

Appeal Handling Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to establish a fair, transparent, and consistent framework for the management of appeals at Princeton International College.

Princeton International College is committed to ensuring that all students are provided with a clear and accessible process to request a review of decisions that affect them, and that all appeals are managed in a timely, impartial, and procedurally fair manner.

This Policy and Procedure is developed and implemented in accordance with the requirements of:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025 (Outcome Standards)
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 10 – Complaints and Appeals)
- ELICOS Standards 2018, where applicable

This policy ensures that:

- Students are informed of their right to appeal decisions
- Appeals are managed in accordance with principles of procedural fairness and natural justice
- Appeals are handled within defined and reasonable timeframes
- Outcomes are evidence-based, documented, and clearly communicated
- Students have access to an independent external appeals process
- Outcomes of appeals are used to inform continuous improvement

2. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all appeals submitted to Princeton International College in relation to decisions made by the College in the delivery of its education and training services.

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This includes, but is not limited to, appeals relating to:

- Assessment outcomes
- Administrative decisions
- Course progress or attendance decisions
- Decisions affecting enrolment, course duration, or delivery arrangements
- Outcomes arising from complaints or internal review processes

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Princeton International College, including:

- Domestic students
- International students enrolled under CRICOS

This Policy and Procedure applies to appeals across all nationally recognised VET courses and, where applicable, ELICOS programs delivered by the College.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the College's broader governance, compliance, and operational framework, including but not limited to:

- Complaints handling Policy and Procedure
- Student Handbook
- Training and Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Student Support and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure

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- Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure
- Records Management Policy and Procedure

3. Definitions

- **Appeal**
A formal request by a student for a review or reconsideration of a decision made by Princeton International College.
- **Appellant**
The student who lodges an appeal.
- **Procedural Fairness (Natural Justice)**
The process by which decisions are made fairly, without bias, and based on relevant evidence, ensuring all parties have the opportunity to be heard.
- **Internal Appeals Process**
The process undertaken by the College to review and resolve an appeal prior to external escalation.
- **External Appeals Process**
An independent review process available where the appellant is not satisfied with the internal outcome.

4. Policy Statement

Princeton International College is committed to ensuring that all appeals are managed in a fair, transparent, and unbiased manner, in accordance with principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.

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The College ensures that:

- All appeals are assessed by an impartial person not involved in the original decision
- Students are given the opportunity to present their case and provide supporting evidence
- Decisions are based on relevant, valid, and sufficient evidence
- Outcomes are communicated in writing, including reasons for the decision

The College ensures that students are not disadvantaged, victimised, or discriminated against as a result of lodging an appeal. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) maintains overall responsibility for the management and resolution of all appeals and ensures compliance with regulatory requirements.

This process is accessible and provided at no cost to the student.

This written agreement, and the right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies.

5. Principles of Appeals Handling

Appeals at Princeton International College are managed in accordance with the following principles to ensure fairness, consistency, transparency, and compliance with regulatory requirements and organisational procedures.

5.1 Procedural Fairness and Natural Justice

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All appeals are managed in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. This ensures that decisions are made objectively, without bias, and based on relevant and verifiable evidence.

The College ensures that each appeal is assessed by an impartial person who was not involved in the original decision. Students are provided with a reasonable opportunity to present their case, submit supporting evidence, and respond to any information or findings relevant to the appeal.

Decisions are made based on valid, sufficient, and current evidence, and are clearly documented. Outcomes are communicated to the student in writing, including the reasons for the decision, to ensure transparency and accountability.

5.2 Accessibility and Support

Princeton International College ensures that the appeals process is accessible, inclusive, and supportive for all students.

Students are provided with clear information on how to lodge an appeal and are supported throughout the process by relevant staff. Assistance is available where required to ensure that students are able to effectively participate in the appeals process.

Students have the right to be accompanied by a support person at any stage of the appeals process. Where required, additional support may be provided to ensure equitable access, particularly for students with identified needs or vulnerabilities.

5.3 Timeliness

Appeals are managed promptly and within defined and reasonable timeframes to ensure timely resolution and minimise disruption to the student's progression.

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Princeton International College ensures that appeals are acknowledged, assessed, and finalised within established timeframes, and that students are kept informed of the progress of their appeal throughout the process. Where delays occur, students are notified in writing, including the reasons for the delay and revised timeframes.

5.4 Record Integrity and Confidentiality

All appeals are documented and managed in accordance with the College's Records Management Policy and Procedure to ensure accuracy, confidentiality, and audit traceability.

Records relating to appeals are maintained in secure systems, with access restricted to authorised personnel only. The College ensures that all information is handled in a confidential manner and is protected from unauthorised access, disclosure, or loss.

All appeal records, including supporting evidence, correspondence, and outcomes, are maintained in a format that supports retrieval for audit, review, and continuous improvement purposes, and are retained in accordance with the requirements specified in the Records Management Policy.

6. Lodgement and Timeframes

Students must lodge an appeal within **20 working days** of being formally notified of the decision.

Princeton International College is committed to managing appeals in a timely, efficient, and transparent manner. Upon receipt of an appeal, the College ensures that:

- A written acknowledgement is provided within **24 hours**, confirming receipt of the appeal and outlining the next steps in the process
- The appeal is reviewed, assessed, and actioned within **5 working days**, including initial evaluation and determination of the appropriate course of action

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- A final outcome is provided to the student in writing within **10 working days**, where practicable

Where an appeal is complex or requires additional time for investigation, Princeton International College will notify the student in writing. This communication will include the reasons for the delay and an updated timeframe for resolution.

Throughout the appeals process, the student is kept informed of the progress of their appeal at regular intervals to ensure transparency and ongoing engagement.

7. CRICOS and ESOS Requirements

For international students enrolled under CRICOS, Princeton International College ensures that all appeals are managed in accordance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 10 – Complaints and Appeals).

The College ensures that students are clearly informed of their right to access both internal and external appeals processes. Information regarding these processes, including relevant contact details for external bodies, is provided through the Student Handbook, College website, and formal communication during the appeals process.

Where an appeal relates to a decision that may affect the student's enrolment, including decisions relating to course progress, attendance, or reporting, the College will maintain the student's enrolment while the internal appeals process is ongoing, in accordance with National Code requirements.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeals process, Princeton International College will advise the student in writing of their right to access an independent

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external appeals process within 10 working days of the conclusion of the internal review. The College will provide the student with the contact details of the appropriate external body, including its arrangements with Resolution Institute for independent mediation and review.

Where the appeal relates to the College's intention to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress or attendance, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the external appeals process is completed and has supported or does not support the College's decision.

If the outcome of the appeal is in favour of the student, Princeton International College will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and will advise the student in writing of the action taken.

All appeals involving international students are documented, monitored, and managed in a manner that ensures compliance with ESOS obligations and supports the protection of student rights.

8. External Appeals

Where an appeal is not resolved through the College's internal appeals process, the student has the right to access an independent external review.

Princeton International College has a **formal agreement with Resolution Institute**, an independent and nationally recognised dispute resolution body, to provide external appeals handling and mediation services. This agreement ensures that students, including those enrolled under CRICOS, have access to an impartial, transparent, and structured external review process.

Where a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeals process, the College will:

- Inform the student in writing of their right to access an external appeals process

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- Provide the relevant contact details for Resolution Institute or another appropriate external body
- Facilitate access to the external process where required
- Maintain appropriate records of the referral and outcome

The external review process is conducted independently of Princeton International College to ensure fairness, objectivity, and transparency in the resolution of the appeal.

In addition to Resolution Institute, students may also seek assistance or lodge complaints with relevant external agencies, including:

- National Training Complaints Service
- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- Office of Fair Trading
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (for privacy-related matters)

Princeton International College will cooperate fully with any external investigation and will provide all relevant documentation as required.

9. Record Management

Princeton International College maintains comprehensive and accurate records of all appeals to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

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Records relating to appeals include, but are not limited to:

- Appeal applications and supporting documentation
- All correspondence and communication records, including emails, letters, and meeting notes
- Investigation records, including evidence reviewed and actions taken
- Outcomes and decisions, including reasons for decisions
- Records of any internal or external appeals processes
- Continuous improvement actions arising from appeals

All records are:

- Stored securely within the College's approved record management systems, including the Student Management System and secure electronic document management systems
- Maintained in a manner that ensures confidentiality, integrity, and protection of personal information
- Accessible only to authorised personnel in accordance with role-based access controls
- Retained in accordance with the College's **Records Management Policy and Procedure** and applicable legislative and regulatory requirements

All appeals are recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register to support monitoring, reporting, and continuous improvement activities.

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Records are maintained in a format that allows for efficient retrieval for audit, review, and compliance purposes.

10. Continuous Improvement

Princeton International College recognises appeals as a valuable source of feedback and uses them to inform ongoing improvements to its systems, processes, and service delivery.

Appeals are managed within the College's Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework, and are incorporated into the structured improvement cycle of:

PLAN → MONITOR → ANALYSE → ACT → VERIFY → CONTROL

All appeals are:

- Recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register
- Reviewed and analysed to identify trends, recurring issues, and root causes
- Assessed to determine any impact on compliance, service quality, and student outcomes
- Used to inform corrective, preventive, or improvement actions where required

Improvement actions arising from appeals are:

- Documented in the Continuous Improvement Register
- Assigned to responsible personnel with defined timeframes
- Monitored for implementation and effectiveness

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- Verified prior to closure to ensure that the issue has been resolved and is not recurring

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) maintains oversight of all continuous improvement activities and ensures that outcomes from appeals are appropriately reviewed, actioned, and integrated into the College's governance and quality assurance processes.

11. Procedure – Appeals Process

Princeton International College follows a structured, transparent, and student-focused process to ensure that all appeals are managed fairly, consistently, and in accordance with regulatory requirements. The CEO may delegate operational aspects of the appeals process; however, retains ultimate responsibility for all decisions and outcomes.

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Step	Stage	What Happens	Responsibility	Records
1	Information Provision	Students are informed about their right to appeal and how to access the appeals process through the Student Handbook, orientation, website, and direct communication with staff. Clear guidance is provided on how to submit an appeal and the applicable timeframes.	CEO / Student Support Officer	Student Handbook, Orientation prior to commencement, website information, communication records
2	Lodgement of Appeal	The student submits an appeal in writing using the Appeals Form or via email. The appeal must clearly outline the decision being challenged and include any supporting evidence. Assistance is provided where required to ensure the student can complete the process.	Student / CEO / Student Support Officer	Appeal form, email submission, supporting documents

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3	Acknowledgement	The College acknowledges receipt of the appeal in writing within 24 hours. The acknowledgement confirms that the appeal has been received and outlines the next steps, process, and expected timeframes.	Administration Officer	Acknowledgement email/letter
4	Initial Review and Assessment	The appeal is reviewed by the CEO to determine its nature, seriousness, and whether further investigation or consultation is required. The CEO ensures that the appeal is handled impartially and in accordance with procedural fairness.	CEO	Review notes, assessment records

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5	Investigation and Consideration	The CEO conducts a detailed review of the appeal, which may include examining evidence, consulting relevant staff, reviewing assessment decisions, and providing the student with an opportunity to present additional information if required.	CEO	Investigation records, evidence, meeting notes
6	Outcome Decision	A decision is made based on the evidence gathered. The outcome, including clear reasons for the decision, is communicated to the student in writing. Where relevant, corrective actions or alternative arrangements (e.g., reassessment) are outlined.	CEO	Outcome letter, decision records

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7	External Appeal (if required)	If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, they are informed of their right to access an external appeals process. The College provides contact details for Resolution Institute and other relevant bodies and facilitates access where required.	CEO / Administration Officer	Referral records, communication records
8	Implementation of Outcome	Any decision or recommendation arising from the appeal (internal or external) is implemented promptly. This may include reassessment, adjustment of records, or other corrective actions.	CEO / Relevant Staff	Action records, updated student file

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9	Record Management and Continuous Improvement	All appeal records are securely stored and recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register. The appeal is reviewed to identify any trends or improvement opportunities, which are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register. Administration Officer / CEO Registers, CI records, documentation
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12. References

This Policy and Procedure is developed and implemented in accordance with the following legislation, standards, and regulatory frameworks:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025 (Outcome Standards)
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Standard 10 – Complaints and Appeals)
- ELICOS Standards 2018
- Australian Consumer Law (Schedule 2 of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth))
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)