

Appeals Management Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

SDG College Pty Ltd is committed to ensuring that all students have access to a fair, transparent and timely appeals process. This policy establishes a structured framework for managing appeals in a manner that ensures procedural fairness, consistency in decision-making, and continuous improvement of organisational practices.

The organisation recognises that appeals are an important mechanism for reviewing decisions and ensuring that students are treated fairly. Appeals also provide valuable feedback which supports quality improvement across training, assessment and administrative practices.

This policy ensures that:

- students are informed about avenues for appealing decisions
- appeals are handled in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice
- reasonable timeframes are applied for managing appeals
- students have access to an independent review where required
- outcomes of appeals are documented and communicated
- Outcomes are also used for continuous improvement where required

Appeals form part of the organisation's overall complaints and feedback management system and contribute to continuous improvement and quality assurance processes.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

SDG College Pty Ltd implements this policy in accordance with the **Standards for RTOs 2025 – Standard 2.8 (Appeals)**, which requires that effective appeal processes are available where decisions of the RTO adversely impact a VET student.

The organisation demonstrates compliance by ensuring that:

- students are clearly informed about avenues for appeal
- an appeals management system ensures procedural fairness
- timeframes for managing appeals are clearly defined and applied
- independent review is available at no or low cost to the student

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- appeal outcomes are documented and communicated
- outcomes of appeals inform continuous improvement

This policy also aligns with the following legislative requirements:

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- Australian Consumer Law
- Privacy Act 1988
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Nothing in this policy removes or limits the student's right to pursue action under the Australian Consumer Law or to seek external advice or resolution at any stage. The organisation ensures that access to the appeals process is provided at no cost to the student for internal appeals and at no or low cost for independent external review.

Students have the right to pursue external remedies at any time, including through relevant regulatory bodies or independent dispute resolution mechanisms.

There is no cost to the student to access the internal appeals process.

The organisation will maintain the student's enrolment during the internal appeals process and, where applicable, during any external review process, until the appeal outcome is finalised.

This written agreement, and the availability of the complaints and appeals process, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all appeals lodged by students relating to decisions made by SDG College Pty Ltd that directly affect the student's training, assessment, participation or outcomes.

Appeals may relate to, but are not limited to:

- assessment outcomes and competency decisions
- administrative decisions affecting enrolment or progression
- certification decisions

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- disciplinary or behavioural actions
- access to support services or reasonable adjustments
- changes to training delivery or course structure
- enrolment decisions or refusals

This policy applies to all delivery modes and all training products delivered by the organisation.

3.1 Compliance with Standards for RTOs 2025 – Appeals

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that appeals processes are implemented in accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2025. The organisation maintains a structured appeals management system that supports transparency, procedural fairness and consistency in decision-making.

Information about how to lodge an appeal is publicly available and easily accessible to VET students. This information is provided through the Student Handbook, organisational website, enrolment documentation and orientation materials to ensure students are aware of their rights and available appeal processes.

SDG College Pty Ltd provides effective appeal processes for students where decisions adversely affect them. Appeals may relate to decisions made by:

- SDG College Pty Ltd
- third party service providers delivering training or assessment
- staff employed by the organisation
- contractors engaged by the organisation
- any person acting on behalf of the organisation

The organisation ensures that students have access to fair and transparent appeal processes in all such circumstances.

SDG College Pty Ltd will maintain the student's enrolment during the internal appeals process and, where applicable, during any independent third-party review. No final decision that adversely affects the student will be implemented until the appeals process is completed.

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Outcomes of appeals are reviewed to identify opportunities for improvement. Where appropriate, improvement actions are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register and reviewed during management meetings.

Information about the appeals process is provided to students prior to enrolment and is made continuously accessible through the Student Handbook, website and orientation materials.

4. Principles of Procedural Fairness

SDG College Pty Ltd applies the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice at all stages of the appeals process to ensure that decisions are made in a fair, unbiased and transparent manner. The organisation recognises that procedural fairness is essential to maintaining integrity, consistency and trust in decision-making processes. All appeals are reviewed objectively and without prejudice, and all relevant information is considered prior to a decision being made.

The organisation ensures that students are provided with a genuine opportunity to present their case and respond to any information that may influence the outcome of the appeal. Decision-makers involved in the appeals process will not have been directly involved in the original decision wherever practicable, and any potential conflicts of interest will be identified and managed appropriately. The organisation will maintain confidentiality throughout the process and ensure that all information is handled sensitively and securely.

Decisions will be based on objective and verifiable evidence, and clear reasons for the decision will be documented and communicated to the student in writing. Students will also be informed of their rights to seek further review, including access to independent third-party review and external complaint mechanisms where applicable.

To support the consistent application of procedural fairness, SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that:

- appeals are handled by an unbiased and appropriately authorised person
- students are provided with an opportunity to present their case and respond to information
- all relevant evidence and documentation is considered
- decisions are based on objective and verifiable evidence

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- reasons for decisions are clearly documented
- students are informed of their rights and further options
- confidentiality and privacy are maintained throughout the process

5. Appeals Management Timeframes

SDG College Pty Ltd applies defined and structured timeframes to ensure that appeals are managed promptly, fairly and without unnecessary delay. The organisation recognises that timely resolution of appeals is important to maintaining student confidence and ensuring that students are not disadvantaged while the appeals process is underway.

All appeals are acknowledged, investigated and resolved within reasonable and clearly communicated timeframes. The organisation ensures that students are kept informed throughout the process and that any delays are communicated transparently. Where additional time is required to complete an investigation, the student will be advised in writing, including the reasons for the delay and the revised timeframe for completion.

The organisation ensures that appeals are managed within the following timeframes:

- appeals must be lodged within twenty (20) working days from the date the student is notified of the decision
- written acknowledgement is provided within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt
- investigation commences within seven (7) calendar days
- a written outcome is provided within fourteen (14) calendar days where possible
- appeals are finalised within thirty (30) calendar days of lodgement

Where the appeal cannot be resolved within thirty (30) calendar days:

- the student will be informed in writing
- reasons for the delay will be clearly explained
- regular progress updates will be provided
- a revised timeframe for completion will be communicated

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These timeframes ensure compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2025 and support timely and fair resolution of appeals. Students retain the right to access external appeal mechanisms at any stage of the process.

6. Lodging an Appeal

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that students are able to lodge an appeal easily and without disadvantage. Students have the right to submit an appeal against any decision that adversely affects their training, assessment or participation. The organisation provides clear and accessible methods for lodging appeals and ensures that students are supported throughout the process.

Appeals must be submitted in writing and should clearly outline the grounds for appeal, relevant details of the decision being appealed, and any supporting documentation. Students may submit an appeal by completing the Request for an Appeal Form or by providing a written statement via email. Where a student experiences difficulty completing the form, assistance will be provided by staff to ensure accessibility.

The Request for an Appeal Form is available for download from the SDG College Pty Ltd website. Students may also request a copy of the form by emailing info@tba. Upon request, the form will be provided electronically or in hard copy where required.

There is no cost to the student for lodging or participating in the internal appeals process. Lodging an appeal will not disadvantage the student or affect their enrolment status during the appeals process

Appeals may be submitted to any of the following authorised personnel:

- Chief Executive Officer
- General Manager
- Student Support Officer

Appeals may be submitted via:

- Email to info@sdgcollege.edu.au
- Hard copy submission to the administration office
- Written letter

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- Completed Request for Appeal Form

Students may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any stage of the appeals process. The support person may include a family member, friend, colleague or other representative. The presence of a support person is intended to provide assistance and does not change the role of the decision-maker.

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that:

- students are not disadvantaged for lodging an appeal
- assistance is provided where students require help completing documentation
- appeals are accepted in accessible formats
- appeals are treated confidentially
- students are informed of the appeals process and timeframes
- students retain the right to withdraw an appeal at any time

SDG College Pty Ltd will maintain the student's enrolment during the internal appeals process. No final decision that adversely affects the student will be implemented until the internal appeals process is completed. Where the student requests an independent third-party review, the organisation will continue to maintain the student's enrolment until that process has concluded. The independent reviewer will be an external, appropriately qualified individual or organisation with no prior involvement in the matter and no conflict of interest.

7. Appeals Procedure

SDG College Pty Ltd implements a structured and systematic appeals management procedure to ensure that all appeals are managed consistently, fairly and in accordance with procedural fairness and the Standards for RTOs 2025. The appeals management process is designed to ensure transparency, accountability and timely resolution, while maintaining confidentiality and supporting students throughout the process.

The organisation ensures that all appeals are reviewed objectively, that appropriate documentation is maintained, and that students are provided with clear communication at each stage. The appeals process includes receipt, acknowledgement, investigation, decision-making, communication, implementation and monitoring of outcomes. Opportunities for continuous improvement identified through appeals are recorded and actioned.

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The appeals process is implemented within the timeframes outlined in Section 6 of this policy. SDG College Pty Ltd will make every reasonable effort to finalise appeals as soon as possible and generally within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt. Where additional time is required, the student will be informed in writing of the reasons for the delay and provided with regular updates on the progress of the appeal

The detailed appeals management procedure is outlined below.

Step	Process Stage	Detailed Description	Responsibility	Records
1	Receipt	The appeal is received by Administration staff or nominated personnel. The appeal is reviewed for completeness and clarity, including confirmation of student details, nature of appeal and supporting information. Where additional information is required, the student is contacted to provide clarification.	Administration	Appeal Form / Email
2	Acknowledgement	Written acknowledgement of the appeal is provided within twenty-four (24) hours. The acknowledgement confirms receipt of the appeal, outlines the appeals process, expected timeframes, and the student's right to procedural fairness and support person.	General Manager	Acknowledgement Email
3	Recording	The appeal is formally recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register. Details	Administration	Appeals Register

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Step	Process Stage	Detailed Description	Responsibility	Records
		recorded include student name, date received, nature of appeal, responsible officer and due dates. Duplicate entries are checked to ensure accuracy.		
4	Initial Review	The Chief Executive Officer reviews the appeal to determine the appropriate investigation approach. The CEO assesses whether the appeal relates to assessment, administration or other matters and assigns responsibility accordingly. Any conflict of interest is identified and managed.	CEO	Review Notes
5	Investigation	Relevant information is gathered including assessment evidence, student records, trainer feedback, policies and procedures and any supporting documentation. Where required, interviews with staff or student are conducted.	General Manager	Investigation Records
6	Student Consultation	The student is provided an opportunity to present their case, either in writing or during a meeting. The student	CEO / General Manager	Meeting Notes

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Step	Process Stage	Detailed Description	Responsibility	Records
		may be accompanied by a support person. Additional evidence provided by the student is considered.		
7	Decision	The CEO reviews all evidence and makes a decision based on objective and verifiable information. The decision ensures procedural fairness and consistency with organisational policies.	CEO	Decision Record
8	Communication	The outcome of the appeal is communicated to the student in writing. The response includes the decision, reasons for the decision, actions to be taken and information about further review options.	General Manager	Outcome Letter
9	Implementation	Where the appeal is upheld, corrective actions are implemented immediately. This may include reassessment, adjustment of results, provision of additional support or administrative correction.	CEO / Trainer	Action Records
10	Monitoring	Following implementation, outcomes are monitored to ensure effectiveness. Trainers and support staff monitor	General Manager	Monitoring Notes

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Step	Process Stage	Detailed Description	Responsibility	Records
		student progress and report any ongoing concerns.		
11	Continuous Improvement	Any systemic issues identified through the appeal are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register. Improvements are reviewed during management meetings.	CEO	CI Register

8. Independent Third-Party Review

Where a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeals process, SDG College Pty Ltd provides access to an independent third-party review to ensure procedural fairness and transparency. This review is conducted by an impartial individual or organisation who has not been involved in the original decision or the internal appeals process.

The purpose of the independent review is to provide an objective assessment of the appeal management process, the decision reached, and the fairness of the outcome. The organisation will support the student throughout this process and will ensure that access to independent review does not disadvantage the student.

SDG College Pty Ltd will facilitate the independent review process by identifying an appropriate and qualified independent reviewer. The organisation will provide all relevant documentation required for the review, including appeal records, investigation findings, student submissions and decision documentation. The organisation will bear the reasonable cost of the independent review to ensure that access to review is available at no or low cost to the student.

The independent reviewer will assess the appeal and provide recommendations. These recommendations will be considered carefully by SDG College Pty Ltd, and any agreed actions will be implemented promptly. The organisation will communicate the outcome of the independent review to the student in writing.

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SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that:

- students are informed of their right to independent review
- an impartial reviewer is engaged
- all relevant documentation is provided
- reasonable costs of the review are covered by the organisation
- recommendations are considered objectively
- outcomes are implemented where appropriate
- the student is informed of the final outcome in writing

The independent reviewer is requested to provide recommendations within fourteen (14) calendar days of receiving the documentation, where practicable.

9. External Appeal Options

If the student remains dissatisfied after completion of the internal appeals process and independent third-party review, the student may refer the matter to an appropriate external agency. SDG College Pty Ltd recognises the student's right to seek external advice and resolution and will not restrict access to external complaints mechanisms.

Students may refer matters to external agencies relevant to the nature of the appeal. These agencies provide independent oversight and may investigate complaints relating to training delivery, consumer rights, or privacy matters. The organisation will cooperate fully with any external investigation and provide requested documentation where required.

Students may contact the following external agencies:

- National Training Complaints Service
- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- State or Territory Consumer Protection Agencies
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (for privacy matters)

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that:

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- students are informed of external appeal options
- access to external agencies is not restricted
- students may seek external advice at any time
- the organisation cooperates with investigations
- relevant documentation is provided when requested
- external review outcomes are considered

This policy does not remove the student's right to take further action under Australian Consumer Law.

10. Confidentiality

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that all appeals are handled in a confidential and respectful manner. Information relating to an appeal is treated sensitively and only disclosed to personnel directly involved in managing the appeal or where disclosure is required by law.

Confidentiality is maintained to protect the privacy of all parties involved, including students, staff and third parties. Records relating to appeals are stored securely and access is restricted to authorised personnel. Any meetings or discussions relating to appeals are conducted in private to ensure confidentiality.

Where information needs to be shared with an independent reviewer or external agency, written consent will be obtained from the student unless disclosure is required by law. All staff involved in the appeals process are required to maintain confidentiality and handle information in accordance with organisational policies and privacy legislation.

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that:

- all appeal information is treated confidentially
- access to records is restricted to authorised personnel
- discussions are conducted in private
- written consent is obtained before disclosure where required
- information is stored securely
- staff maintain confidentiality obligations
- privacy legislation requirements are followed

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11. Record Management

SDG College Pty Ltd maintains accurate and comprehensive records of all appeals to ensure transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. All documentation relating to appeals is retained securely and managed in accordance with the organisation's record management requirements.

Appeal records include all documentation associated with the appeal, including correspondence, investigation findings, decisions and actions taken. Records are maintained in electronic format within secure systems and access is restricted to authorised personnel.

The organisation ensures that appeal records are complete, accurate and retained in a manner that allows for monitoring and review. Records are also used to identify trends and improvement opportunities.

Appeal records include:

- details of the appeal
- investigation notes and findings
- correspondence with the student and relevant parties
- decision and reasons for decision
- actions taken
- monitoring outcomes
- continuous improvement actions

SDG College Pty Ltd ensures that:

- records are stored securely
- access is restricted to authorised personnel
- records are protected from loss or damage
- electronic records are backed up
- records are retained in accordance with retention requirements
- records support continuous improvement processes

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These record management practices ensure compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2025 and support effective governance and quality assurance. All appeal records are retained and managed in accordance with the organisation's Records Management Policy and applicable regulatory requirements.

12. Appeals & Continuous Improvement

Appeals are systematically analysed to identify trends, systemic issues and risks. Outcomes of appeals are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register and reviewed through governance and management meetings to support ongoing compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2025 and to enhance organisational practices.

Appeals data is periodically analysed to identify emerging risks and is reviewed as part of governance reporting to ensure ongoing compliance and improvement.