

APPEALS HANDLING POLICY & PROCEDURE Document Control

Document title	Appeals Handling Policy and Procedure
Version	V2.0
Approved by	Chief Executive Officer
Date approved	25 October 2025
Next review due	October 2026
Document owner	Student Support Officer / Compliance Officer/ Campus Manager

Standards & Legislation Mapping

This policy declares the specific requirements it gives effect to under Britts College's self-assurance obligations.

Framework	Reference(s)
Standards for RTOs 2025	Quality Area 2 (VET Student Support) – Outcome Standard 2.8 (effective appeal processes are available where decisions of the RTO or a third party adversely impact a VET student and are used to inform continuous improvement); Quality Area 4 (Governance) – Standard 4.2 (roles and responsibilities) and Standard 4.4 (self-assurance monitoring).
National Code 2018	Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals) – Britts College maintains an accessible internal complaint handling and appeals process, and the option of an external, independent review, for overseas students.
ESOS Act 2000	The framework establishing Britts College's obligations to overseas students, under which appellants must be afforded accessible, fair and timely handling of appeals.
Other legislation	Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) – handling of personal information collected from appellants and other parties during the appeals handling process.

Quality Area key: QA1 Training & Assessment · QA2 VET Student Support · QA3 VET Workforce · QA4 Governance.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure:

- students are informed about the avenues available for appealing decisions;
- appellants are afforded procedural fairness;
- appeals are actioned within a reasonable timeframe;
- avenues for review by an independent party are provided where an appeal is not resolved internally;
- outcomes of appeals are documented and communicated to the student; and
- outcomes of appeals are used to inform continuous improvement and prevent recurrence.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all appeals of decisions made by Britts College that are relevant to, or that affect, a student;
- all staff, trainers, assessors and management involved in receiving, handling, resolving or reviewing appeals; and
- all delivery locations and modes.

A student may appeal where Britts College has made a decision that is relevant to the student, or which affects the student in some way. Where Britts College makes a decision that does not relate to or affect a student, the student is not eligible to appeal that decision. Examples of decisions a student might appeal include:

- an assessment decision about the student's knowledge and skills;
- an administrative decision that affects the student directly;
- a policy decision that changes the nature or terms of service the student agreed to at enrolment;
- a decision in relation to utilising third parties in service delivery;
- a decision in relation to a training product being superseded or deleted, and the related transition process; or
- a decision to change the nature of the service being delivered that the student agreed to at enrolment.

The above list is not exhaustive. This policy may apply to any decision Britts College makes that is relevant to, or affects, a student. It applies equally to domestic and overseas (CRICOS) student cohorts; accessible, fair and timely handling of appeals directly supports Britts College's obligations to overseas students under the ESOS framework and the National Code 2018.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Appeal	An application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding made during their time with Britts College. An appeal must be made in writing, specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute, and be lodged within 28 calendar days of the decision or finding being notified to the student.
Appellant	The person making an appeal – a student for, or on whose behalf, an appeal is lodged.
Procedural fairness	The requirement that an appeal is handled by an unbiased person not involved in the original decision, that the student is given an opportunity to be heard, that like appeals are treated consistently, and that the student is informed of any outcome before it is implemented.
Natural justice	The principle that decision-making is fair and reasonable, observed where a decision affects the rights, interests or legitimate expectations of individuals.
Third-party review	A review of an appeal outcome by a body or person independent of Britts College, available where the appellant is not satisfied with the internal handling of the appeal.
Complaints and Appeals Register	The controlled record that identifies the student, their relationship with Britts College, the nature of the appeal, findings/outcomes, any link to continuous improvement, and the dates received and closed.
Continuous Improvement (CI) Report / Register	The controlled record and central register used to log, track and close out opportunities for improvement identified through appeals handling and other quality assurance activities.

4. Policy Statement and Principles

Britts College is committed to providing a fair, transparent and accessible appeals process. Any student who is dissatisfied with a decision that affects them has the right to appeal that decision and to have it reconsidered on its merits. Britts College's approach is guided by the following principles:

- **No detriment.** There is no detriment to a student who lodges an appeal.
- **Accessibility.** A range of avenues is provided through which students may lodge an appeal – for example verbally in the first instance to a trainer, the Student Support Officer or CEO, and then in writing using the approved form.
- **Transparency.** Information on the appeals handling process is publicly available on the Britts College website and in the Student Handbook, setting out how appeals are handled, what students can expect, and expected timeframes.
- **Support.** Information is handled sensitively so that students feel safe and supported when lodging an appeal, and each student may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.

Britts College implements the following mechanisms to ensure procedural fairness when handling appeals:

- the appeal is handled by an unbiased person who was not involved in making the original decision;
- the student is given an opportunity to be heard and to provide relevant information, with access to all relevant information and the right of reply;
- similar appeals are treated in a consistent manner to ensure fairness and reliability in the resolution process;
- the student is informed of any outcome or decision before it is implemented and has the option to respond; and
- the privacy of all parties is protected and information included in an appeal is kept confidential, accessible only to individuals directly involved in the appeals process.

5. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy gives effect to Britts College's obligations under the following instruments:

- **Standards for RTOs 2025** – Outcome Standard 2.8, which requires that effective appeal processes are available where decisions of the RTO or a third party adversely impact a VET student, and that appeal outcomes inform continuous improvement.

- **National Code 2018** — Standard 10, which requires an accessible internal complaints and appeals process and the option of independent external review for overseas students.
- **ESOS Act 2000** — the framework under which Britts College’s obligations to overseas students, including fair and timely handling of appeals, arise.
- **Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)** — governs the confidential handling of personal information collected during the appeals handling process.

6. Roles and Responsibilities (RACI)

Britts College does not have a governing board. Control and influence over Britts College, and all decision-making authority, rest solely with the CEO and the Director. Accountability under this policy therefore sits exclusively with the CEO and the Director; all other roles are responsible for carrying out activities, or are consulted or informed, under the direction of the CEO and the Director.

R Responsible (does the work) **A** Accountable (owns the outcome — one per row) **C** Consulted
I Informed

Activity / Decision	CEO / Director	Student Support / Compliance	Trainers & Assessors	Admin / Office Support	Independent Third Party
Approve this policy	A	R	I	I	—
Make appeals information publicly available	A	R	I	R	—
Receive and acknowledge appeal (within 24 hours)	A	R	C	C	—
Record appeal in the Complaints and Appeals Register	A	R	I	C	—
Review appeal; determine investigation or re-assessment	A/R	R	C	I	—
Maintain the student’s enrolment during the appeal	A	R	I	C	—
Provide regular updates to the appellant	A/R	R	I	C	—

Activity / Decision	CEO / Director	Student Support / Compliance	Trainers & Assessors	Admin / Office Support	Independent Third Party
Offer re-assessment / additional training (assessment appeals)	A	C	R	I	—
Determine response and communicate outcome (within 30 days)	A/R	R	I	I	—
Facilitate independent third-party review (if required)	A/R	C	I	I	R
Implement outcome and advise appellant	A	R	C	C	—
Record-keeping, retention and evidence	A	R	I	R	—
Identify and implement continuous improvement actions	A	R	C	I	—

7. Procedure / Policy in Practice

7.1 Early resolution of appeals

Students are encouraged to resolve any concerns directly with the Britts College staff member involved in the first instance. It is often the case that a student's decision to lodge an appeal can be avoided by proper communication and consultation at the time a decision is made. Where the matter cannot be resolved directly, an appeal is to be lodged in accordance with the following section.

7.2 Submitting an appeal

If the student is unable to resolve the matter directly with the Britts College staff member, they should raise the appeal with the Student Support Officer or CEO. This may be verbal in the first instance and must then be put in writing by completing a Request for an Appeal of a Decision Form. The form may be submitted to the Student Support Officer or CEO, or by email or hard copy via post; contact details are provided in the Student Handbook. An appeal must be received in writing using the specified form within 28 calendar days of the decision or finding

being notified to the student. Britts College maintains the enrolment of the student during the appeals handling process.

Appeals are to be handled in the strictest confidence. No Britts College representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of the CEO. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the student has given written consent.

7.3 Communicating the appeals handling policy and procedure

The appeals handling policy and procedure will be:

- publicly available on the Britts College website;
- integrated into the Britts College Student Handbook; and
- included in the Britts College policies and procedures.

7.4 Appeals handling timeframe

Britts College is committed to resolving appeals in a reasonable timeframe and without unnecessary delay:

- **Written acknowledgement** — provided no later than 24 hours from the time the appeal is received, using the appeals written acknowledgement email template, assuring the student that the appeal has been received and that they will receive a written response within 14 days explaining the process and their rights and obligations.
- **Commencement** — handling of an appeal commences within seven (7) calendar days of lodgement, with all reasonable measures taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- **Regular updates** — the student is provided with updates at a minimum of two (2) weekly intervals.
- **Final outcome** — appeals must be resolved to a final outcome, with a written response provided, within thirty (30) calendar days of the appeal being lodged.

Where the CEO considers that more than 30 calendar days are required to process and finalise the appeal, the CEO must inform the student in writing — including the reasons why — and maintain regular fortnightly contact with the student, including to explain any further delays.

7.5 Principles of natural justice and procedural fairness

A student is to be provided an opportunity to formally present their case at no cost, and may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness must be incorporated into every stage of the appeals handling process to ensure decision-making is fair and reasonable. The following principles apply:

CEO and bias. Where the CEO feels there may be bias or a perception of bias, or where the student is not satisfied with how the matter is being handled, the student is to be referred directly to an independent third party for consideration and response. The student is entitled to have their appeal heard by a person who is without bias and who is not affected by the decision.

Third-party review. Where the student is not satisfied with Britts College's handling of the matter, they may have a body or person independent of Britts College review the appeal following completion of the internal process. The student should first allow Britts College to fully consider the appeal and respond in writing. If still not satisfied, they may request an independent review by informing the Student Support Officer, who will initiate the process with the CEO. The CEO will appoint an appropriate independent party, who is required to respond with recommendations within fourteen (14) calendar days of the review being requested. This advice is accepted by Britts College as final, advised to the student in writing and implemented without prejudice. Where Britts College engages an independent reviewer, it will meet the full cost of the review.

7.6 Unresolved appeals

Once the appeals handling process has concluded, where the appellant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they are to be advised of their right to refer the matter to any relevant external authority or agency. The following external agencies are nominated in the first instance as relevant points of referral:

- in relation to consumer-related issues — the Office of Fair Trading;
- in relation to the delivery of training and assessment services — the National Training Complaints Service (13 38 73, dewr.gov.au/national-training-complaints-hotline) or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (asqaportal.asqa.gov.au/Make-a-Report); and
- in relation to privacy matters — the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (oaic.gov.au or 1300 363 992).

This guidance is also communicated to students within the Student Handbook and the publicly available policies and procedures on the Britts College website. Britts College will cooperate fully with agencies such as the Office of Fair Trading or ASQA that may investigate the handling of an appeal, and will ensure the student is provided with a written response they may use for this purpose.

7.7 Appeals handling procedure steps

Step	Action	Responsible
Step 1 – Inform students of the process	Publish the appeals handling policy and procedure on the website and provide it to students in the Student Handbook (refer to the Enrolment procedure).	CEO
Step 2 – Receive appeal	The student completes the Request for an Appeal of a Decision Form (available on the website or from the office) and submits it to the Student Support Officer or CEO, in hard copy, by email or by post, within 28 calendar days of the decision. Where a student has difficulty accessing the form or lodging the appeal, they are advised to contact Britts College immediately.	Student; Student Support Officer
Step 3 – Acknowledge receipt	Provide written acknowledgement no later than 24 hours from receipt, using the appeals written acknowledgement template, informing the student they will receive a written response within 14 days and explaining the process and their rights and obligations.	Student Support Officer
Step 4 – Record appeal	Enter the appeal into the Complaints and Appeals Register, recording the student, relationship with Britts College, nature of appeal, findings/outcomes, links to continuous improvement, and dates received and closed. Check for any prior or duplicate submission and store records securely.	Student Support Officer/ Campus Manager
Step 5 – Review the appeal	Refer the appeal to the CEO, who determines whether further investigation or consultation is required (administrative appeal) or whether the student is offered re-assessment with the option of additional training (assessment appeal). Handling commences within seven (7) calendar days of lodgement. Britts College maintains the student's enrolment during the process.	CEO
Step 6 – Keep the appellant up to date	Provide regular updates not less than every two weeks advising the student of the status and progress of the appeal, using the Complaints or Appeals Update template.	Student Support Officer; CEO
Step 7 – Determine and communicate response	The CEO examines the outcomes of the review and determines the appeal response within 30 calendar days, providing a written response including the reasons for the outcome using the Appeals Response Letter template.	CEO

Step	Action	Responsible
Step 8 – Obtain written acknowledgement	Request written acknowledgement from the student once the appeal has been determined.	Student Support Officer
Step 9 – Implement decision	Decisions or outcomes that find in favour of the student are implemented immediately. For an assessment appeal where the student agrees to additional training, Britts College provides the training and completes re-assessment. If the student is deemed not yet competent after re-assessment, they meet with the CEO to discuss the assessment process and outcome. The student retains the right of reply at every stage.	CEO; Trainers & Assessors
Step 10 – Independent third-party review (if required)	Where the student is not satisfied with Britts College's handling of the appeal, an independent third party may review the appeal and respond with recommendations within fourteen (14) calendar days of the review being requested.	CEO; Independent Third Party
Step 11 – Consider opportunities for improvement	Record any opportunities for improvement in a Continuous Improvement Report for consideration at a future management meeting (refer to the Continuous Improvement and Management Meeting procedures).	Campus Manager/Student Support Officer; CEO
Step 12 – Document response	Update and record the appeal in the Complaints and Appeals Register, retaining all associated documents including records of continuous improvement.	Student Support Officer

8. Records Management

Records relating to appeals exist in two formats: electronic records (email correspondence and documents communicated electronically) and hard-copy records submitted by the student or generated by Britts College. A record of each appeal is also maintained within the student management system, including the appeal details, a diary log recording progress and closure, and identified opportunities for improvement. Records are accessible to the CEO, Student Support Officer / Compliance Officer, and are retained in accordance with the College's Records Management Policy for a minimum of five (5) years. Only the CEO can authorise, in writing, the destruction of appeals handling records, and only after the retention period has lapsed. Records are available on request to support Britts College's self-assurance position and any regulatory audit.

9. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

- Frequently, the appeals handling process exposes weaknesses in training and assessment or administrative systems that flow into the continuous improvement system as opportunities for improvement. Appeals should be seen in a positive light and as opportunities for improvement.
- At the end of each appeal, consideration is given to opportunities for improvement that can be applied to prevent recurrence, recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register as a standing agenda item at quality and management meetings.
- An internal audit is conducted at least annually to confirm compliance with this policy and relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
- This policy is reviewed at least every two years, and sooner where changes to the Standards, legislation, regulatory guidance or practice indicate the approach requires revision. Revisions are approved by the CEO and recorded in the Document Control table.

Self-assurance review questions:

- How are appeals acknowledged, recorded and resolved within the required timeframes?
- How is procedural fairness demonstrated across the handling of individual appeals?
- How are the outcomes of appeals used to inform actual changes to training, assessment and administration?
- How is the effectiveness of improvement actions, once acted on, verified?

Consequences of non-compliance:

- **For Britts College** — breaches of legislation or regulatory requirements may result in regulatory action by ASQA and reputational damage.
- **For staff** — disciplinary action, which may include formal warnings, suspension or termination of employment, where appeals handling obligations are not met.

10. Related Documents

Policies:

- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure
- Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure
- Management Meeting Policy and Procedure
- Records Management Policy

Forms:

- Request for an Appeal of a Decision Form
- Complaints and Appeals Register
- Appeals Response Letter template
- Appeals Written Acknowledgement template
- Complaints or Appeals Update template
- Continuous Improvement Report / Register

11. Approval

This policy is approved by the Chief Executive Officer of Britts College. Approval of each version is recorded in the Britts College Policy Register.