

**Standards:**

This Policy and procedure relates to Standard 8- Complaints and appeals in the National Code 2007

**Policy Statement:**

St George & Sutherland Community College is committed to providing a fair complaints and appeals process.

**What is a complaint?**

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by St George & Sutherland Community College in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by students and/or employers.

**What is an appeal?**

An appeal is an application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during training and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 28 days of the decision or finding is informed to the student.

**Early resolution or complaints and appeals:**

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved.

**Relationship to continuous improvement**

Frequently, the complaints and appeals handling process will expose weaknesses in the training and assessment system that can flow into the continuous improvement system as opportunities for improvement. This outcome of complaints and appeals handling is very positive and should be actively applied by all persons involved.

**Procedure:****1. Complaint and appeals handling**

St George & Sutherland Community College undertakes to apply the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- 1.1. A written record of all complaints and appeals is to be kept by St George & Sutherland Community College including all details of lodgement, response and resolution by the Workskills VET business Manager.
- 1.2. A complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- 1.3. Each complainant or person lodging an appeal may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- 1.4. The handling of a complaint or appeal is to commence within 14 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- 1.5. The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- 1.6. The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to have the opportunity for a person or a body that is independent of St George & Sutherland Community College to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal St George & Sutherland Community College complaint or appeals process. It is noted that a review of findings by an independent person or body will generally only relate to the appeals process and is less likely to be required in complaints handling.

- 1.7. St George & Sutherland Community College shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant or person lodging an appeal during the complaint or appeals process.
- 1.8. Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeals process that find in the favour of the student shall be implemented immediately.
- 1.9. Complaints and appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No St George & Sutherland Community College representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of St George & Sutherland Community College Principal. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur by their completing the Information Release Form.
- 1.10. Complaints and appeals are to be considered on the basis of procedural fairness and lead to opportunities for improvement as a Continuous Improvement Report.
- 1.11. Students who are not satisfied with the complete complaint handling by St George & Sutherland Community College may refer their complaint to ASQA for consideration. Students are to be advised that registering bodies will require the student to have exhausted all avenues through St George & Sutherland Community College before taking this option. Please refer to the Complaint Handling Procedure for more information.
- 1.12. Appeals of assessment decisions are not able to be referred to ASQA and are to be determined by an approved independent body.
- 1.13. St George & Sutherland Community College considers that it would be extremely unlikely that complaints and appeals are not able to be resolved quickly within St George & Sutherland

Community College is internal structures.

## 2. **Hearing of student difficulties or grievances**

St George & Sutherland Community College is committed to providing a fair hearing of student difficulties or grievances.

Should a student have a grievance the following procedure will apply:

- 2.1 If the student has a difficulty or complaint which they wish to discuss, they should first talk to The International Manager or the International Student Support Service Officer.
- 2.2 If this discussion does not satisfy the student, they should then talk to the WorkSkills Manager – Vocational Education & Business.
- 2.3 If the WorkSkills Manager – Vocational Education & Business is unable to help them with their difficulty or complaint, then the student should complete a Complaint form which formalises their complaint.
- 2.4 Upon receipt of lodgement of the grievance the student will be advised in writing of the outcome of their complaint within 10 working days this procedure must begin within 10 working days of the lodgement of their grievance. Students will be advised in writing of the outcome of their complaint and SGSCC International will implement any decisions and/or corrective and preventative actions required. During this process, SGSCC International will maintain the student's enrolment whilst the grievance process is ongoing. (See National Code Standard 8.4).
- 2.5 If the student wishes, they should ask a friend to go with them for either language or moral support.
- 2.6 If this procedure is unsuccessful, then students are able to approach The Fair Trading Centre as an external agency, in order to have their unresolved financial grievances heard. Students are to be advised that they are able to formally present their case to this external agency with minimal or no cost to themselves.
- 2.7 All other disputes are to be dealt with by the Appeals Process, so that a suitable resolution to their complaint may be obtained. An appeal process begins when the student completes an Appeals form. The Board will comprise the following:
  - a college representative
  - the student
  - a student representative

- 2 professional independents who may be drawn from industry representatives, peak bodies, or independent consultants.

All members of the Appeals Board must be approved, by both the college and student. The college and student must agree to abide by the decision of the Appeals Board before the board convenes.

- 2.8 A decision will be made, recorded and acted upon. The college will implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required.

### **3 Making a complaint to ASQA**

To make a complaint, students are to complete the *Complaint about a registered training organisation* form located on the ASQA website

- 3.1 The student can also submit the form by emailing:

[complaintsteam@asqa.gov.au](mailto:complaintsteam@asqa.gov.au).

- 3.2 If the student wishes to submit the complaint in hard copy they can print and fill out the form, and post it to:

**Complaints team**

Australian Skills Quality Authority

GPO Box 9928

Melbourne VIC 3001

- 3.3 Staff is to provide assistance to students during the complaint handling process. If student's require additional help they may call the ASQA complaints team on 1300 701 801, or email

[complaintsteam@asqa.gov.au](mailto:complaintsteam@asqa.gov.au).

- 3.4 The response to the complainant must include information that demonstrates that the matter was thoroughly reviewed and what actions and outcomes have been identified as a result of the complaint.

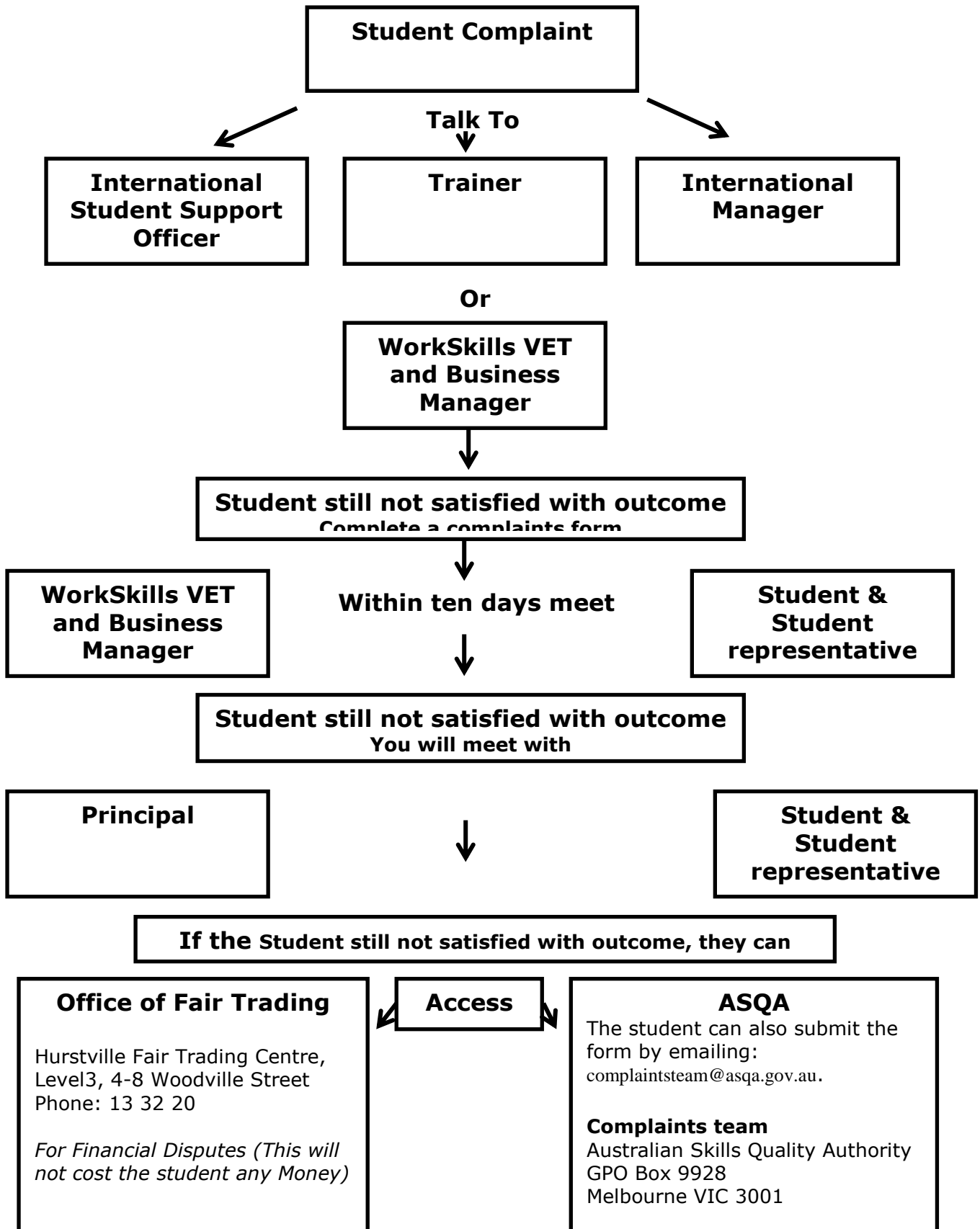
- 3.5 Opportunities for improvement that were identified as a result of the complaint are to be recorded in a Continuous Improvement Report and submitted for the next Management Team meeting. The Principal may, at his or her discretion, follow-up with the complainant after consideration by the Management Team to inform the complainant of

**St George & Sutherland Community College Incorporated Trading as SGSCC International**  
**CRICOS Provider Code: 03122K**

the improvement actions identified.

- 3.6 The Complaints and Appeals Register is to be kept up to date at all times to accurately reflect how the matter was responded to and the duration from the date the complaint was received to the date the complaint was resolved.

**Complaints Process**



#### **4 Appeals Handling Procedure**

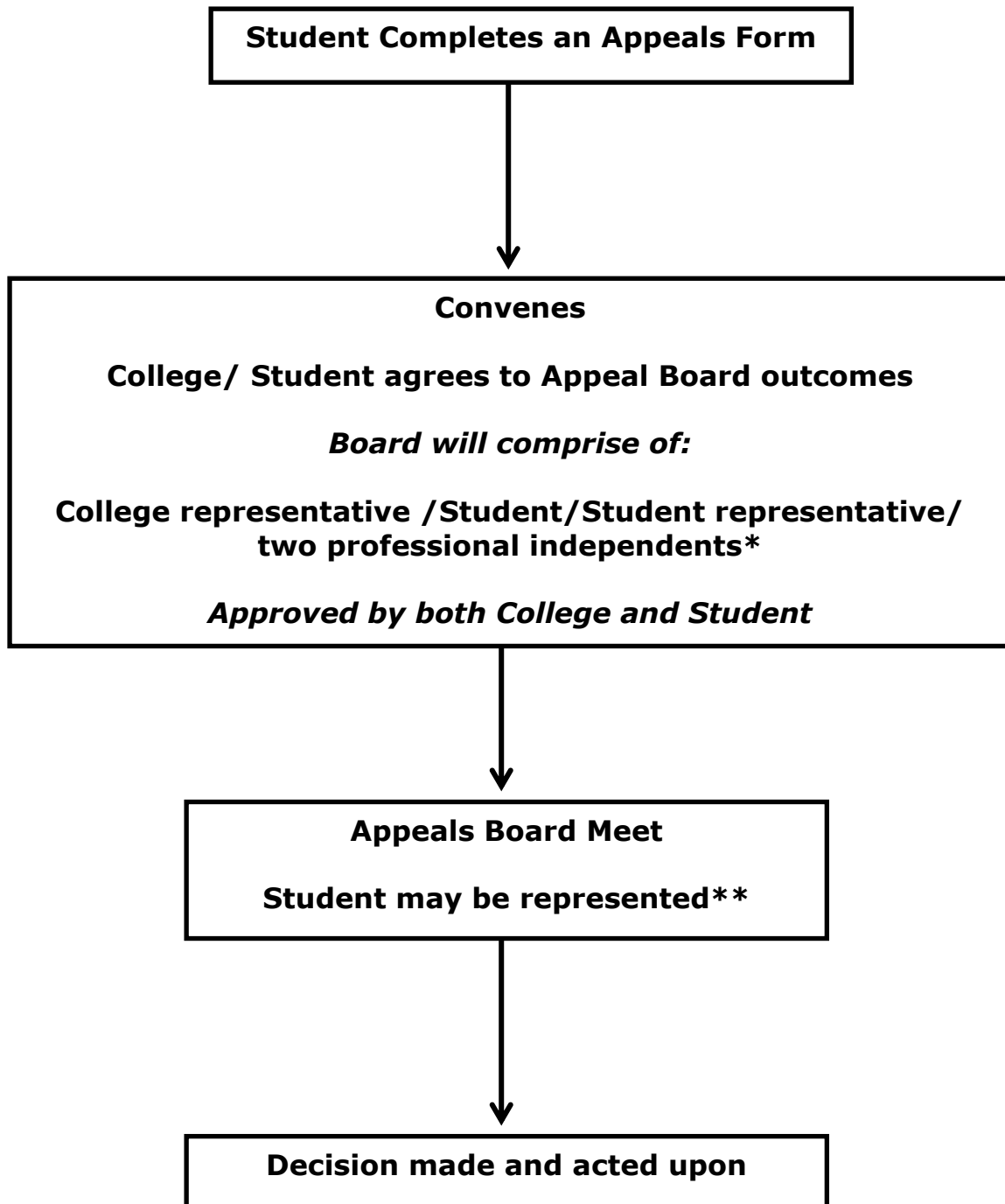
Applications by students for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding are to be treated with the highest importance. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 14 days of when the decision or finding is communicated to the student. The following procedure is to be followed when an application for appeal is received:

- 4.1 A student appealing and assessment decisions are to be referred immediately to the Manager – Business & Vocational Training by completing the Appeals against Assessment Result in the Student Handbook. The Manager – Business & Vocational Training is to arrange for a re-assessment of the student as soon as possible. The student is also to be offered the opportunity to undertake additional training before this re-assessment. The reassessment is to be conducted by one other than whoever conducted the initial assessment. The student may be offered up to 3 re-assessments.
- 4.2 If after the reassessment, the student remains not-yet-competent and is unsatisfied with the assessment outcome, the student is to meet with the Manager – Business & Vocational Training to discuss the assessment process and the assessment outcome.
- 4.3 If after consultation with the Manager – Business & Vocational Training, the student remains unsatisfied with the assessment process, the student is to be provided the Complaints and Appeals Form and the matter is to be dealt with in accordance with the complaint handling procedure.
- 4.4 If the student is seeking a refund of their tuition fees based on an unfavourable outcome, this may be considered by the Principal on its merits. If the Principal does not approve a refund and considers that St George & Sutherland Community College has dealt with the matter appropriately and has provided the student all reasonable opportunity to demonstrate their competence, the student is to be advised of the



opportunity to refer the matter to the Office of Fair Trading in relation to their dispute over the requested refund.

- 4.5 Management Team to inform the applicant of the improvement actions identified.
- 4.6 The Complaints and Appeals Register is to be kept up to date at all times to accurately reflect how the matter was responded to and the duration from the date the appeal was received to the date the appeal was resolved.

**Appeals Process**

\*Independents may be drawn from industry representatives, peak bodies, independent consultants etc.

\*\* Each party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting- **National Code Std 8.1**

5. **Copy of the complaints and appeals procedures and the forms they are made known to students.**

The complaints and appeals policy is published in a diagrammatic form in order to make it accessible to all students.

5.1 Students will be made aware of the information in the following ways:

5.1.1 The complaints and appeals process will appear on the student induction handbook.

5.1.2 The process is spoken of during student induction

5.1.3 A copy of the flowchart is available in student common area and student meeting room.

**Person Responsible:**

SGSCC International Manger

SGSCC International Student Support officer

SGSCC International Admin assistant

SGSCC Workskills Manager

SGSCC Principal

**Related Documents:**