

Complaints Handling Policy

Cocoon International College is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaint handling process.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services or people which has not been resolved locally. It may involve issues concerning:

- Cocoon International College, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- a third party's services provided on the Cocoon International College behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- a learner of Cocoon International College.

Early resolution of complaints

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved. It is often the case that complaints can be avoided by proper communication and respect between persons involved.

Relationship to continuous improvement

Frequently, the complaints handling process will expose weaknesses in the training and assessment or administrative system that can flow into the continuous improvement system as opportunities for improvement. This outcome of complaints handling is very positive and should be actively applied by all persons involved. It is for this reason that complaints received from stakeholders should be seen in a positive light and as opportunities for improvement.

Making a complaint

A complaint may be received by Cocoon International College in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by students and/or employers.

To make a complaint, the person is recommended to complete the Cocoon International College - Complaint Form. This form is available via our website. The completed complaint form is to be submitted to the Office Manager either in hard copy or electronically. These instructions are detailed within the Student Handbook.

Complaints Handling Policy

Complaint handling principles

Cocoon International College will apply the following principles to its complaints handling:

- A complaint may be received in any form (written, verbal) although persons seeking to make a complaint are recommended to complete the complaint form which is available to them on the website. There is no time limitation on a person who is seeking to make a complaint.
- A written record of all complaints is to be kept by Cocoon International College including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. The complaints register within aXcelerate SMS is to be used to record the details of the complaint and to maintain a chronological journal of events during the complaint handling process. Records relating to complaint handling must be stored securely to prevent access to unauthorised personnel.
- A complainant is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each complainant may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The complaints policy must be publicly available. This means that the complaints policy and procedure must be published on the Cocoon International College website.
- The handling of a complaint is to commence within **seven (7) working days** of the lodgement of the complaint and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The complainant is to be provided a written response to the complaint, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response must be provided to the complainant within **fourteen (14) working days** of the lodgement of the complaint.
- Complaints must be resolved to a final outcome within **sixty (60) calendar days** of the complaint being initially received. Where Cocoon International College Chief Executive Officer considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint, the CEO must inform the complainant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. As a

Complaints Handling Policy

benchmark, Cocoon International College should attempt to resolve complaints as soon as possible. A timeframe to resolve a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days is considered acceptable and in the best interest of Cocoon International College and the complainant. A complainant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the progress of the complaint handling. Updates should be provided to the complainant at a minimum of **four (4) weekly intervals**.

- Cocoon International College shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant during the complaint handling process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint handling process that find in the favour of the student shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Cocoon International College representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of Cocoon International College Chief Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur. This permission should be given using the Information Release Form.
- Complaints are to be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the complaint handling process. This means that the complainant is entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The complainant is entitled to have their complaint heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally the decision must be made based on logical evidence and the decision-maker must take account of relevant considerations, must act for a proper purpose and must not take into account irrelevant considerations. Further guidance on principles of natural justice and procedural fairness can be accessed at the following link: [Complaints process - Queensland Ombudsman](#)

Third Party Review

Where the person making a complaint is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by Cocoon International College, they have the opportunity for a body or person that is independent of Cocoon International College to review his or her complaint following the internal completion of complaint handling process. In these circumstances the Cocoon International College Chief Executive Officer will advise of an appropriate party independent of Cocoon International College to review the complaint outcome (and its subsequent handling) and provide advice to Cocoon International College in regard to the recommended outcomes. The independent third-party is required to respond with their recommendations within **fourteen (14) working days** of their review being requested. This advice is to be accepted by Cocoon International College as final, advised to the person making a complaint in writing and implemented without prejudice.

Where the Cocoon International College appoints or engages an appropriate independent person to review a complaint, the Cocoon International College will meet the full cost to facilitate the independent review. Where the person seeking an appeal objects to this appointment and requests to engage a person or organisation they nominate to undertake the review, the Cocoon International College may seek the person making a complaint to contribute to the cost of engaging this person to undertake the review. This is advised to the person making a complaint within the Student Handbook.

Unresolved Appeals

Where the person making a complaint remains not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint handling procedure, the person making a complaint is to be directed to the following external agencies:

- In relation to consumer protection issues, these may be referred to the **Office of Fair Trading**.
- In relation to the delivery of training and assessment services, these may be referred to the **National Training Complaints Service** via the following phone number: 13 38 73.

This guidance is communicated to students within the Student Handbook. It is expected that the above agencies will investigate the persons concerns and contact the Cocoon International College for information.

Complaints Handling Policy

International Student Complaint

Where an international student complaint is unable to be resolved, the matter may be referred to the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's services are free, independent and impartial.

The Overseas Students Ombudsman:

- investigates complaints about problems that overseas students have with private education and training in Australia
- provides information about best practice complaints handling to help private education providers manage internal complaints effectively
- considers, free of charge, external appeals under Standard 8 of the National Code of Practice for Registered Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students

Please find more information on the OSO website [Overseas Students old - Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) The Cocoon International College is to cooperate fully with agencies such as the National Training Complaints Service, the Office of Fair Trading, Overseas Students Ombudsman or ASQA that may investigate the handling of a complaint. Cocoon International College considers that it would be extremely unlikely that a complaint is not able to be resolved quickly within Cocoon International College internal arrangements.