

# Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure

January 2026

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## 1. Purpose

TACIS is committed to providing all students with a fair, equitable, timely, and transparent process for resolving complaints, concerns, and appeals. This policy ensures that students have the right to raise issues and appeal decisions that affect their studies, academic progress, or wellbeing.

There is no cost to students for accessing TACIS's internal complaints and appeals process.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all current and prospective students of TACIS and covers complaints, concerns, and appeals relating to, but not limited to:

- Training and assessment processes
- Academic outcomes and progression
- Quality of teaching and learning
- Student services and facilities
- Discrimination, bullying, or sexual harassment
- Administrative decisions
- Attendance or course progress decisions

## 3. Principles

TACIS ensures that:

- All complaints and appeals are handled professionally, confidentially, and without bias
- All parties understand the steps involved in the process
- Students are treated fairly and equitably
- Complaints and appeals are resolved as efficiently as possible
- Written records are maintained for all complaints, appeals, and outcomes
- Students may be accompanied by a support person at any stage
- Students' enrolment is maintained while an internal or external appeal is ongoing (for international students)

## 4. Access to Information

- All prospective students receive a copy of this policy through the Student Handbook prior to enrolment
- The complaints and appeals process is explained during orientation
- Current students are informed of external authorities they may contact if dissatisfied with an internal decision

## 5. Timeframes

- TACIS will attempt to resolve complaints or appeals within 10 working days of receiving a completed Complaint or Appeal Form
- Students will be notified in writing of outcomes and reasons for decisions
- Students have 5 working days to respond to a formal decision

## 6. Internal Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Step 1: Informal Resolution (Where Appropriate)

Students are encouraged, where appropriate, to first raise the matter with:

- Their trainer/assessor; or
- The relevant staff member.

If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the student may proceed to a formal complaint or appeal.

### **Step 2: Lodgement of Formal Complaint or Appeal**

The student must:

- Complete a Complaint and Appeal Form
- Provide full details including:
  - Nature of the complaint or appeal
  - Parties involved
  - Supporting evidence or witnesses (if applicable)

The completed form must be submitted to the CEO or their nominee.

### **Step 3: Acknowledgement and Meeting**

- The CEO (or representative) will acknowledge receipt within 24 hours
- A formal meeting will be scheduled within 5 working days
- The student may bring a support person
- Accurate notes and meeting minutes will be recorded

### **Step 4: Investigation and Decision**

- The CEO (or delegate) will:
  - Review all evidence
  - Consult relevant staff
  - Make an informed and impartial decision
- The outcome will be communicated to the student within 10 working days of lodgement

### **Step 5: Outcome and Documentation**

- A written statement outlining:
  - The decision
  - Reasons for the decision
  - Any corrective actions

will be provided to the student.

- Records are securely stored in the student's administrative file.

If the outcome supports the student, TACIS will immediately implement corrective or preventative actions and keep the student informed.

## **7. External Complaints and Appeals**

If a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved internally, or the student is dissatisfied with the outcome:

- TACIS will refer the student to an **external appeals body at no cost**
- TACIS will cooperate fully with the external process
- If the external decision supports the student, TACIS will **implement the outcome immediately**

## **8. International Students – PRISMS Reporting**

For international students:

- TACIS will maintain enrolment while an internal or external appeal is in progress
- Where:
  - The student does not lodge an appeal within 20 working days; or
  - Withdraws from the appeal process; or

- The appeal outcome supports TACIS

TACIS will notify the Secretary of DEWR through PRISMS as required.

## 9. Assessment-Related Appeals

Students may appeal an assessment outcome where they believe that:

1. They have achieved the required competency; and
2. They have provided reasonable evidence to support this claim.

### Assessment Appeal Process

1. Student discusses the matter with the assessor
2. If unresolved, lodges a formal Complaint and Appeal Form
3. CEO and/or Program Manager:
  - Acknowledges receipt within 24 hours
  - Schedules a meeting within 5 working days
4. Investigation and decision completed within 10 working days
5. Written outcome provided to the student
6. External appeal available if the student remains dissatisfied

Note: Appeals against assessment decisions must be lodged within two (2) months of the assessment decision date.

## 10. Record Keeping

All complaints, appeals, meetings, decisions, and outcomes are:

- Documented in writing
- Stored securely
- Managed in accordance with TACIS's privacy and records management policies

## External Complaint and Appeal

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If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of TACIS's internal complaints or appeals process, they may access an external complaints body at no cost.

### For International Students – Commonwealth Ombudsman

International students may lodge a complaint with the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, which investigates complaints about private education and training providers in Australia.

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>

The Ombudsman's service is free and supports:

- Future, current, and former international students
- Complaints where a provider may not have followed rules or acted fairly

### The Commonwealth Ombudsman can assist with complaints about:

- Admission to a course
- Fees and refunds
- Course or provider transfers
- Course progress or attendance
- Cancellation of enrolment
- Accommodation or work arranged by the provider
- Incorrect advice provided by an education agent

They also publish information and fact sheets on topics such as:

- Attendance and course progress
- Fees and refunds
- Transfers between providers
- Written agreements
- Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)
- Grades and assessment processes

For concerns about the **quality of VET or English language courses**, students should contact the **Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)**.

### **For Domestic Students – ASQA Complaints**

Domestic students who are not satisfied with TACIS's internal complaints or appeals outcome may submit a complaint to **ASQA**.

ASQA Complaints Information: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints>

Before lodging a complaint with ASQA, students must:

- First complete TACIS's internal complaints and appeals process
- Provide evidence showing:
  - The complaint or appeal was lodged with TACIS, and
  - TACIS's written response or outcome

Note: ASQA requires students to identify themselves when lodging a complaint, but students may request that their identity remains confidential during any investigation.

### **State and Territory Consumer Protection Agencies**

Students may also seek advice or assistance from consumer protection agencies in their state or territory:

State / Territory	Agency	Website
NSW	NSW Fair Trading	<a href="http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au">http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au</a>
ACT	Office of Regulatory Services	<a href="http://www.ors.act.gov.au">http://www.ors.act.gov.au</a>
NT	Consumer Affairs	<a href="http://www.consumeraffairs.nt.gov.au">http://www.consumeraffairs.nt.gov.au</a>
QLD	Office of Fair Trading	<a href="http://www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au">http://www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au</a>
SA	Consumer and Business Services	<a href="http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au">http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au</a>
TAS	Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading	<a href="http://www.consumer.tas.gov.au">http://www.consumer.tas.gov.au</a>
VIC	Consumer Affairs Victoria	<a href="http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au">http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au</a>
WA	Consumer Protection	<a href="http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection">http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection</a>

### **Additional Information**

- Students may access free interpreting services through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450
- There is no cost to students for accessing external complaints bodies
- TACIS will maintain a student's enrolment while an internal or external appeal is in progress
- Students are encouraged to continue attending classes and meeting course progress requirements during this time
- Access to complaints and appeals processes does not limit a student's rights under Australian consumer protection laws

### **Record Keeping**

TACIS maintains secure records of all complaints and appeals in accordance with regulatory requirements:

- Complaints Compliance Folder
- Appeals Compliance Folder