

Complaints and Appeals

1. Policy

Monarch Institute (“the Institute”) seeks to continuously provide a high quality education and training environment that is safe, fair and free from discrimination, in which all are encouraged to strive for excellence and fulfil their potential. The Institute is committed to implementing effective complaint resolution procedures that, where possible, are managed quickly, with a minimum number of people involved. The resolution process will focus on a rapid re-establishment of good educational working relationships and positive outcomes. All parties to the complaint resolution process will observe the principles of courtesy, mutual respect, confidentiality and procedural fairness.

The focus for resolution will be on issues rather than individuals. A complainant has the right to withdraw the complaint at any stage.

Where a complainant is a current student, their enrolment must be maintained while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing, unless a request is made in writing by the student to alter the status of their enrolment. Complaints managed by the Institute are not charged, however, if an external mediation service is required this service may be charged.

A person will be provided an opportunity to lodge a formal grievance within 6 months from the date of occurrence of the event. For example, if the issue arose on 1 January 2017, the 30 June 2017 is the last date to lodge a formal complaint/appeal;

The Institute at all times will endeavour to resolve any issues brought to their attention. All grievances whether formal or informal brought to the attention of the Institute and their outcomes will be progressively recorded in the Institute’s Complaints and Appeals Register. The Institute will keep track of all grievances and their current status and update all stakeholders involved in the lodgement, management and resolution of the issue. Information from this register will be used by the Institute to improve the quality of its services.

All improvements stemming from a complaints or appeal will be recorded in the Institute’s Continuous Improvement Register.

2. Purpose

Essential to a safe, inclusive environment is ensuring that staff and students are encouraged to come forward with their grievances in the knowledge prompt and effective action will be taken to address complaints.

Despite all efforts of the Institute to provide satisfactory services, complaints may occasionally arise that require formal resolution. The following procedures provide the opportunity to have complaints and appeals acknowledged and resolutions reached internally where possible but without limiting the complainant’s right to seek external recourse. Further, the Complaints and Appeals process does not remove the right of either party to pursue other legal remedies.

The objective of this policy is to ensure:

- the process is clear and readily available for all and consistently applied
- the process is well documented and communicated to relevant parties within 20 days, including advising the complainant or appellant of the outcome through written notification
- the complainant or appellant is aware of their right to have a support person present at any interview or proceeding
- the process be conducted with fairness in accordance with the principles of natural justice
- the complaint resolution process will be used by the institute to identify areas for improvement in the quality of services and support it provides to students

3. Scope

This policy applies to complaints and appeals brought by persons who engage the services provided by Monarch Institute or its third party partners.

The Institute is not compelled to consider:

- anonymous appeals; or
- appeals that appear to be of a frivolous nature, or vexatiously or maliciously made; or
- appeals made on the basis of the judgment of the Institute staff member who made the decision;
- or appeals that fail to meet the lodgement requirements

4. Definitions

Complaint

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with an action, product or service associated with the Institute in the provision of nationally accredited training and assessment.

Appeal

For the purposes of this policy, an appeal is defined as a situation where a student or other interested party disputes a decision made by the Institute. The decision made by the Institute may be an assessment decision or it may be about any other aspect of the Institute's operations.

5. Complaint Resolutions

The Institute encourages students and staff to informally resolve complaints as the majority of these situations can be addressed and resolved at this level. The Institute advises complainants first speak to the person/s their complaint is related to. The Institute promotes and requests that parties involved try to resolve their issues with each other in an informal manner, with mutual respect for each other.

The Institute endeavours to have all informal complaints brought to the attention of the CEO, General Manager, & Head of Teaching & Learning and any action or changes resulting from the complaint/appeal be included in the continuous improvement process where applicable.

However it is understood that not all complaints can be resolved in an informal manner.

Where a resolution of a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the following process applies.

- i. The issue needs to be brought to the attention of the General Manager or delegate of the Institute. A written complaint detailing the issue arising should be forwarded to the General Manager – lisa@monarch.edu.au.
- ii. All formal written complaints lodged will be actioned within 48 hours of being received and logged in the Complaints & Appeals Register by the General Manager. An opportunity will be provided to all complainants to formally present their case;
- iii. The complaint will be investigated within 14 working days. The General Manager will ensure that as far as possible, the person making the complaint is satisfied with the outcome.
- iv. The person making the complaint will receive a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision within 21 working days of lodging their complaint.

6. Academic Review

All students have the right to request an academic review. Where a student is dissatisfied with the assessment of an assignment and/or an examination result, the student should discuss this informally in the first instance with their assessor.

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, a student may submit a request for a formal academic review in writing to the Head of Teaching & Learning or Course Co-ordinator within twenty (20) working days of receiving the reviewed academic result. The request must outline why the student has requested a formal review of the result.

The Head of Teaching & Learning or Course Co-ordinator will seek to resolve a formal academic review through the appointment of an independent and impartial educator to conduct an investigation and make a recommendation. The Head of Teaching & Learning or Course Co-ordinator will make the final decision on all formal academic reviews.

All parties involved in any formal academic reviews will be advised in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision within twenty (20) working days from the date the review was lodged. If a student's formal academic review is successful the academic result will be amended.

Where a formal academic review is not upheld by the Head of Teaching & Learning or Course Co-ordinator, will advise the student in writing of the option to access the appeals procedure.

7. Appeal Resolution

If a complaint is not rectified to the satisfaction of both parties, and one party chooses to appeal the decision, they must lodge an appeal in writing within twenty (20) working days of the date of notification of the original decision. Any appeal must set out the grounds for the appeal.

The CEO will conduct their own investigation and may call a meeting of the parties in order to mediate the dispute. The appeal will be finalised within twenty (20) working days of the date of the lodgement of the appeal. The CEO will provide a written notification on the finalisation of the appeal.

8. Appeals arising from enrolment cancellation due to plagiarism/cheating

If the Head of Teaching & Learning and/or Course Co-ordinator recommends that the student's enrolment be cancelled for student misbehaviour arising from plagiarism/cheating, the Head of Teaching & Learning and/or Course Co-ordinator will send a letter to the student advising them that their enrolment is at risk of being cancelled. The letter will advise the student that they have 14 days in which to appeal the outcome of the investigation. The Head of Teaching & Learning will cancel the student's enrolment if the student fails to lodge an appeal within the 14 day time period, withdraws from an appeal or the outcome of the appeal process results in a decision in support of the Institute.

9. Independent Complaint Handling Authorities

Either party may choose to engage a third party mediator at any stage throughout the process, however Monarch Institute encourages all grievances, in the first instance, to be brought to their attention in order to improve practice and experience. Similarly ASQA and the Institute funding bodies require a student to go through the internal resolution process first before they are contacted.

- **The Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria**
URL: <https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/contact-us>
Phone: 1300 372 888
- **Queensland Training Ombudsman**
Phone: 1800 773 048
Email: info@trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au
Write: PO Box 15090, City East Qld 4002
- **Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)**
URL: <http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/making-a-complaint.html>
- **The Victorian funding body**
URL: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/compliancecomplain.aspx>.