

40 Learner Complaint & Critical Incident Policy & Procedure



OVERVIEW:

- It is the responsibility of all PTEs to provide a study environment for students which is physically safe, free from harassment of any kind and conducive to the achievement of good learning outcomes.
- The College also seeks to meet or exceed all students' expectations and places high emphasis on setting and achieving excellence throughout the operation of the College.
- Any expression of lack of satisfaction or concerns, raised orally or in writing, must be documented by the staff member to whom the concern is raised, and brought to the attention of a Senior Manager.
- In the event of any aspect of the student experience not meeting their expectation there is a clearly publicised procedure available to them.
- The Policy sets out ITC's approach to student complaints or appeals, and the related Procedure seeks to resolve any issue informally, fairly and with minimal difficulty for the student.
- Where an issue cannot be resolved informally within the College students may contact external agencies who will seek resolution on their behalf.
- The College's position is to seek amicable resolution with all students and their representatives.

POLICY:

The International Travel College encourages student feedback on their training courses and uses feedback to continually improve our training courses and services.

All students shall have access to appropriate guidance and support to ensure that their learning needs are met and that barriers to their progress are minimised.

All students shall be provided with information regarding the pathway choices they may make in meeting the requirements for qualifications they are seeking.

Students will be provided with a range of mechanisms to provide feedback on any aspect of their training programme, including oral, written, and regular reviews and meetings with Academic and Support Staff.

In the event of a learner being dissatisfied with any aspect of their course of study, including their grades or results in assessments, or of their experience at the International Travel College, a clear and accessible course of action shall be publicly available, and notified in the Student Handbook, online, and on College noticeboards.

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PROCEDURE:

Summary:

1. All concerns should be brought to the tutor's attention in the first instance and, if a solution is not reached, the tutor and/or student may consult with a Campus Manager, or a member of the Management Team.
2. If the Tutor, Campus Manager or other Manager cannot resolve the issue, the concern should be submitted in writing to the CEO within 14 days of the occurrence.
3. If the CEO cannot resolve the issue, the concern will be brought to the College Advisory Board, who will contact the student by letter with their response.
4. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, the concern may be submitted to the relevant external authority (i.e. New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Tertiary Education Commission or DRS).
5. Students may contact NZQA directly at PO Box 160 Wellington or by telephone: 04 802 3000. This information is included in the Student Handbook.

Students may also submit details of their complaint in writing using the **Student Complaint Form** which is reproduced on the final page of this document.

DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS: FORMAL OR INFORMAL

- **Informal complaints** (i.e. minor classroom irritations, misunderstandings, minor disagreements over academic matters, including marking, resource irritations such as internet access) should be directed to the person best situated to address the student complaint and facilitate a speedy resolution. Resolution is achieved by the complainant verbally expressing satisfaction with the outcome, or verbally accepting the decision reached was fair.
- **Formal complaints** (i.e. harassment, inappropriate treatment by staff or fellow students, unfairness in a formal assessment situation, marking issues that are not resolved formally, unfair application of policies, unsafe learning situation) should be made in writing.

Complaints received in writing should be entered in the **Complaints Register** held on the College Server, and progress towards resolution tracked and recorded in the Register.

To assist students in submitting concerns or grievances in writing, a **Student Complaints/Appeals Form** is posted on the website, with copies available at reception, and referred to in the Student Handbook. (a copy of this form is included within this document)

Forms are directed to the Campus Manager and are handled by the CMC/CMB in the first instance. All forms are recorded, actions documented, and the Senior Management Team updated on instances of any critical incidents or serious complaints at each monthly meeting.

A meeting will be convened with the complainant, and a member of the Student Appeals Committee. This may be the Chief Executive, a Senior Manager, or a member of the Advisory Board.

Meetings held with complainants should always be documented; the complainant treated with respect and dignity and offered help in expressing their complaint if language is a problem.

Students who may be uneasy about discussing a complaint with someone whom they see as an authority figure should be given reassurances about the integrity of the process and offered the opportunity to bring a friend/colleague in support.

In the case of international students, translators may be included in the meeting to facilitate mutual understanding.

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Staff involved in meetings with students to discuss complaints should use active listening, reflective listening, and open questions to ensure mutual understanding of the issues.

If necessary, a first meeting may be adjourned whilst additional information is gathered, and decisions regarding outcomes of formal complaints only made once all the facts and relevant information has been gathered.

When considering solutions, students should be asked what solution they are seeking. Proposed solutions or outcomes should be confirmed in writing to complainants, and if agreement is reached it must be documented, signed by both parties, and held on file as an **Outcome Statement**. An Outcome Statement template is located on the College Server.

Actions agreed should be implemented immediately and followed up by the staff member/s involved.

APPEALS:

If the complainant wishes to pursue the complaint beyond the internal process described here, the Complaints and Appeals Procedure should be explained to them, and written information provided to them to help understand the next step.

The key steps in the Complaints Procedure are posted on the College website and included within the Student Handbook (issued to students on their first day) and Staff Induction Manual. The text is reproduced overleaf:

The Text below is provided to Students in their Student Handbook:

Policy

The International Travel College of New Zealand believes that we have a responsibility to provide you with a study environment which is physically safe, free from harassment of any kind, and conducive to the achievement of good learning outcomes. While we are sympathetic with any situation which causes you distress, the main areas this policy is intended to deal with relate to the following:

- Inappropriate application of College policies and procedures.
- Failure to act in accordance with our policies and procedures.
- Actions by staff or students which cause upset to others

Procedure

"If you have a complaint, or wish to lodge an appeal, this is what you do:

1. Talk to the tutor informally first or your Home Tutor. Explain, ask questions, seek a solution with the tutor and, if a solution is not reached, you and/or the tutor may consult the CM.
2. If your tutor and the CM cannot resolve the issue informally, the concern should be submitted in writing to the Student Appeals Department within 14 days of the occurrence. A Student Complaints/Appeals Form is available to help you in this process, available from reception, and is also posted on the College website.
3. The Student Appeals Committee will consider your complaint, and will contact you by letter with their response.

If you are still not satisfied, your final recourse is to the NZQA Student Complaints Process. The process, and a Complaints form are all available online on the NZQA website. (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz>). Their phone number is 0800 697 296. If learners' concerns/complaints are

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not effectively addressed by their provider, learners can escalate the matter to NZQA or, if they relate to financial or contractual matters, the Disputes Resolution Scheme (DRS).

iStudent Complaints is available to help you resolve financial or contractual disputes with your education provider. There is no cost to you for this service. iStudent Complaints (Fair Way) is an independent service with experience in helping people to resolve disputes. You can contact iStudent Complaints on 0800 00 66 75 or help@studycomplaints.org.nz for information about the Disputes Resolution Scheme.

Domestic tertiary and international learners with a financial or contractual dispute against an education provider should contact Study Complaints| Ngā amuamu tauira.
[Study Complaints| Ngā amuamu tauira\(external link\)](https://studycomplaints.org.nz) - studycomplaints.org.nz

Follow Up

The **Complaints Register** is reviewed by the Senior Management Team, at Management meetings, if there are complaints on it to review, and Actions arising from Complaints are followed up to ensure long term quality improvement. The Complaints Register is also reviewed at internal and external quality audits.

FILE LOCATIONS

- All files and forms, including the Complaint Register, relating to Student Appeals and Complaints are located on the College Server_College Ops_ Student Complaints + appeals
- Paper based files regarding complaints and appeals (notes and outcome decisions) are filed in the CEO's office in the City Road Campus.
- File notes of individual complaints or appeals are located within the Student File on the Student Management System (SELMA)

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **The Chief Executive** is responsible for ensuring that the College Policy meets all requirements of external education agencies in respect of the handling and management of student complaints.
- **The Chief Executive** is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the complaints/appeals procedures are sustained, and for convening the Student Appeals Committee as required.
- **The Chief Executive** is responsible for dealing with complaints passed for their attention, and for recording all meetings, correspondence and outcomes.
- **The Campus Managers** are responsible for ensuring that information on complaints/appeals procedures is notified to students within their Induction period. They are also responsible for ensuring that information on complaints/appeals procedures is notified to new staff within their Induction period, and that existing staff are updated on changes to procedures as they occur.
- **The Senior Management Team** is responsible for ensuring that students are provided with all available options to provide feedback and to effectively deal with any student complaints or appeals that may arise. (notes must be kept of any and all meetings with students in respect of complaints).

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- **Nominated Managers** are responsible for participating in the Student Appeals Process, and for ensuring decisions taken during that process are fair and impartial.
- **All staff** are responsible for familiarising themselves with the procedure, for maintaining consistent standards in the provision of training courses and support, and for documenting any student complaints or stated lack of satisfaction with any aspects of their course. They are also responsible for submitting written notes to the CMB/CMC relating to student complaints in which they have had involvement, either for the Director or Student Appeals Committee attention, and/or for inclusion within analysis of student satisfaction data.
- **The Chief Executive** is responsible for notifying the Senior Management Team and College Advisory Board of student satisfaction levels and for reporting on notified complaints. The Chief Executive is responsible for the maintenance of records of student complaints for inclusion in reports as required by the Ministry of Education, NZQA and other agencies.
- **The Academic & Quality Manager (AQM)** is responsible for initiating a review, of this policy and associated form, and for nominating an appropriate manager for the review of both the policy and form.

EVALUATION & REVIEW

This policy and associated form are reviewed annually in line with the Policy & Procedures review, or more frequently as required.

Student Complaint/ Appeals Form



Please use this form to either:

- Make a formal complaint regarding any aspect of your studies at the International Travel College of New Zealand.
- Register an appeal against a marking decision in any internal formal assessments or exams.

Student Name & ID:		Class Code:	
Please write below the details of the problem: <i>(please add additional pages if needed and staple them to this cover sheet)</i>			
Have you tried to resolve the problem with any member of the College staff?		Yes	No
If 'Yes', please give details below. <i>(Who did you speak with, when, what action has been taken to try to resolve the problem)</i>			
What action would you like the College to take now?			
Student Signature:		Date:	
Please post this form or hand in a sealed envelope on campus. Mail to: Student Appeals International Travel College of New Zealand PO Box 6009, Victoria St West AUCKLAND			
Thankyou for taking the time to complete this form. We will make every endeavour to resolve any issue or concern you may have. You will be contacted by the College within 7 days of lodging this complaint			