

Procedure Name	STUDENT APPEALS PROCEDURE
Procedure Number	V005_PR_VET
Purpose	The purpose of this procedure is to detail the steps the Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia (Whitehouse) will take to resolve a grievance or appeal that has been initiated by an enrolled student related to their studies.
Scope	This procedure applies to all students, employees and contractors involved in the provision of teaching and learning in vocational education and training courses at Whitehouse.
Procedure	The following procedure requires actions by the following who have rights and responsibilities under the terms of this procedure: • Students • VET Course Coordinators • VET Trainers and/or Assessor Staff • Student Administration. If at any time during the resolution process it appears that more than 30 calendar days will be required to process and finalise the grievance or appeal, the Executive Director or senior staff delegate must: • Notify the student in writing and inform them of the reasons why more than 30 working calendar days are required, and • Regularly update the student on progress of the matter. Records relating to all complaints and/or appeals, and their outcomes must be securely maintained. All Whitehouse staff can identify potential grievance, complaint or appeal causes and then take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence. Stage 1: Informal Resolution Process 1.1 If the student has a grievance regarding formative or summative feedback on specific briefs/assessment tasks in the duration of a unit of study and before results are published, they can in the first instance contact the Trainer delivering the unit, requesting further clarification. If the issue is not resolved the student can then contact the VET Course Coordinator in writing requesting an informal review of the project/submission task. 1.2 If the issue is not resolved informally by the VET Course Coordinator, then the student can escalate the grievance and/or appeal to formal process as outlined in Stage 2 below. 1.3 If the student has a grievance with final results in the first instance, the student should contact the VET Course Coordinator in writing no later than five (5) working days from the date of publication of the official results to initiate an informal review of the result received for a unit/s or from the date

of the grievance arising.

- 1.4 The VET Course Coordinator will decide what action is deemed appropriate to resolve the matter.
- 1.5 As the result of the informal review of an assessment, the final result can only improve or stand as originally determined.
- 1.6 The informal process should take no longer than five (5) working days from the student first contacting the VET Course Coordinator.
- 1.7 The VET Course Coordinator will advise the student and student administration in writing of the outcome of the informal review of the assessment appeal/grievance.
- 1.8 If applicable, Student Administration will amend the students' result(s) and file all correspondence.
- 1.9 If the matter is not resolved informally, that is the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal review, then they may initiate the Formal Resolution Process (Stage 2).

Stage 2: Formal Resolution Process

- 2.1 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal resolution process the student should submit in writing to Student Administration within five (5) working days from the date of notification of the outcome from the informal review process, a request for a formal assessment/grievance review.
- 2.2. The written request shall state the following:
 - 2.2.1. An outline of why the student thinks the original assessment result and the decision of the informal review was inappropriate.
 - 2.2.2. Any new and relevant evidence in support of their appeal.
 - 2.2.3. Where assessed work has been handed back to the student, the student will attach the marked work to the letter as well as a clean copy of the assessment task.
- 2.3 The assigned senior staff Officer will read the student's communication and request a written report from the VET Course Coordinator, which may include a request for additional information from student administration and / or the relevant unit teacher, if needed.
- 2.4 The assigned senior staff Officer will determine if a formal resolution process is warranted.
- 2.5 If the assigned senior academic staff member does not consider a formal review is warranted, a letter so advising the student must be sent within five (5) working days of the decision being made. The student must be advised as to why a formal review has not been initiated. The student can appeal this decision (Stages 3- 5below).
- 2.3 If a formal review is warranted the assigned senior staff Officer will apply the relevant (and any related) policy and procedure. **For example**, if the appeal relates to assessment, the assigned Officer will:
 - 2.5.1. Verify that the assessment policy and procedure have been correctly carried out

- 2.5.2. If required, arrange for work to be independently reassessed by a Trainer/Assessor with experience and knowledge in the field and a report written by this person whose identity is not revealed to the staff member who carried out the informal review
- 2.5.3. If required, ensure the work to be assessed is an unmarked copy and no original mark, comment or grade is disclosed to the independent assessor
- 2.5.4. Discuss the matter directly with the student if further information is required.

- 2.6 The student will be informed of the outcome in writing within five (5) working days of the decision being made. The written report will set out the result of the reassessment/review and, if relevant, the revised result is given and the reasons for the decision.

As is the case with an informal review of an assessment mark, the student's result can only improve or stand as originally assessed.

- 2.7 If a student is not satisfied with the outcome, the student can appeal the decision of the formal resolution process. (Stages 3-5 below)

Stage 3: Appeal

- 3.1 A student may appeal an outcome from a formal resolution process on one or more of the following grounds:
 - 3.1.1. That the case had not been heard or decided on all the evidence
 - 3.1.2. That the student can provide new evidence
 - 3.1.3. That a procedural irregularity had occurred.
- 3.2. A student must lodge the appeal in writing within five (5) working days of the notification of the outcome of the formal resolution process.
- 3.3. The student must lodge the appeal with the Chair of the Academic Board.
- 3.4. The appeal must be lodged in the format below:
 - 3.4.1. Itemise the grounds for appeal in accordance with above
 - 3.4.2. Detail and provide relevant evidence relating to the ground(s) for appeal to enable the Appeals Committee to prepare for the hearing
 - 3.4.3. If applicable, state the procedural irregularity and as far as possible how this has affected the outcome of the initial review
 - 3.4.4. Include student's signature, date, family name, given names, student number, address for notices, contact phone number, email address.
- 3.5. Upon receipt of the appeal the Chair of the Academic Board will confirm that the case has been considered in accordance with the informal and/or formal resolution process. If the case has not been considered through the formal resolution process, the matter shall be referred to Academic Board and the student advised accordingly.
- 3.6 Where the appeal does not comply with the criteria and therefore should not be heard by the Board, the Chair of the Academic Board will reject the appeal. The student will be notified.
- 3.7 Where the appeal has not been rejected, the matter shall be forwarded to the

Academic Board, who may choose to convene an Assessment Appeals Committee.

- 3.8 The Academic Board or the Assessment Appeals Committee hears all appeals in respect of assessment and other academic matters referred to it by the Whitehouse Executive and/or other relevant Institute body.
- 3.9 Where a member of the Assessment Appeals Committee has had any involvement in a student's case, that member cannot sit as a member of the Committee hearing that student's appeal.
- 3.10 The Chair of the Academic Board or their delegated representative is the Chair to that Committee.

Stage 4: Appeal Hearing

- 4.1. The student, the VET Course Coordinator, assigned senior staff Officer and the Academic Board/Assessment Appeals Committee (Board/Committee) are *given* a minimum of five (5) days' written notice of the hearing and all relevant documentation forwarded to the members of the Committee.
- 4.2. The student and the VET Course Coordinator will be given the opportunity to give evidence at the hearing.
- 4.3. The student can be represented by an advocate at the hearing, such as a friend or family member or student representative.
- 4.4. The Board/Committee must hear the matter on its merits, considering all circumstances of the student's case.
- 4.5. After consideration of all evidence available in the case, the Board/Committee shall reach its decision by a majority vote by agreement with the members, each of whom has equal voting rights. The Secretary does not have voting rights. If it is a split decision, the Chair will make the final decision.
- 4.6. The Board/Committee may decide to:
 - 4.6.1. Confirm the outcome/decision against which the student lodged their appeal
 - 4.6.2. Uphold the appeal and any or all of it
 - 4.6.3. Cancel any penalty imposed on the student; modify any penalty imposed on the student; direct the assigned senior staff Officer to undertake a course of action (for example: re-assess the student's work, allow the student to sit a further supplementary assessment task and provide ongoing academic support for the student).
- 4.7. The Secretary of the Board/Committee will then:
 - 4.7.1. Document the decision and the reasons for the decision
 - 4.7.2. Contact Student Administration and the assigned senior staff Officer with the decision and the reasons for the decision
 - 4.7.3. Prepare the written communication for the student for co-signing by the Chair of the Academic Board/Assessment Appeals Committee and the assigned senior staff Officer
 - 4.7.4. The written advice shall be sent to the student's contact address and filed.

	Stage 5: External Appeals Students are encouraged to complete all internal complaints and appeals processes to try and resolve their complaint before taking any external action. If the student feels that the outcome of their internal appeal is unfair or incorrect, the student can apply for an external appeal. Whitehouse will participate fully in any such external appeal and resolution process. External agencies include: • National Student Ombudsman https://www.nso.gov.au/ • Administrative Review Tribunal (ART): https://www.art.gov.au/ • Australian Human Rights Commission • The Resolution Institute • Department of Fair Trading (Victoria) (NSW); (QInd) For information on the above external appeals processes, students are encouraged to contact the agency or visit their website directly. Whitehouse acknowledges that if the external appeal decides in favour of the student, the Institute will immediately implement the decision/recommendation and/or take corrective action and advise the student in writing of the outcome.
Relevant Legislation	• Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), 2025 • Australia Qualifications Framework (AQF) • National Student Ombudsman https://www.nso.gov.au/ • Administrative Review Tribunal (ART): https://www.art.gov.au/ • Australian Human Rights Commission • Department of Fair Trading (Victoria) (NSW); (QInd)
Key Related Documents	• Student Appeals Policy (VET) • Code of Conduct, students • Access and Equity policy and procedure (VET) • Supporting Students policy and procedure • Critical Incident policy and procedure • Privacy policy and procedure • Student Consultation Form • Relevant Student Course Handbook
Definitions	Complaint or Grievance: a complaint or grievance can be defined as a student's expression of dissatisfaction with an aspect of the Whitehouse Institute's services and activities. Complainant: the student making a complaint or grievance. Executive Management Committee: Whitehouse's Senior Operations Group.

	Advocate: a person nominated by a student to present their case in an appeal on their behalf. This person must not be a legal practitioner. International Students may use the Senior Education Officer. Product: in this context, material goods are provided to a student, either free of charge or for a fee, to assist them to study at the Whitehouse Institute. Service: in this context, an act done for a student as part of their experience at the Institute. Written Notice/Letter: unless otherwise specified, written notice/letter can include notification by presentation with a written document, mailed or couriered letter or emailed. Grievances / Appeals about academic matters. These are usually complaints or appeals against academic decisions. They include but are not limited to: • course entry requirements • selection or admission decisions • structure of training programs, coursework, nature of teaching, or assessment • assessment matters (e.g. assessment briefs; tasks, methods, types, rubrics; penalties; marks/ grades / results) • learning progress decisions • decisions by staff that affect the training program of an individual or group/s of students • attendance / participation • credit recognition • issues relating to and breaches of academic integrity, authorship and / or intellectual property.
Responsible Officer	Executive Director or delegated Senior Executive Management Committee member.
Approval Authority/ Authorities	Board of Governors
Date Approved	20/12/2023
Date of Commencement	21/12/2023
Date for Review	20/12/2026
Documents superseded by this Procedure	Academic Grievance & Appeals Policy and Procedure (23/03/2017)
Amendment History	05/2026 • Updated procedure sections 1-5 to align with recent legislative and policy changes • Checked and updated relevant legislation section and links. • Updated key related documents section.

Signed and dated for Whitehouse Institute Pty Ltd	- Updated definitions section and relevant definitions statements - Removed statements, links, <i>et al</i> related to international students, as Whitehouse is not a CRICOS registered RTO VET provider.
	12/2023 - checked and updated relevant legislation section and links. - updated key related documents section. - Added definitions section and relevant definitions statements.
	08/2018 Procedure re-branded, renamed and re-coded, minor edits and corrections, including removing irrelevant definitions.
	02/2017 Policy and Procedures separated and higher education and vocational education and training documents separated and updated.
	 Leanne Whitehouse 20 12 2026 Signature Name Date

INFORMATION FOR PUBLISHING ON POLICY REGISTER	
Category	Vocational Education and Training (VET)
Stakeholders	Whitehouse Executive Management VET Trainers Assessors Administration Support Staff Students