



# Complaint Policy: Student, Customer and Stakeholder Version 2

# 1 Document Control

Version	Date	Amended by	Changes Made
1	13/04/2017	Simone Spicer	Initial document
2	17/05/2017	Simone Spicer	HEBOS & VETBOS comments

## 2 Purpose

To provide a framework for lodging and resolving complaints and grievances made by students, customers and stakeholders. This policy and procedure replaces the Student Grievance Policy - Box Hill Institute and CAE and the Student Grievance Procedure - Box Hill Institute and CAE.

## 3 Scope

A Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction made to the organisation relating to an action/decision by BHI and CAE which is alleged to have an adverse impact on the complainant/s.

This Policy applies to:

- All Box Hill Institute Group (BHIG) campuses and programs conducted by BHIG. BHIG includes Box Hill Institute, CAE and their wholly owned entities.
- Current, prospective and former students of BHIG.
- Customers and other stakeholders.

This Procedure sets out a process to ensure:

### Objectivity and fairness

Complaints are managed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner and with regard to fairness and timeliness.

### Access and transparency

Information about how and where to complain is well publicised and easily accessible to all stakeholders.

### Responsiveness

Complaints are acknowledged in a timely manner, addressed promptly and according to order of urgency, and the Complainant is informed of the process.

### Confidentiality and privacy

- Complaints are treated confidentially and the identity of Complainants kept confidential to the extent possible where requested, except where the law otherwise provides.
- In handling Complaints, the Institute will comply with the requirements of privacy legislation.

### **Accountability**

- The Complaint response system is open to scrutiny and there is reporting of the process against performance standards.
- A Complaints Register is maintained.

**Complaints from students, customers or stakeholders relating to harassment** are promptly referred to relevant management for urgent attention and response.

**Complaints related to unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying or student conduct** are responded to with reference to specific policy and procedures:

- Equal Employment Opportunity and Prevention of Workplace Discrimination Policy - BHIG
- Prevention of Workplace Harassment Policy - BHIG
- Prevention of Bullying Policy - BHIG
- Learner Conduct Management Policy
- Learner Conduct Management Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Learners with a Disability Policy
- Learners with a Disability Procedure

The Learners with a Disability Policy and Learners with a Disability Procedure apply to Complaints of Unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability or medical condition.

### **Complaints about unprofessional or inappropriate staff conduct or about student conduct**

Complaints about staff are addressed by the relevant Manager or Dean/Head and the Executive Manager Workplace Relations with reference to employment and personnel policy and procedures.

Complaints about a student or students must be addressed by the relevant Dean/Head and Operations Manager with reference to the Student Code of Conduct, the Learner Conduct Management Policy and the Learner Conduct Management Procedure.

### **Complaints about Academic Matters**

These complaints include those related to academic results, academic process, academic conduct or withdrawal of awards or degrees.

- In the first instance a complaint on an academic matter is lodged within the School: with the Teacher, Program Coordinator or Operations Manager.
- If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved or the Complainant believes the Operations Manager is a party to the Complaint, the Complaint is referred to the Dean/Head.
- The Dean/Head will consult with any relevant parties and investigate the circumstances to negotiate an acceptable outcome.
- If the Complainant or Dean/Head considers the Complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved the Complaint may be referred to the Executive Director, Academic Affairs (VET & Higher

Education). The referral will be in writing and include all supporting documentation related to the matter.

- A Complainant in the academic complaint process may lodge an appeal on the grounds of procedural unfairness or that a judgement was harsh, unjust or unreasonable.

When a complaint about Academic Matters is referred to the Executive Director, Academic Affairs (VET & Higher Education), the Director will:

- Form a committee from either the VET Board of Studies or the Higher Education Board of Studies to make a recommendation to him or her within 15 business days of receipt of the Complaint.
- Make a determination on the recommendation of the committee.
- Provide to the Complainant and respondent, within 30 business days of the receipt of the Complaint, a written decision in response to the matters raised and describing in writing the reasons for the decisions and the actions taken as part of the procedure.
- If no decision has been made within 30 business days of receiving the Complaint, ensure that the Institute/CAE writes to the Complainant, stating the reasons for the delay and further provide updates on the matter at regular intervals of no more than 30 days until a decision is made.

## 4 Policy Statement

BHIG is committed to providing an effective complaints response system that reflects the needs, meets the expectations and protects the rights of Complainants.

A student, customer or other stakeholder has the right to make a formal complaint and have their concerns addressed fairly at all stages of the response process.

This policy statement sets the framework for addressing complaints.

BHIG addresses complaints through a resolution process based on that formulated by the Victorian Ombudsmen. Complaints will be investigated thoroughly and in accordance with this policy.

Complaints will be addressed as quickly as possible with the aim of seeking a resolution acceptable to all parties. The matters will be addressed between those directly responsible unless there are valid reasons for involving third parties.

BHIG may discontinue any investigation when it reasonably considers that the process is stalled, raises safety concerns, is frivolous, vexatious or lacks credibility.

The outcome of a Complaint will be:

- Communicated, within privacy and confidentiality restraints, to the Complainant, respondent and any other party directly involved.
- Noted on the Complaints Register.
- Evaluated to ensure correct process was followed.
- Reviewed to ascertain if management can make improvements to operational practice.
- It is expected that agreed actions will be implemented by the parties.

## 5 Code of Conduct

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Box Hill Institute Group Code of Conduct for Employees.

## 6 Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Complaint</b>	an expression of dissatisfaction made to the organisation relating to an action/decision by BHI and CAE which is alleged to have an adverse impact on the complainant/s.
<b>Complainant</b>	person expressing dissatisfaction with an action or inaction associated with responsibilities of the organisation
<b>Support Person</b>	is a person who attends a meeting to support a Complainant or relevant party. Students who lodge a complaint may bring an approved support person to an interview. Where they wish to have a Support Person present the option of a Student Life Team member may be offered. If a Complainant wishes to involve a legal representative BHI Group should be advised in advance.
<b>Complaints Group</b>	The Executive Manager, Student Life and staff team designated to receive and report complaints, maintain a Complaints Register and facilitate timely and satisfactory resolution of Complaints.
<b>Victimisation</b>	occurs, in relation to this policy and procedure, when a person receives less favourable treatment because they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have made or propose to make a complaint or submit a grievance against any person; or</li><li>• are associated with another person who has made a complaint; or</li><li>• have participated in processes associated with the investigation or resolution of a complaint/grievance</li></ul>

## 7 Related Procedures

The following procedures are linked below:

- Complaint Procedure: Student, Customer and Stakeholder

## 8 Related Legislation and Registration

### 8.1 Box Hill Institute Group

### 8.2 External

- Victorian Ombudsmen website: [www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au)
- Consumer Affairs Victoria [www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au)
- Australian Skills Quality Authority [www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints.html](http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints.html)

## 9 Records

Records will be maintained in accordance with the requirements of Box Hill Institute's Records Management Policy and Procedures.

Where the privacy of individuals may otherwise be compromised, records will be maintained as confidential.

## 10 Review

This policy must be reviewed no later than three (3) years from the date of CEO approval. The policy will remain in force until such time as it has been reviewed and re-approved or rescinded. The policy may be withdrawn or amended as part of continuous improvement prior to the scheduled review date.

## 11 Stakeholders, Endorsement, Approval, Responsibility for Implementation

<b>Key Stakeholders</b>	Leadership Team Student Life Teaching Schools
<b>Endorsement body</b>	BHI Group Executive Management Team
<b>Approval body</b>	BHI Group CEO
<b>Responsibility for implementation</b>	Executive Director, Academic Affairs (VET & Higher Education) Executive Manager, Student Life

## 12 Approval Body

The CEO is the approval body.

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Author</b>
Executive Director, Academic Affairs (VET & Higher Education)	Executive Manager, Student Life