

Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

Policy Owner	Principal Executive Officer		
Document Management	Compliance Manager		
Department	Student Services		
Date Approved	February 2023		
File Name	SMP4 Student Complaints and Appeals Policy	Version	2.0
Last update	12/02/2023		
Revision Date	11/02/2024		

Policy

Sydney City College of Management endeavors to create a positive learning environment, free of coercion, unfair treatment or harassment. Any circumstance caused by Sydney City College of Management, its trainers, assessors or other staff, a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf (including, the third party organisation itself, their trainers, assessors or other staff), or another learner of Sydney City College of Management, which affects the well-being of a student, will be dealt with in a professional manner in line with published procedures. Students who are dissatisfied with decisions made by the Institute will be able to access the Institute's internal and external appeals processes, which are handled with care, fairness, professionalism, objectivity and independence. Should a student access Sydney City College of Management's appeal process, the students' enrolment will be maintained until the internal appeals process and if necessary, external appeals process has been completed. Once the appeals process has been completed, Sydney City College of Management will undertake necessary actions depending on the outcome of the appeals process, within 10 working days of the process being finalised.

General Guidelines

- 1.0 A complaint is defined as a dissatisfaction with a treatment or service made by:
- 1.1 Sydney City College of Management, its trainers, assessors or other staff
 - 1.2 A third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf (including, employers, a third-party organisation itself, their trainers, assessors or other staff)
 - 1.3 Another learner of Sydney City College of Management

Examples of complaints include, but are not limited to:

- a) Unfair treatment conducted by any party identified in point 1.0 of this policy
- b) State of classroom facilities, equipment or resources of Sydney City College of Management or third-party organisation providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf
- c) Time taken to receive feedback on academic results
- d) Time taken to access any service provided by Sydney City College of Management or a third-party organisation providing services on

Sydney City College of Management's behalf

- e) Any interaction conducted by a party identified in point 1.0 of this policy
- 2.0 An appeal is defined as dissatisfaction with a decision made by Sydney City College of Management or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf. Examples of appeals include, but are not limited to, a review of:
- a) A decision, including an assessment decision made by a Sydney City College of Management assessor or assessor of a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf
 - b) SCCM's intention to report a student for non-compliance of a visa condition
 - c) SCCM's decision to not provide a student refund
 - d) SCCM's decision to not approve a transfer request
 - e) SCCM's decision to not accept an enrolment
 - f) SCCM's decision to not approve a suspension of studies, deferment or cancellation request

Note that grounds for internal appeals generally fall in to, but are not limited to, one of the following categories:

- a) New evidence being received by the Institute, which was not reasonably available at the time that Sydney City College of Management or a providing service on Sydney City College of Management's behalf, made its decision
- b) Procedural irregularity by Sydney City College of Management or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf
- c) Other (compassionate or compelling circumstances)

3.0 Internal Complaints/Appeals Guidelines

- 3.1 There is no cost involved to students in accessing SCCM's internal complaints and appeals process
- 3.2 All parties directly involved in the internal complaints and appeals process may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting
- 3.3 Complaints and Appeals applications must be accompanied with relevant documentation e.g. written statements, names of witnesses and any other relevant documents to support the students' case. The evidence provided by the student will determine SCCM's investigative activities and will form the basis of SCCM's decision
- 3.4 Should a student not make an internal appeal within 20 working days of Sydney City College of Management or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf's initial decision, the initial decision will be maintained and the Institute or third party acting on Sydney City College of Management's behalf will act on the decision
- 3.5 All students that access Sydney City College of Management's complaints and appeals process will be provided with acknowledgement of receipt within 5 working days of the complete complaint/appeal (including supporting evidence) being received
- 3.6 Sydney City College of Management will maintain the students' enrolment while the complaints and appeals process are ongoing, and will not act on

- its', or a third party acting on Sydney City College of Management's behalf, initial decision until the appeals process has been completed. Students must in turn ensure they continue to meet their attendance and course progress requirements until the process has been completed
- 3.7 All students that access Sydney City College of Management's complaints and appeals process will be provided with written notification of the outcome, including reasons for the outcome, within 10 working days of the complete complaints/appeal being received
 - 3.8 Where the complaint or appeals process results in a decision that supports the student, Sydney City College of Management or a third party acting on Sydney City College of Management's behalf, will complete any corrective actions within 10 working days from the decision
 - 3.9 Where the complaint or appeals process results in a decision that is not in favor of the student, the student may choose to access Sydney City College of Management's external appeals process within 10 working days of the internal appeal outcome
 - 3.10 Sydney City College of Management will assist all students with the external appeals process and will provide the student with written acknowledgement that the external appeals process has been activated upon advice from the student
 - 3.11 All records of the complaints and appeals process will be filed in the students file

4.0 External Complaints/Appeals Guidelines

- 4.1 Students that are dissatisfied with the outcome of Sydney City College of Management's internal complaints and appeals process, have the right to access external appeals process within 10 working days of the internal appeal outcome. Should a student not make an external appeal within 10 working days of the internal appeal outcome, Sydney City College of Management's initial decision will be maintained, and the Institute will act on the initial decision
- 4.2 Sydney City College of Management's external appeal reviewers are:

Commonwealth Ombudsmen (International Students)
Address: GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601
Phone: 1300 362 072
Online: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints#:~:text=We%20can%20look%20into%20complaints,providers%20on%20a%20student%20visa.&text=your%20private%20education%20pr ovider's%20handling,grades%20and%20assessments>
- 4.3 Sydney City College of Management will maintain the students' enrolment while the complaints and appeals process are ongoing and will not act on the initial decision until the appeals process has been completed. Students must in turn ensure they continue to meet their attendance and course progress requirements until the process has been completed
- 4.4 In most cases, the purpose of the external appeals process is to consider whether Sydney City College of Management or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf has followed its policies and procedures, not to make a decision in place of

Sydney City College of Management

- 4.5 The outcome of the external appeal is final, however does not remove the right for the student to take further action under Australia's Consumer Protection Laws, pursue other legal action or make a complaint to:
- The National Training Complaints Hotline 13 38 73
 - Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
<http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints.html>
(complaints about information provided by RTO's, the quality of delivery and assessment and qualifications issued or yet to be issued only)
 - Department of Fair Trading
<http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>
 - Administrative Appeals Tribunal (<http://www.aat.gov.au>)
- 4.6 Where the external complaints or appeals process with OSO, results in a decision that supports the student, Sydney City College of Management will provide written advice to the student and any other relevant party of the outcome and will complete all necessary corrective actions within 10 working days
- 4.7 Where the external complaints or appeals process with OSO, maintains Sydney City College of Management's or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf initial decision, the Institute will implement the actions as stated in the initial decision
- 4.8 All records of the complaints and appeals process will be filed in the relevant students' file
- 4.9 Students not satisfied with Sydney City College of Management's complaints and appeals process can contact the Department of Education and Training <https://www.education.gov.au/email-complaints> or phone 13 38 73

5.0 Complaints/Appeals Process

- **Informal Stage (Complaint only):** Student advises Student Services Team and attempts to solve the problem with the relevant party identified in point 1.0 of this policy informally.

If the student is satisfied with the outcome, no further action is needed.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, progress to step 1.

- **STEP 1 – INTERNAL (Complaint and Appeals):** Student completes the relevant form (SCCM Complaint Form or SCCM Internal Appeal Form) with relevant supporting documentation and lodges it with the Student Services Manager. For appeals, this must be within 20 working days of Sydney City College of Management or third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management's behalf's initial decision.

The Student Services Manager:

- a) Reviews the case and provides written advice of receiving the complaint/appeal within 5 working days of receiving the complete student submission
- b) Schedules a meeting with the relevant parties involved

- c) Provides student with outcome, including reasons for the outcome within 10 working days of receiving complete student submission

If the student is satisfied with the outcome, no further action is needed.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, progress to step 2.

- **STEP 2 – EXTERNAL (Complaints and Appeals):** Within 10 working days of receiving the outcome, the student makes an external appeal to the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (Domestic Students) or the Overseas Students Ombudsmen (International Students) and completes and submits the SCCM External Appeal Form to the Student Services Manager.

The Student Services Manager:

- a) Provides ongoing assistance to the student in accessing the Institute’s external appeals process
- b) Provides written advice acknowledging the students external complaint/appeal within 5 working days
- c) Provides student and other relevant parties with the final outcome, including reasons for the outcome within 10 working days of receiving notification from

Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO)

Address: GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: 1300 362 072

Website: OSO.gov.au

Online:

https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/27460/02616-OSO-Making-a-complaint_web.pdf

OSO review the appeal and inform Sydney City College of Management and the student of the outcome.

Note that in most cases, the purpose of the external appeals process will be to consider whether Sydney City College of Management or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management’s behalf has followed its policies and procedures, not to make a decision in place of Sydney City College of Management. OSO decisions are final however this does not remove the right for the student to take further action under Australia’s Consumer Protection Laws or pursue further legal action.

Where the external complaints or appeals process with OSO results in a decision that supports the student, Sydney City College of Management will provide written advice to the student and any other relevant party of the outcome and will complete all necessary corrective actions within 10 working days.

Where the external complaints or appeals process with OSO, maintains Sydney City College of Management’s or a third-party providing services on Sydney City College of Management’s behalf’s initial decision, the Institute will implement the actions as stated in the initial decision

For International students, if an appeal is against a College's decision to defer or suspend a student's enrolment due to misbehavior or to cancel a student's enrolment the College only needs to await the outcome of the internal appeals process (supporting the College) before notifying the Department of Education through PRISMS of the change to the student's enrolment

**International students lodging an external appeal with should contact the
OSO on 1300 362 072.**

Related Documents

- Complaint Form
- Internal Appeal Form
- External Appeal Form
- Internal Appeal Outcome Letter
- External Appeal Acknowledgement Letter
- External Appeal Outcome Letter
- Complaint Register
- Appeal Register

Related Policies

- Student Entry Requirements, Selection, Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy
- Transfer between Providers Policy
- Student Refund Policy
- Student Attendance Policy
- Student Course Progress Policy
- Student Assessment, Reassessment and Repeating Units of Competency Guidelines Policy

Policy Implementation Manager

- Academic Manager