

POLICY: S2.8

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The Australian Institute of Management Education and Training (AIM) as a nationally registered training organisation (RTO 0049) seeks to provide a positive and productive experience to support individuals and organisations in achieving their goals. AIM recognises that a customer concern about AIM may provide an opportunity for AIM to improve its services or products.

1.2 Purpose

This policy outlines how AIM manages complaints and appeals in a fair, efficient and effective manner and continues to improve its services and products.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Complaints and Appeals procedure.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to all AIM staff involved in the provision of AIM services and products. It also applies to all prospective AIM students, and all current AIM students enrolled in courses and those students accessing a VET Student Loan (VSL) and government funding for approved courses. It also includes stakeholders who may interact with AIM in conducting its business.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

None

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All those referred to under the Scope of this policy are responsible for complying with its terms and its procedure.
2. Specific responsibilities are provided in the AIM Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Principles

1. AIM complies with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 including the clauses related to complaints and appeals (clauses 6.1 to 6.5).

2. AIM complies with all relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation and regulatory requirements relevant to its operations including (but not limited to) privacy, consumer affairs and fair trading.
3. AIM complies with the VET Student Loans Act 2016 and VET Student Loans Rules 2016 including the requirements relating to student complaints and ensures that students are treated fairly and without discrimination.
4. AIM is committed to:
 - a. making the AIM Complaints and Appeals policy publicly available.
 - b. informing students of the policy pre-enrolment and advising students to read it at the commencement of a course.
 - c. providing reasons in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the complaint/appeal process.
 - d. keeping appropriate records of complaints and appeals, and ensuring records are treated as confidential.
5. AIM will:
 - a. address each complaint in an objective, equitable and impartial manner.
 - b. manage a complaint in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.
 - c. take reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.
 - d. manage conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived.
 - e. ensure that complaints made about a staff member are handled by someone other than the person about whom the complaint is made and
 - f. ensure that reviews about how a complaint was managed is undertaken by a person independent from the original decision maker.
6. AIM will provide the person making the complaint with the following information:
 - the outcome of the complaint and any action taken
 - the reason/s for the decision
 - the remedy or resolution/s that AIM has proposed or put in place and
 - options for internal or external review. (Refer to the *Complaints and Appeals Procedure*.)
7. AIM will record complaints it has received. The information recorded will include:
 - contact information of the person making the complaint
 - issues raised by the person making the complaint
 - the outcome/s they are seeking and
 - any other relevant information.

8. AIM will acknowledge Formal Complaints within five (5) business days of receipt and investigations will be concluded with an outcome within twenty-one (21) business days of AIM receiving the complaint.
9. AIM staff receiving informal complaints will be responsible for resolving these in a timely manner or referring these to a relevant staff member to address, or alternatively advising the student to complete a Formal Complaint.
10. If a Complainant is not satisfied with AIM's decision, the Complainant must apply to AIM within twenty-eight (28) business days of receiving that decision requesting an Internal Review.
11. If, following the Internal Review, the Complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution, the Complaint may be referred to an External Independent to conduct an Independent Review, advising AIM and the Complainant of the outcome. Alternatively, the Complainant may be referred to the Ombudsman for a resolution.
12. Students who have used the VSL program and who have a grievance, may wish to contact the VET Student Loans Ombudsman at www.vet.ombudsman.gov.au. Students with a complaint or enquiry about any service to do with Smart and Skilled can email enquiries@smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au or telephone 1300 772 104.
13. A complaint can be made free of charge. If the student wishes to engage someone to assist in their complaint, that charge is paid by the student and cannot be included in the VSL.
14. If a student disagrees with an assessment outcome, the student should communicate with the Assessor to discuss.
15. If a student, enrolled in a nationally accredited VET qualification, wishes to appeal an assessment outcome, this must be made within ten (10) business days of the date of the assessment judgement.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Assessment Appeal** is a request by a learner enrolled in a nationally accredited VET qualification for reconsideration of an unfavourable assessment outcome. An appeal must be made in writing to the Assessor and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute.
- **Complaint** - Is an expression of dissatisfaction made in relation to AIM's Services or products where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
- **Complainant** is a student or third party who has submitted a formal complaint using the Complaint Form after exhausting the informal complaint process.
- **Complaints Register** is the register of all formal complaints and appeals.
- **Formal Complaint** is a complaint that is recorded in the Complaint and Appeals form.
- **Independent review** is when a Complainant has exhausted the internal complaint and review processes and is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint appeal. In this

case, the Complainant may apply for an external review (by an independent third party) to resolve the dispute.

- **Informal Complaint** is an informal discussion between a Complainant and AIM staff member that leads to a resolution to the matter or issue without a formal record.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- [Student Feedback Form](#)
- [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#)
- Training Product Lifecycle Policy and Procedure
- Transition and Teach Out Policy and Procedure and Templates
- [VET Student Loans Act 2016](#)
- [VET Student Loans Rules 2016](#)
- Withdrawal, Deferral, Extension, Transfer and Refund Policy and Procedure

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Executive Director AIM
Status	Reviewed on July 2022
Approval Authority	Chief Executive Officer
Date of Approval	13 September 2022
Effective Date	26 September 2022
Implementation Owner	Executive Director AIM
Maintenance Owner	VET Compliance and Operations Manager
Review Due	11 August 2025
Content Enquiries	Head of Academic Delivery VET Sandy Jagdev sandy.jagdev@aim.com.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
S2.5	13 September 2022	VET Compliance and Operations Manager	Update of policy as per Scenia governance review and templates; change of policy/procedure name to Complaints and Appeals and includes assessment appeals.
S2.6	23 March 2023	VET Compliance and Operations Manager	Updated to include students enrolled in short courses. See also update to clause 10 to clarify assessment appeals relate to nationally accredited courses with assessments.
S2.7	4 October 2023	VET Compliance and Operations Manager	Addition of information related to VET Student Loans (VSL) and government funds for approved courses.
S2.8	13/10/2023	VET Compliance and Operations Manager	Additional information related to a complaint and a VSL.