvements Register’ by Compliance Manager.

**Record keeping and confidentiality**

Student Grievance /complaint is logged in to SIA complaints register by the SIA staff member. These details are also entered in the student relationship management software (VETTRACK). Records of all grievances handled under this procedure and the outcomes of these will be maintained for a period of at least one year, to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the Compliance Manager SIA.

All records relating to complaints will be treated as confidential and will be covered by the Personal Information and Privacy Policy and Procedure.