

Academic Grievance, Complaints, and Appeals Policy

Date Approved: 16 March 2023
Implementation: Student Services Managers, Operations Managers
Maintenance Owner: Executive General Manager- Quality, Accreditation & Compliance

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Section 1 – Introduction

1) Purpose

AIT and all of its brands and affiliates aim to provide a fair, equitable and productive learning environment for all its students. This policy seeks to support the achievement of this goal by providing a transparent and consistent process for resolving academic grievances, complaints and appeals.

AIT sets educational goals and standards through its graduate outcomes and subject level learning outcomes. Assessment results indicate how well students are progressing towards these goals.

When there is a formal appeal or dispute over a student's assessment result, this policy is designed to provide a clear pathway to resolution.

This policy is to aid the resolution of informal complaints and the process for addressing formal grievances, complaints, or academic appeals.

2) Scope

This policy applies to:

- i) All students (domestic and international) of AIT brands;
- ii) All staff of AIT including employees and contractors; and
- iii) All courses delivered by AIT including those delivered on their behalf by education providers with whom there is a licensing arrangement.

If there are any discrepancies between an affiliate's policy and this policy, the AIT policy will apply.

Academy of Interactive Technology Pty Ltd (also trading as Coder Academy, iscd, and Work Ready Education) RTO: 90511, Registered Higher Education Provider.
PRV12005, CRICOS: 02155J

3) Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Academic Appeal	An Academic Appeal is an appeal against an assessment decision, made by submitting an Assessment Appeal Form - within ten working days of results being posted.
Anonymous Complaints	AIT does not generally respond to anonymous complaints unless they involve allegations of a serious nature, such as corruption or criminal behaviour. Where appropriate, the delegated Student Services Officer may decide that an investigation is warranted.
Appeal	A student may appeal against any decision made by AIT staff by submitting an Appeal Decision Form.
Conflict of Interest	A participant may disqualify themselves from participating in these complaint procedures should they consider that their involvement would create a conflict of interest. The convenor of any meeting is required to ensure that any participant in the processes specified by this Policy can declare whether they have a conflict of interest. Any participant who perceives a possible conflict of interest should report the matter to their Executive General Manager who shall decide on what action is appropriate and may disqualify a person from participating in the decision-making process.
Complaint	<p>Any student or member of the public can make an informal or formal complaint at any time, including if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of any informal complaint already made.</p> <p>An informal complaint becomes a formal complaint when a student submits a Complaints Form to their education provider.</p> <p>A formal complaint must be lodged in writing (letter or email) with Student Services. In cases where no formal complaint has been received, the Student Services Manager, Academic Director/Manager, Quality, Accreditation and Compliance Manager, Executive General Manager, PEO, and members of relevant Academic Boards may decide that an investigation is warranted, in which case they will initiate the formal complaints process.</p>
Formal Complaint	Started by submitting a complaint form. The process follows the procedures described in this policy and the included flowcharts
Informal complaint	<p>An informal complaint can be made to any member of AIT staff either verbally or in writing. It is not dealt with through the formal process. Informal complaints involve discussion between relevant parties towards an outcome focused resolution.</p> <p>Any student or member of the public may make an informal complaint at any time. Many problems can be resolved informally, and complainants are encouraged to try to resolve the issue directly with the person concerned. If a student or member of the public is dissatisfied with the outcome of an informal complaint, they may lodge a formal complaint by submitting a Complaints Form to their education provider.</p>

	<p>Pursuing an issue informally does not prevent the student also seeking to resolve it through the formal process.</p>
<p>Rights</p>	<p>This policy, and the right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if Australian Consumer Law applies.</p>
<p>Special Circumstances</p>	<p>Special circumstances (also known as Compelling and/or compassionate circumstances, or Special Consideration) are events beyond the students control that impact upon their ability to maintain continuity of study or enrolment, and may not be addressed through online study. Examples may include extended periods of hospitalisation for conditions not present at time of enrolment, the death of a family member, secondment overseas by government agencies including the armed forces</p> <p>Circumstances are such that it makes it impractical for the student to submit their assessment or continue or complete their studies including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illness Supporting evidence will be required and may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a doctor’s certificate, or if a mental illness; a report from a registered psychologist/psychotherapist, 2. A death in the family Supporting evidence will be required and may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a funeral notice (or Order of Service) 3. For a relevant cultural event or practice, Or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representation at State level for a particular sport. Or - Requirement to participate in a performance event Or - Voluntary service in the SES to attend a natural disaster or other event, Or - Service in the Defence Force to attend a national or state emergency, or compulsory training. Supporting evidence will be required and may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Statement signed by an authorised officer of the appropriate organisation, which validates that the date/s of the commitment corresponds with the date/s for which Special Consideration is requested. 4. If you were impacted by domestic violence or other police matter. Supporting evidence will be required and may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Police Report number; or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Declaration providing an outline of the matter, and the dates of impact. <p>5. Serious Unforeseen Personal Events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural disasters, such as bush fires or flooding. - Impacts from COVID-19, such as sudden lockdowns or border closure. - Family members being impacted by COVID-19. - Technology breakdowns that result in lost work. - Sudden serious accident involving yourself or someone else which impacts you. <p>Supporting evidence will be required and may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An official document that corroborates the nature of the event, showing dates of impact relevant to the Special Consideration being sought for the assessment item.
Victimisation	<p>Any victimisation of a complainant will be regarded seriously and should be referred to the CEO for appropriate action. Any student who victimises a person in relation to these complaint procedures may be subject to an action under the Student Code of Conduct or the Bullying and Harassment Policy. A staff member who victimises a student in relation to these Academic complaint procedures may be subject to an action under the Staff Code of Conduct or the Bullying and Harassment Policy.</p>

Section 2 – Policy

1) Overview

All stakeholders are entitled to access an efficient mechanism to raise and settle grievances. AIT is committed to identifying and responding to any issue or grievance considering any aspect of its business operations. AIT has established an academic complaint and grievance resolution system to resolve:

- a. academic appeals and grievances relating to student progress, assessment, facilitators, plagiarism, course materials, curriculum or awards in a course of study;
- b. academic appeals and grievances relating to personal information held and any other administrative matters;
- c. academic grievances between staff and students, and between students.

There are no costs to students from AIT when using the AIT Academic Grievance, Complaints, and Appeals Policy or procedures.

AIT welcomes all forms of feedback, and students are invited to offer feedback on the assessment process via multiple surveys offered during their enrolment.

At all times, AIT will respect the rights of all students to use other avenues available to them to address their academic grievances and/or appeals.

2) Confidentiality

Records of grievances and their outcomes and the Grievances Register will be kept for 7 years in strictly confidential files. Parties to the grievance will be allowed supervised access to these records on request. Management of and access to any grievance records (including the Grievances Register) will be restricted to the Student Services Managers, Academic Directors/Manager, EGM-Group Quality, Accreditation and Compliance, and the CEO.

All parties, subject to the grievance process, shall always treat Grievance as confidential and shall not reveal the names of complainants making a grievance or where applicable those referred to in the grievance to any third party without the express permission of those concerned.

3) Timeliness

The intent of the Academic Grievance, Complaint, and Appeal Policy is to try and resolve the issue so progression can occur in a timely manner. This means a result that will allow students to enroll into other subjects (if there is a prerequisite), or the same subject (if repeating the subject is required), or a new course (based on the completion of the student's current course).

This does not mean the opportunity to appeal a decision is negated nor response times and deadlines for responses are truncated, but the intent is to assist the student to resolve the issue and progress.

Section 3 – Academic Appeals

1) Internal Formal Academic Appeal

Basis for Academic Appeals

Fair opportunity and fair application of the relevant assessment guide and AIT policies will be the only basis for appeal.

A student has reasons for appeal if:

- a. There was a technical error in the recording of the correct result.
- b. The grade, or result was not an accurate or fair interpretation of the published assessment criteria.
- c. There was an incorrect application of an AIT policy and procedures.
- d. Factors outside the student's control meant that the work submitted did not accurately reflect the student's ability (Special Circumstances).

2) Final Grade/Result Academic Appeal

In an appeal application, a student must make clear the grounds on which they are making the appeal and provide evidence to support their claim. Each AIT Student Services function will provide a suitable form.

While meetings are not usually held, students have an opportunity to formally present their case (at no cost from the AIT education provider) and may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.

Responsibilities

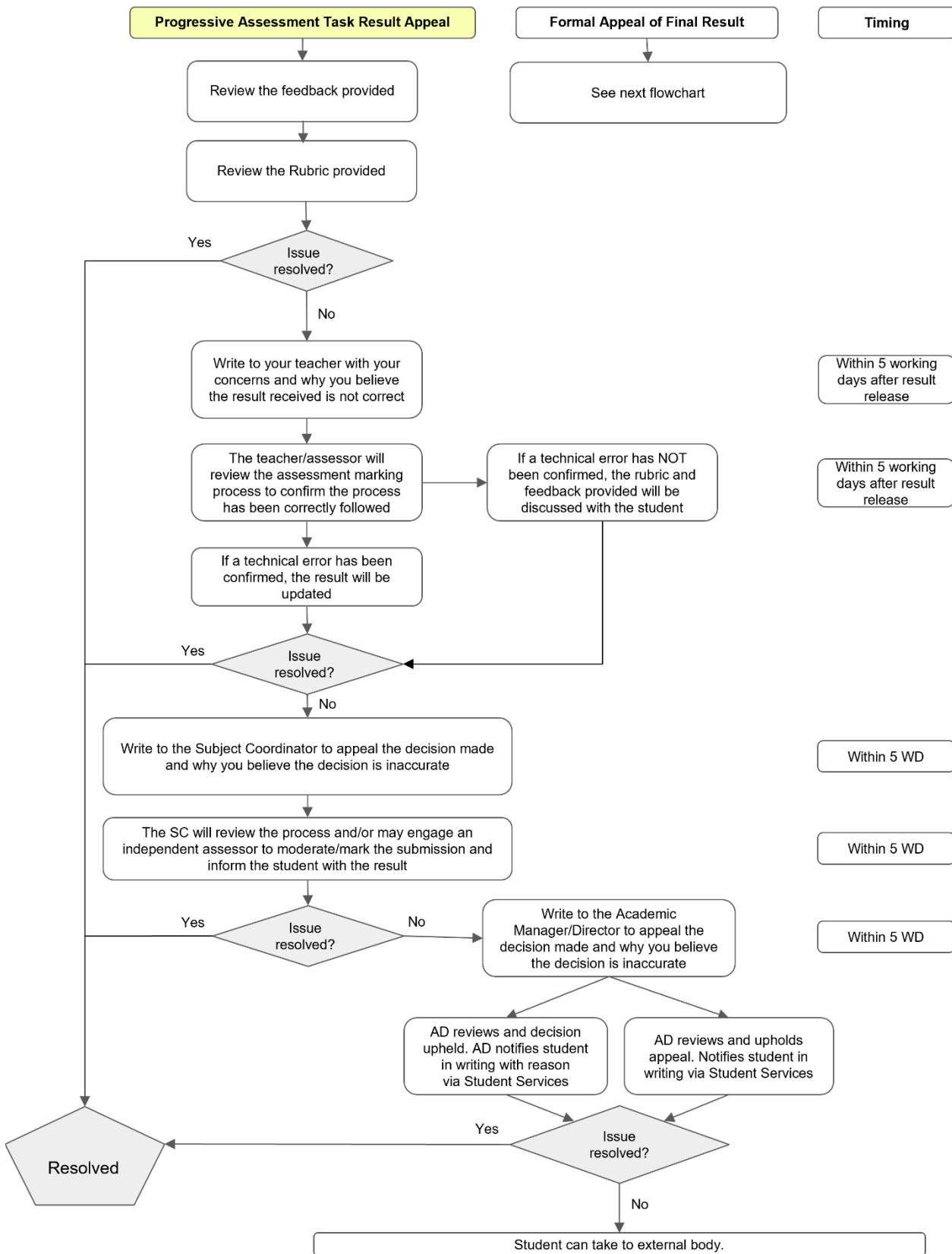
Action	Responsibility	Time frame
Initial Academic Appeal	Student	Application must be made within five working days of results being posted.
Review of appeal	Course Coordinator* (CC)	The review decision must be sent to the student within five working days.
Appeal the decision made	Student	Application for Appeal of the CC decision must be made within five working days of being notified of CC's decision.
Internal Appeal Review of decision made	Academic Review Committee (ARC) or Academic Manager	ARC must meet within five days. The decision must be sent to the student within two working days.
Internal appeal of ARC/AM decision	Student	Application, or Notice of Application must be made within five working days of being notified of ARC decision.
Grievance Review of ARC/AM decision	Appeals Panel (AP) Set up by Exec GM	AP must meet within five working days. The decision must be sent to the student within two working days.

* If a Course Coordinator is also the student's teacher, the Academic Director/Manager will select an alternative appropriate person to conduct the review and prepare the response.

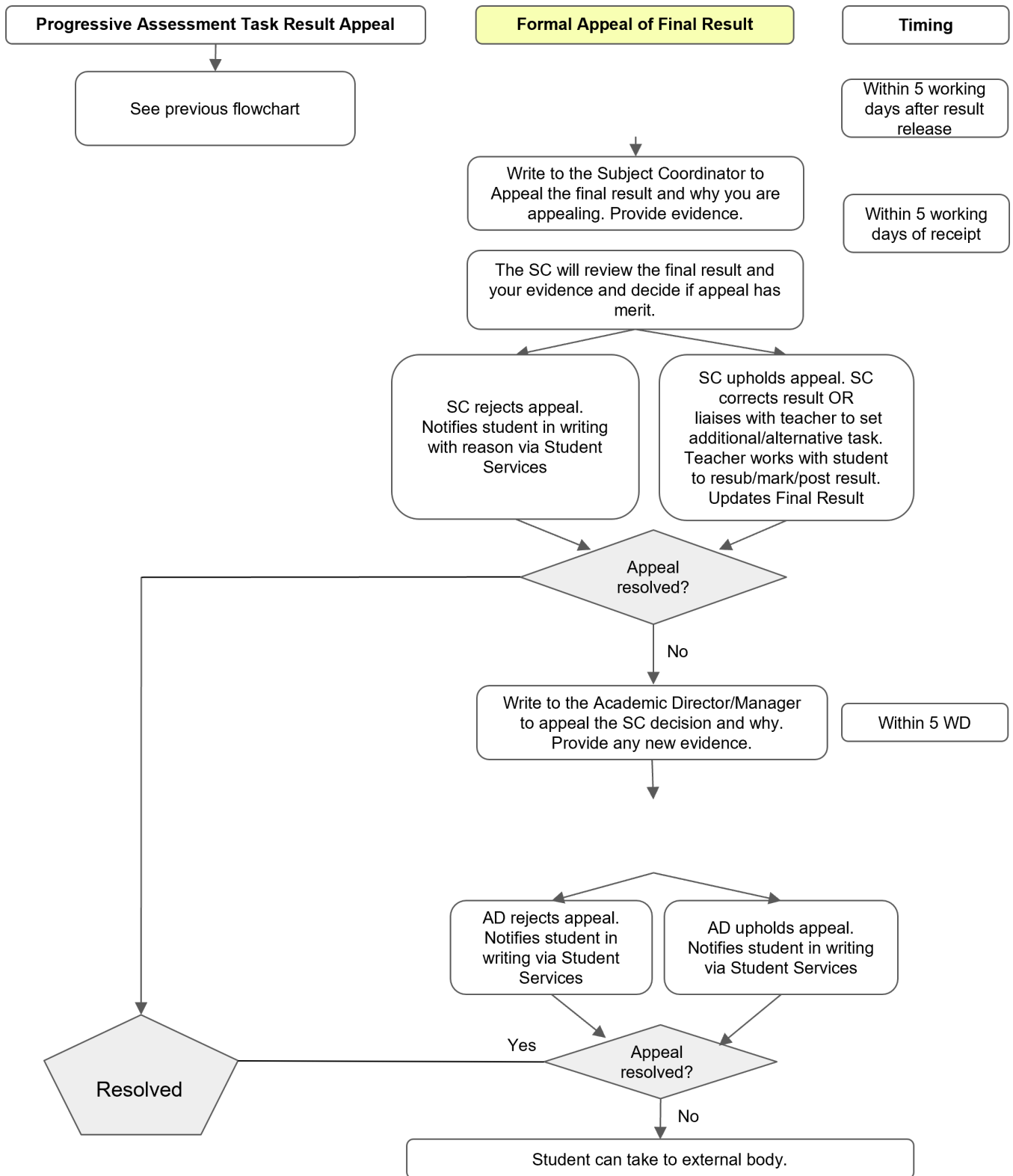
Summary Guide

Reason for appeal	This means	Supporting evidence	Example
Inappropriate Grade/result	The assessment criteria published in the subject/unit outline were inappropriately applied	Name the specific criteria and point to evidence in your assessment that satisfies that criterion	"I was marked down (or deemed Not Yet Competent) because I didn't have a storyboard. There is a storyboard on page seven."
Inappropriate application of college rule or regulation	That the grade/result was modified because it was late, plagiarised or did not meet the requirements of the assessment	Cite the rule or regulation used to modify your result. Attach evidence refuting that the rule or regulation was breached	"My result was altered due to lateness. This screen grab shows that my assessment was submitted on time"
Special Consideration	Was there a reason, beyond your control, that resulted in a result that does not reflect your ability	Special Consideration is outlined in the Definitions of this Policy. You need to have evidence supporting these circumstances	"I was sick in the week before the assessment was due. Here is a medical certificate from a registered general practitioner covering that period"

3) Flowchart – Academic Appeal of Assessments



4) Flowchart – Academic Appeal of Final Results



Section 4 – Supporting Documents and Change History

1) Publication

This policy & procedure is published on the websites of AIT and LMS to ensure students have up-to-date and accurate information publicly available to them.

2) Supporting Documents

Document name	Document type	Location
Student Code of Conduct	Policy	Internal
Student Handbook	Policy Guide	Internal
TEQSA Threshold Standards 2021, Standards 2.2 Diversity and Equity, 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety, and 2.4 Student Grievances and Appeals	Legislation	Website
Under 18 Years Student Management and Supervision Procedure	Procedure	Website
U18 International Students Guideline	Procedural Guide	Website
ESOS Act 2017	Govt Standards	External
National Code 2018	Govt Standards	External
Higher Education Support Act 2003	Govt Standards	External
ASQA Standards for RTO's 2015	Regulatory Standards	External
Privacy Act 1988	Legislation	External

3) Change History

Version	Approval date	Department	Approved by	Change
V1.0	04 May 2016	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Group Manager	Development of Group Policy replacing existing entity level policies
		Principal Executive Officer	CEO	
V1.1	18 May 2018	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Compliance Manager	Replaced CTTT with ACPET
		Principal Executive Officer	CEO	
V1.2	09 October 2019	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Group Manager	Update to new template
		Technology & Design Division	General Manager	
V1.3	21 July 2020	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Group Manager	Update to timeline to lodge an appeal and provide clarity around obligations and processes. Flowchart updated.
		Technology & Design Division	General Manager	
V1.4	20 August 2020	Group Accreditation & Compliance	Group Manager	Merging of Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Policy with Academic Appeals Policy
		Technology & Design Division	General Manager	
V1.5	14 April 2022	Group Quality, Accreditation & Compliance	Executive General Manager	Update of Flowchart. Inclusion of point 5 – Notice for Appeal if served with Notice to Cancel Enrolment
		Technology & Design Division	Executive General Manager	
V2.0	30 September 2022	Chief Executive Officer		Update to iCollege template, Inclusion of group entities, Inclusion of state-based support agencies, Update of flowcharts, Clarity of contact for U18YOs.
V2.1	16 March 2023	Chief Executive Officer		Update AIT name and new template,