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Wissen Holdings Pty Limited

SC4: COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURE (V2.0 – JULY 2025)

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Compliant with Outcome Standards 2025 (2.7 – Complaints, 2.8 – Appeals, 4.4 – Continuous Improvement) and National Code 2018 (Standard 10).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline Wissen Holdings Pty Ltd, trading as Atlas College, approach to managing dissatisfaction, complaints, and appeals from students, clients, staff, and members of the community.

This procedure provides a transparent and equitable process for handling all complaints and appeals fairly, efficiently, and confidentially, ensuring compliance with:

- Outcome Standards 2025 (Outcome 2.7 – Complaints and Outcome 2.8 – Appeals), and
- National Code 2018 (Standard 10).

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority – the national VET regulator and registering authority for Atlas College.
Appeal	A request for a decision made by Atlas College to be formally reviewed.
Complaint	A person's expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service provided by Atlas College.
DESE	Department of Education (Commonwealth).
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Students Management System.
Services	Training, assessment, related educational or support services, or activities related to the recruitment of learners.
Outcome Standards 2025	Legislative instrument outlining performance and compliance expectations for RTOs, replacing the Standards for RTOs 2015.

POLICY

1. Atlas College responds to all allegations involving the conduct of:
    - its trainers and assessors and other staff;
    - any third party providing services on behalf of Atlas College; and
    - any student or client of Atlas College.
2. Complaints may be made in relation to any of Atlas College's services and activities, including but not limited to:
    - the application and enrolment process;
    - marketing information;

- the quality of training and assessment provided;
- training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements;
- the way a person has been treated; and
- the actions of another student.

3. Appeals may be lodged to request that a decision made by Atlas College is reviewed. Decisions may relate to:
   - course admissions;
   - refund assessments;
   - responses to complaints;
   - assessment outcomes or results; and
   - other general decisions made by Atlas College.
4. Atlas College is committed to developing and maintaining a procedurally fair complaints and appeals process, carried out free from bias and in accordance with the principles of natural justice, as required under the Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations (2025).
5. Where a matter cannot be resolved informally, Atlas College has a formal process for lodging a complaint or appeal. Through this policy and procedure, Atlas College ensures that complaints and appeals:
   - are responded to in a consistent and transparent manner;
   - are responded to promptly, objectively, with sensitivity and confidentiality;
   - may be lodged at no cost to the individual;
   - allow the complainant or appellant to be accompanied by a support person at any meetings conducted as part of the process; and
   - are used as an opportunity to identify potential causes of the complaint or appeal, implement appropriate remedial actions to prevent recurrence, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.
6. Atlas College acknowledges the right of students to request the appointment of an independent external party to review a matter where it is requested by the complainant or appellant and where internal processes have failed to resolve the issue.

   Costs associated with engaging an independent party will be borne by the complainant or appellant, unless the decision to engage an independent party is made by Atlas College.

   Where an international student is not satisfied with the outcome or conduct of the internal complaints and appeals process, the student will be referred to the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO). This service is free of charge.
7. Complaints and appeals must be submitted in writing, using the Student Complaints Form or another written format, and sent to Atlas College at , Australia, attention: Administration Office, either in person or via Atlas College email.

   Appeals must be lodged within **30 calendar days** of the original decision being made.

   When lodging a complaint or appeal, sufficient information must be provided to allow Atlas College to investigate and determine an appropriate outcome. This includes:

   - details of the issue being complained about or the decision being appealed, including what occurred and how it affected the student;

- any evidence supporting the complaint or appeal;
- details of steps already taken to resolve the matter; and
- suggestions regarding possible resolution.

8. Members of the Atlas College management team will be involved in resolving complaints and appeals in accordance with the procedures. Where a third party delivering services on behalf of Atlas College is involved, that party will also be included in the resolution process as appropriate.
9. Where a student chooses to access this policy and procedure, Atlas College will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints or appeals process is ongoing, in accordance with the Outcome Standards 2025 and, where applicable, the ESOS Act 2000.
10. The enrolment status of a student will be managed as follows:
    - Atlas College will maintain the student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals process and will not notify DESE via PRISMS of a change in enrolment status during this period. Where an external appeals process is accessed, enrolment status will be managed depending on the nature of the appeal, as follows:
        - If the appeal relates to Atlas College's decision to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress or attendance, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the external appeals process is completed and the outcome supports or does not support Atlas College's decision to report.
        - If the appeal relates to Atlas College's decision to defer, suspend or cancel a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour, Atlas College will notify DESE via PRISMS of a change to the student's enrolment status following the outcome of the internal appeals process.
11. Complaints and appeals will be finalised within 60 calendar days, unless there is a significant reason for the matter to require additional time. Where additional time is required, the complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the reasons and will be provided with weekly updates on the progress of the matter until resolution.
12. Atlas College will maintain a record of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes in the Complaints and Appeals Register, in accordance with Outcome 4.3 (Records and Risk Management) of the RTO Standards 2025.
    All complaint and appeal records will be treated as confidential and managed in accordance with Atlas College's Privacy Policy.
13. This policy and procedure do not replace or modify responsibilities arising under other Atlas College policies, statutes or laws. Nothing in this policy limits the rights of an individual under Australian Consumer Protection Laws, nor does it restrict the right to pursue other lawful remedies.

PROCEDURE

COMPLAINTS

RECEIVE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE COMPLAINT

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Procedure	Responsibility
RECEIVE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE COMPLAINT • As per policy, complaints are to be made in writing by the complainant, attention to the Student Support Service Officer • The Student Support Service Officer should review all complaints upon receipt. • Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing by sending a letter to the complainant within **3 working days** of receipt by *using Receipt of Formal Compliant & Appeal Notice* • Record details of the complaint on the *Complaints and Appeals Register* • Commence the process of investigation within 10 working days of receiving the complaint.	Student Support Services Officer
INVESTIGATE THE COMPLAINT • Upon receiving the complaint, the matter is to be investigated to ensure all relevant information is available and it is accurate and complete. • Further details from the complainant, respondent or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face. Where the meeting is face to face, the complainant may be accompanied by a support person. • If the matter is in relation to a third-party delivering Services on behalf of Atlas College the third party should be involved in the resolution of the complaint. • The Student Support Service Officer will review the information and decide on an appropriate response. Where deemed necessary by the Student Support Service Officer, the matter may be reviewed by other members of the management team to arrive at an appropriate resolution. • Note: The complaint must be completely resolved within 60 calendar days of receipt of the original complaint. If the matter is particularly complex and it is going to take longer to resolve, the complainant is to be advised in writing along with reasons for the extra time. They must be provided with updates on progress on a weekly basis thereafter until the matter is resolved.	Student Support Service Officer
ADVISE OF THE OUTCOME AND UPDATE RECORDS • Provide a written response to the complainant outlining: – The Atlas College's understanding of the complaint – The steps are taken to investigate and resolve the complaint – Decisions made about resolution, with reasons for the decisions made – Areas that have been identified as possible causes of the complaint and improvements to be recommended – Students' right to access the appeals process with the CEO of Atlas College if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaints process.	Student Support Service Officer

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Procedure	Responsibility
• Update the *Complaints and Appeals Register* so it includes the outcome of the complaint. • Update the *Continuous Improvement* Register if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome. • Keep a copy of the complaint and supporting documents in the student or staff file (where relevant). • Discuss the complaint and its outcome at the next management meeting.	

APPEALS

RECEIVE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE APPEAL

Procedure	**Responsibility**
RECEIVE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE APPEAL • As per policy, appeals are to be made in writing by the appellant, attention to the CEO. • The CEO should review all appeals upon receipt. • Acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing by sending a letter to the appellant within **3 working days of receipt**. Use *Receipt of formal Complaints and Appeal Notice*. • Record details of appeal on the *Complaints and Appeals Register*	CEO
RESPOND TO ASSESSMENT APPEALS • In the case of appeals against assessment decisions, the original assessment decision will be reviewed by having an assessor independent of the original decision, mark the assessment task again. • The assessment decision made during the appeals process will be considered the actual assessment outcome for the task. • Advise the student of the outcome of the appeal as per point G below.	CEO
RESPOND TO APPEALS AGAINST NON-ACADEMIC DECISIONS • Upon receiving the appeal, the matter is to be investigated to identify the original decision made and the reasons for the decision. • Further details from the appellant, respondent, the person who made the original decision, or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face. • If the matter is in relation to a third-party delivering Services on behalf of Atlas College, the third party should be involved in the resolution of the appeal.	CEO Student Support Service Officer

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Procedure	Responsibility
• The appellant may request for an independent party (mediator) to be involved in the process. Where this is requested by the appellant, they will bear the costs associated. Additionally, Atlas College may decide to call upon an independent mediator to assist to resolve the issue where a decision cannot be reached internally. This will be at Atlas College cost. • Atlas College CEO will review all relevant information and decide on an appropriate response. • Note: The appeal must be resolved within 60 calendar days of receipt of the original appeal. If the matter is particularly complex and it is going to take longer to resolve, the appellant must be advised in writing along with reasons for the extra time. They must be provided with progress updates on a weekly basis thereafter until the matter is resolved.	
ADVISE APPELLANT OF THE OUTCOME AND UPDATE RECORDS • Provide a written response to the appellant outlining: – Atlas College's understanding of the reasons for the appeal – The steps are taken to investigate and resolve the appeal – Decisions made about resolution and reasons for the decisions – If relevant, areas that have been identified as possible causes of the appeal and improvements to be recommended – Their right to, and information on, the external appeals process. – For international students, the effect on their enrolment status (see enrolment status in policy – SC-6(G) • Update the *Complaints and Appeals Register* so it includes the outcome of the appeal. • Update the *Continuous Improvement Register* if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome. • Keep a copy of the appeal and supporting documents in the Complaints file and in the student or staff file (where relevant). • Discuss the appeal and its outcome at the next management meeting.	CEO

INDEPENDENT REVIEWS BY EXTERNAL PARTY (EXTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION)

Procedure	Responsibility
EXTERNAL COMPLAINT OR APPEAL • If dissatisfied with the internal processes, the complainant/appellant may initiate an external complaint or appeal. • Additionally, a complainant or appellant who has been through the internal processes may request Atlas College to appoint an independent party to review the matter.	Staff as required & CEO

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Procedure	Responsibility
• For all academic disputes, Atlas College has made arrangements with Mediation Institute for an effective and efficient way to handle student's complaints or appeals for an external independent review and dispute resolution. All academic EDR matters to be referred to the Mediation Institute. • For international students, all non-academic EDR matters to be referred to the Overseas Students Ombudsman. • Atlas College will co-operate fully in the process of the external party to investigate and review the matter. This will include and not be limited to providing full access to the relevant student file/s and the internal complaints record where permitted to do so by law. All staff will be instructed to cooperate in such instances and to give an accurate account of the events as they understand them. • Where the decision of the external party supports Atlas College, Atlas College will notify DESE via PRISMS of the change in enrolment status.	

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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