

Policy: Formal Grievance Procedure (External)

Objective: The Australian Institute of Fitness ('AIF') is committed to providing students and staff the best possible environment in which to study or work. However, the AIF recognises there may be instances of dissatisfaction and acknowledges that cause/s must be addressed and rectified in a timely and efficient manner.

This procedure details the differences between the handling of informal and formal complaints and ensuring an effective, efficient, timely, equitable and confidential complaints handling process for all students.

Complaints covers both:

1. Academic matters (including matters relating to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards for an approved course); and
2. Non-academic matters (including matters relating to enrolment in a course and personal information held by the provider).

Last updated: 26 March 2021

Policy: Informal Complaints

Informal complaints are resolved locally through direct discussion between the Student or other complainant, with course trainers ('Coaches') and where necessary, the Training Manager ('Training Team Leader') at the Campus. Complaints can also be received via AIF Team Inboxes, Collections Team, Administration Team etc.

Where the Complainant is not satisfied with the results of this informal approach and wishes to take the matter further, a **formal complaint** may be lodged following the steps set out below.

It is not mandatory for a complainant to raise a complaint informally.

With both informal and formal complaints, the complainant is invited to include suggestions about how the complaint might be resolved.

Formal Complaints

Stage One

A formal complaint is submitted in writing, via the 'submit a complaint form' on AIF's website. <https://fitness.edu.au/submit-a-complaint/>. The submitted complaint is automatically forwarded to the Regional General Manager.

The General Manager (or their delegate) notifies the complainant of receipt of the written complaint within two (2) business days of receipt of the written complaint.

The General Manager (or their delegate) will investigate your complaint and may call or seek further clarification around the complaint. Once fully reviewed, the General Manager determines the outcome and advises the complainant in writing of their decision and full details of the reason for the decision within 10 business days of acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint.

If the General Manager (or their delegate) or the complainant requests a meeting to discuss the complaint, the complainant is permitted to be accompanied and assisted by a third party.

The Complainant is advised of their right to access Stage Two of this procedure, if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One. There is no charge associated with the investigation or review of a formal stage one complaint.

Stage Two

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge a request for a review of the decision, in writing via email to complaints@fitness.edu.au, addressed to Mr Steve Pettit (CEO).

The CEO (or their delegate) notifies the complainant of receipt of the written complaint within two (2) business days of receipt of the written complaint.

The Complainant's request for a review is determined by the CEO, who conducts all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons at the AIF and makes a determination. The Complainant is advised in writing of the outcome of the review, including the reasons for the decision within 20 business days of the receipt of the request for a review.

The Complainant is advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the complaints procedure, if they consider the matter unresolved. There is no charge associated with the investigation or review of a formal stage two complaint.

Stage Three

If the complaint remains unresolved, the complainant is able request an external review from an appropriate independent third party / mediator. The National Training Complaints Hotline and website will be able to direct you to the right authority in your state:

Phone: 13 38 73

<https://www.employment.gov.au/national-training-complaints-hotline>

The AIF and the Student share the cost of the mediator and the cost of a mediation venue, but the parties each pay their own costs of their own lawyers should a mediation be required.

It is not the role of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to act as an advocate for individual student complaints.

Records retention

All documentation and notes relating to a complaint, including the original complaint, any supporting documentation, all diary notes and written communications between AIF and the Complainant are stored on AIF's secure electronic document management system for at least five years.

Any party of the complaint may request access to these records in writing via email to complaints@fitness.edu.au.

Compliance: In accordance with the AIF Code of Conduct, any breach of this policy is dealt with seriously and may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment (staff) or enrolment (student), depending on the severity of the breach.

Where Team Members consider that significant departures from the principles of this Policy have occurred, they are obligated to report it immediately to their Line Manager or iExec Team Member. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of this Policy & AIF Code of Conduct

Associated documentation:

- VET Student Loans Act 2016
- VET Student Loans Rules 2016
- VET Student Loans (VSL Tuition Protection Levy) Act 2020
- VET Student Loans (Charges) Act 2016
- VET Student Loans Manual for Providers
- Higher Education Support Act 2003
- Grievance Policy
- VSL Student Withdrawal Policy and Procedure
- VSL Re-crediting FEE-HELP Balances Procedure
- VET Student Loans Handbook
- Corrective Action Register

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