

OVERVIEW

This policy deals with complaints and appeals about the PGA International Golf Institute's (PGA IGI) Registered Training Organisation (RTO ID 31270), third parties, staff, trainers, assessors and students. This policy also details the process for any complaints and appeals made.

This Policy and Procedure will ensure that all complaints and appeals are dealt with fairly and efficiently.

DEFINITIONS

Appeal: An appeal is where a client of an RTO, or other interested party, may dispute a decision made by the PGA IGI. The decision made by PGA IGI may be an assessment decision or may be about any other aspect of the PGA IGI operations.

Complaint: A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with an action product or service of the PGA IGI. This may be informal (not officially recorded) or formal (made on an official complaints form and recorded).

The complaints and appeals processes are independent, easily and immediately accessible and inexpensive to the parties involved. The process follows the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness by allowing anyone subject to a decision by PGA IGI, or anyone who has allegations made against them, to tell their side of the story before a decision is made. PGA IGI will ensure the decision maker is independent of the decision being reviewed (for example, an assessor should not consider or decide an appeal against an assessment decision they made).

If the person making the complaint or appeal is not happy with the outcome, PGA IGI will make arrangements for an independent third party to review the complaint or appeal. Any costs associated with a third party review are detailed further in this policy so all parties are aware of any costs they may need to pay. It is important to note that the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is not able to act as the independent third party for reviewing complaints.

PROCEDURE

Appeals: If you wish to lodge an appeal in regards to any decision made by the PGA International Golf Institute PGA of Australia Education Department you are required to complete the PGA Education Complaints & Appeals form on the PGA IGI website (Public) or the Complaints & Appeals form on The Fairway (Students).

Complaints:

Informal Complaint – PGA IGI encourages complaints to be resolved informally by speaking to PGA IGI staff. A note of the conversation may be recorded on the student/staff file.

Formal Complaint - If you wish to make a complaint against the PGA IGI or the PGA of Australia Education Department you are required to complete the Complaints form which is located on the PGA IGI website (public access) or The Fairway (student access) or by asking at PGA IGI administration. All formal complaints will be recorded on the Complaints and Appeals register and a formal record made on the student/staff file.

All complaints and appeals will be responded to in writing within 10 working days of the formal complaint/appeal being received by the PGA IGI and completed within a reasonable timeframe.

The PGA IGI treats all complaints and appeals seriously. The PGA IGI will investigate each complaint or appeal and work with the complainant/appellant to resolve any issue using a fair and equitable process ensuring the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the appeal and complaint process.

The PGA IGI will have a fair and equitable process for dealing with student complaints and appeals. In the event that complaints or appeals cannot be resolved internally, an external group should be nominated to arbitrate (See Below).

The process for the lodgement and hearing of appeals and formal complaints is as follows:

1. The complainant/appellant is to lodge in writing using the '**Complaints & Appeals form**' **within fourteen (14) days** of the issue/complaint/circumstance occurring. This application is to be inclusive of all representations, supporting documentation (e.g. medical reports) and the like.
2. The appeal process will commence within **ten working (10) days** of the complaint/appeal lodging a formal complaint/appeal.
3. The complaint or appeal will be reviewed by the Senior Manager who will then notify the complainant/appellant of the decision within **fourteen (14) days of complaint/appeal being formally lodged**. If a decision cannot be made the complaint or appeal will be forwarded to the General Manager-Education.
4. The General Manager-Education will then make a decision and notify the Senior Manager of the outcome, who will then notify the complainant/appellant of the decision within **fourteen (14) days** of the complaint/appeal being escalated to the General Manager - Education.
5. If a decision cannot be made, the complaint or appeal will be forwarded to the PGA IGI Board for review and decision.
6. The PGA IGI Board will review the complaint or appeal and determine an outcome for the matter as soon as practicable or within **twenty eight (28) days** of them receiving the complaint/appeal.
7. If required the PGA IGI Board will hear the complaint or appeal at the next Board meeting and receive representation from the complainant/appellant by way of personal attendance, teleconference attendance or similar should the complainant/appellant wish, the complainant/appellant may bring a support person to any meeting.
8. The PGA IGI Board will instruct the General Manager-Education to advise the complainant/appellant of the outcome of the hearing and communicate this in writing. The advice will include any corrective action/revised or amended requirements of the student, PGA Member, Staff member or Third Party as they may pertain to the decision, also the reason for the decision and advice on how to appeal the decision.
9. It would be normal for this information to be conveyed by personal contact prior to official notification being forwarded to the complainant/appellant.
10. The complainant/appellant may make a further appeal to an Appeals Committee (E.g. the Full Board of the PGA of Australia or Independent Party) should they be dissatisfied with the process which occurred in determining the outcome of the initial appeal.
11. If the procedure will take longer than **twenty eight (28) days** to make a decision at each complaint/appeal stage then the time may be extended if both parties agree. If the total days of the complaint/appeal process (including review) will take more than **sixty (60) days** to finalise the complainant/appellant will be notified in writing and new estimated finalisation date provided.

The PGA IGI will allow parties who have used this procedure to access records of that use, but otherwise keep the records confidential.

At each stage of the complaint or appeal procedure, the complainant/appellant will be informed of the next step and notes recorded on their iMIS (student management system) file. Complainants/appellants will be kept informed of the process and decisions at each stage of the process.

Complainants have the opportunity to formally present their case to the PGA IGI at minimal or no cost to themselves. If the student cannot attend the PGA IGI office a meeting may be held by Skype. Complainants may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings at their own cost. There is no charge for an internal or external stage of a complaint lodged by a student who has a VET Student Loan.

If a student wishes to undertake the complaints or appeal process, their enrolment is to be maintained whilst the process is ongoing. In case of an international student who is appealing a decision to report for unsatisfactory course progress the student's enrolment will be maintained until the internal and external complaints process is complete. If the appeal is to defer, cancel or suspend a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour then the PGA IGI only needs to wait until the outcome of the internal appeals process before notifying the Department of Education through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment. If a decision is made that supports the student, PGA IGI will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective/preventative action required.

All complaints or appeals received will be documented in the Complaints and Appeals register and noted on the Continuous Improvement register where applicable. All complaints and appeals will be reviewed to ensure that the issue does not occur again.

In the instance that a complainant is not satisfied with the handling of their complaint by the RTO, or there are extenuating circumstances that preclude the complainant from lodging their complaint directly with the RTO, they may seek external assistance and lodge their complaint with the registering body or the National Training Complaints Hotline at the Department of Education and Training, telephone: 13 38 73 or NTCH@education.gov.au

Internal Complaint / Appeals:

If you wish to lodge an appeal in regards to any decision made by the PGA International Golf Institute RTO or PGA of Australia Education Department you are required to complete the PGA Education Complaints & Appeals form on the PGA IGI website (Public) or the Complaints & Appeals form on The Fairway (Students).

External Complaint / Appeals:

International students wanting to initiate an external complaint or appeal may contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman if they have complaints regarding the actions of the PGA IGI. The Overseas Students Ombudsman investigates complaints that International students have with private education and training in Australia.

Website: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

Phone (within Australia): 1300 362 072

Phone (International): +61 2 6276 0111

VET Student Loans wanting to initiate an external complaint or appeal may contact the VET Student Loans Ombudsman regarding any actions of the PGA IGI. The VET Student Loans Ombudsman investigates complaints regarding the actions of the PGA IGI.

Website: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/vet-student-loans-ombudsman>

Phone: **1300 362 072**

Domestic students (non VET Student Loan) wanting to initiate an external complaint or appeal can contact Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

Website: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint-domestic-students>

Phone: **1300 701 801**

