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## Complaints and Appeals

### Policy

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<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>Issue History:</b>
November 2014	Initial release (V1.0)
September 2015	Reviewed and revised (V1.1)
August 2016	Reviewed and updated related forms (V1.2)
August 2017	Reviewed and revised (V1.3) Remove Director of Quality Assurance

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Complaints and Appeals Policy</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of this policy is to define the system available to students for dealing with complaints and appeals.
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to all current and prospective students
<b>Policy Statement</b>	<p>Cambridge International College (WA) is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints and appeals system about matters or issues relating to students' experiences at CIC. CIC ensures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Complaints or appeals are resolved promptly, objectively with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality. When CIC attempts to resolve difficulties experienced by CIC students it is committed to a culture of openness, fairness and continuous improvement.</li> <li>b. A complaints or appeals handling system is in place that is client focused and helps CIC to prevent these events from recurring.</li> <li>c. A culture that views complaints and appeals as an opportunity to improve operations.</li> <li>d. That students are fully informed of their rights to lodge a complaint or appeal. CIC will give students who raise complaints the opportunity to formally present their cases. Under no circumstances will students suffer any discrimination as a result of raising a complaint or appeal.</li> <li>e. Responsibility for investigating and handling complaints are clearly identified as follows;             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i – All withdrawal, suspension or deferrals from Course/Unit complaints will be investigated and handled by the Director of Studies</li> <li>ii – All campus and facilities related complaints will be investigated and handled by the Director of Studies and/or Campus Manager.</li> <li>iii – Academic complaints will be investigated and handled by the Director of Studies.</li> <li>iv – Academic complaints in courses may also be investigated and handled by academic coordinators</li> <li>v – Financial complaints will be investigated and handled by the Financial Controller.</li> <li>vi – All appeals will be investigated and handled by the Complaints and Appeals Panel.</li> </ol> </li> <li>f. All formal complaints and appeals and their outcomes will be recorded on the Student Management System (TEAMS) forms or letters.</li> <li>g. Complaints and appeals may be made in relation to any of CIC's services, learning and teaching and decisions such as, but not limited to:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i – The enrolment process;</li> <li>ii – Selection or admission decisions;</li> <li>iii – Lack of resources and facilities;</li> <li>iv – Learning and teaching facilities, staff and library resources provided.</li> <li>v – Assessment results / final results and reviews</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

- vi – Student at risk/progress in a course of study;
- vii – Decisions made on academic misconduct;
- viii – Decisions by academic staff members affecting individuals or groups of students;
- ix – The way someone feels they have been treated, including allegations by staff or students of harassment, bullying or discrimination;
- x – Complaints in relation to misconduct by other students;
- xi – Fees and refund matters.

### **Resolution timeframe**

#### **Formal Complaints**

All formal complaints will be responded to efficiently to ensure an effective resolution within a reasonable timeframe. CIC will acknowledge and start the process within 5 working days upon receiving a complaint. CIC will endeavour to resolve formal complaints within twenty (20) working days upon receipt of the formal complaint. However in some cases, particularly if the matter is complex, the resolution may take longer, but not more than 45 working days, in which case students will be advised of an extended timeframe. Students may appeal the outcome of the complaint or grievance process to the Complaints and Appeals Panel.

#### **Appeals**

All appeals will be responded to efficiently to ensure an effective resolution within a reasonable timeframe. The CIC Complaints and Appeals Panel will acknowledge and start the process within 5 working days upon receiving the appeal. CIC will endeavor to resolve formal appeals within twenty (20) working days upon receipt of the appeal as soon as practical. However in some cases, particularly if the matter is complex, the resolution may take longer, but not more than 45 working days, in which case students will be advised in writing of an extended timeframe with the reasons for the need for the extension.

### **Lodgement of an Appeal**

- Appellant must lodge the appeal in writing within 10 working days from receipt of CIC's complaint outcome notification of the decision;
- Appellant must lodge the appeal with detail, and where appropriate provide relevant evidence relating to the ground(s) for appeal as to enable the Complaints and Appeals Panel to prepare for the appeal meeting.

### **Appeal Panel membership**

The Complaints and Appeals Panel will comprise of a minimum of two and maximum of three CIC staff members and one independent member [may be an Educo staff member] who will chair the panel.

The panel members may be;

- a representative from the teaching staff
- a representative from the Welfare department.
- a representative from the Academic department (Learning Advisor and/or

	<p>Academic coordinator).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a representative from CIC / Educo Staff /Campus Manager)</li> </ul> <p>Each member of the panel has equal voting rights; the decision of the appeal is a majority decision. The chair will notify the outcome of the appeal and will save the letter in the student file (TEAMS). A member of the panel who was involved in the matter being appealed may not be a member of the Appeals Panel. The CIC Complaints and Appeals Panel is bound to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hear all evidence impartially</li> <li>- Make a decision on the evidence based before them</li> <li>- Make a decision based on a balance of probabilities – i.e. that a proposition is more likely to be true than not</li> <li>- Preserve the academic integrity of programs and standard on behalf of CIC.</li> <li>- Maintain the confidentiality of information made available and of panel decisions</li> </ul> <p><b>Continuous improvement</b></p> <p>Where the Complaint or Appeal is identified as an area for improvement, the Director of Studies in consultation with the VET Education Director will capture the details on a continuous improvement register and action according to the quality assurance framework and the CIC Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedures.</p> <p><b>Record keeping</b></p> <p>All complaints and appeals forms and outcome decisions under this policy shall be maintained for a period of at least five (5) years to allow all parties to the complaint or appeal appropriate access to these records. All records and outcome letters will be saved in TEAMS under the individual student file. All records relating to complaints and appeals will be treated as confidential and will be covered by the CIC Privacy and Personal Information Policy.</p>
<b>Related Policy and Procedures</b>	Privacy and Personal Information Policy and Procedure Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure Complaints and Appeals Procedure
<b>Related Forms</b>	Student/College Complaint form Student/College Appeal form
<b>Policy Owner and Delegated Authority</b>	Director of Studies – Melbourne, Perth Campus Manager
<b>Approved by</b>	CEO
<b>Approved Date</b>	November 2014