Complaints and Appeals Policy

A grievance is any concern, difficulty or problem that a student or staff member has concerning their studies or AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW ("the College").

The College aims to provide an effective and acceptable procedure for students, staff and employees to bring complaints and grievances concerning their study or work to the attention of the management of the College.

It is the policy of the College to ensure students study in a friendly environment, free from any forms of coercion, unfair treatment, victimisation, harassment or bullying. All complaints and grievances, whether caused by a fellow student or staff member, will be handled professionally and confidentially with the aim of achieving a satisfactory resolution as soon as possible.

Employment Awards (where applicable) contain Disputes Procedures that must be followed in the event of a dispute arising between the College and an employee. Before any disputed matter goes to external arbitration the in-house Complaints and Grievances Procedure should be followed.

In accordance with access and equity principles this procedure is made available to all clients and stakeholders.

The process of this grievance procedure is confidential and any complaints are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process. All internal appeals processes will be at no cost to the student or staff member.

If the student or parent(s)/legal guardian remains dissatisfied with the outcome, AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW will advise of access to an independent external appeals process.

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW's Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct.

For conditions which apply to handling of a complaint or appeal arising from the college's suspension or cancellation of a student's studies, please see the Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.

All prospective students will have access to this procedure before they enrol.

1) Students
a) Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns or difficulties with the staff members or students in question. Students should contact the Student Services Office in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint. If a student has a grievance with his/her trainer or teacher, the student may choose to refer the matter directly to the Director of Studies or the Student Counsellor.
b) If a student has a grievance with his/her trainer or teacher or if the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred to the relevant Director.
   i) For academic matters – to do with teaching, learning, or assessment issues in your course, see the relevant teacher. If the problem can not be resolved through your class teacher, see the Academic Co-ordinator. If the problem can not be solved through the Academic Co-ordinator, then see the Director of Studies.
   ii) For administrative matters – to do with the management of the College and/or the administration of your enrolment see the Director of Administration.
   iii) For personal or welfare matters – to do with your comfort, safety and general well-being while attending the College make an appointment through the Receptionist to see the Student Counselor.

c) If the difficulties cannot be resolved informally then the student should utilise the Complaints and Grievances Procedure. At this point, the student should notify AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW (managed by Australian Pacific Travel & Tourism Pty Ltd) in writing of the nature and details of the complaint. Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within five working days.

d) Each complainant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the relevant Director. Students may be accompanied by a support person.

e) The formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgment of the complaint with the relevant Director.

f) Once the relevant Director has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome.

g) If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the student, AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW (managed by Australian Pacific Travel & Tourism Pty Ltd) will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.

h) If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the student or the student is dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, he/she will be informed of the external complaints and appeals process available to them at minimal or no cost.

i) AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW (managed by Australian Pacific Travel & Tourism Pty Ltd) undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 20 working days.

j) For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal.

2) Parent(s)/Legal guardians
   a) Parent(s)/legal guardians should contact the Student Services Office in the first instance to attempt mediation/ informal resolution of the complaint. If a Parent(s)/legal guardian has
a grievance with their child/ward's trainer or teacher, the parent(s)/legal guardian may choose to refer the matter directly to the Director of Studies or the Student Counsellor.

b) If a Parent(s)/legal guardian has a grievance with their child/ward's trainer or teacher or if the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred to the Director of Studies.

i) For academic matters – to do with teaching, learning, or assessment issues in your course, see the relevant teacher. If the problem cannot be resolved through your class teacher see the Director of Studies- Nick Nelson (VET).

ii) For administrative matters – to do with the management of the College and/or the administration of your enrolment see the Director of Administration, Carolin Long.

iii) For personal or welfare matters – to do with your comfort, safety and general well being while attending the College make an appointment through the Receptionist to see the Student Counselor.

c) If the difficulties cannot be resolved informally then the Parent/guardian should utilise the Complaints and Grievances Procedure. At this point, the Parent/guardian should notify AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW (managed by Australian Pacific Travel & Tourism Pty Ltd) in writing of the nature and details of the complaint. Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within five working days.

d) Each complainant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the relevant Director. Parent(s)/guardian may be accompanied by a support person.

e) The formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgment of the complaint with the relevant Director.

f) Once the relevant Director has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the parent(s)/guardian will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome.

g) If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the parent(s)/guardian, AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.

h) If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the parent(s)/guardian or the parent(s)/ guardian is dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, he/she will be informed of the external complaints and appeals process available to them at minimal or no cost.

i) AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW (managed by Australian Pacific Travel & Tourism Pty Ltd) undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 20 working days.

3) Responsibilities of Staff and Managers

Managers and other designated staff are responsible for responding to complaints in an appropriate manner. They also have the responsibility for ensuring that the staff and
students involved in the complaint resolution processes understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to this policy.

The officer charged with conducting the grievance process must ensure that all determinations are actioned and document the outcomes in the Grievance Report.

4) Complaints and Grievances Procedure
In the first instance, AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue. If this is unsatisfactory or does not result in a resolution of the matter, the College’s internal formal complaints handling procedure will be followed.

This procedure can be utilised by students and staff.

Stage One: Formal Grievances must be submitted in writing on the AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW’s Grievance Form to the Director of Studies for students and the supervisor for staff. The AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW Grievance Form is available on the College website www.nswcollege.afta.edu.au and from Administration. Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within five working days.

The supervisor, DOS or nominee will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the aggrieved person hopes to achieve. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview with the aggrieved person they may ask another person to accompany them. The supervisor, DOS or nominee with then endeavour to resolve the grievance, providing a written report to the aggrieved person on the steps taken to address the grievance within ten working days or request clarification of desired outcomes.

Stage Two: If the grievance remains unresolved, third parties may be appointed to consult with the aggrieved person and other relevant parties. Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The aggrieved person may ask another person to accompany them to interviews. Once the supervisor, DOS or nominee receives a report of the consultation procedure, they will provide a written report to the aggrieved person within ten working days on the further steps taken to address the grievance.

If grievances are not resolved after discussion with the College, you may wish to refer to an external agency, e.g. The Anti-Discrimination Board (9268 5555) or VETAB (9244 5335) or the Department of Fair Trading 13 3220. Further information may be obtained from the Department’s website: www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au.

If a student or staff member is not satisfied with the outcome of the College’s procedures, mediation is available through the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) or other external appeals bodies where independent mediators are available for a fee of approximately $80 per hour.

e.g.
• Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators of Australia (IAMA) at http://www.iama.org.au
• National Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisory Service at http://www.nadrac.gov.au/
• NSW Community Justice Centres at http://www.cjc.nsw.gov.au

Nothing in this Complaints and Grievances Procedure limits the rights of students to take action under Australia’s Consumer Protection laws. Also, the College’s dispute resolution procedures do not circumscribe student's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

5) Definitions
a) Working Day – any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time
b) Student – a student enrolled at AFTA Travel & Tourism College NSW
c) Support person – a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance