



PP16 – Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Policy

1. Purpose

Austra College is committed to providing a fair, transparent, accessible and timely process for receiving feedback, managing complaints and handling appeals.

This policy ensures that students, prospective students, former students, staff and relevant third parties can raise concerns or seek review of decisions in a safe and respectful way, without fear of disadvantage, victimisation or retaliation.

This policy supports compliance with:

- ✚ Standards for RTOs 2025 – Outcome Standards 2.7 and 2.8
- ✚ National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 – Standard 10
- ✚ National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- ✚ Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), including the Australian Privacy Principles

Austra College uses feedback, complaints and appeals outcomes to support **continuous improvement** of training, assessment, student support, administration, marketing and other services.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all current, prospective, and former students, as well as Austra College staff and third-party providers. It relates to:

- ✚ Informal and formal feedback
- ✚ Formal complaints
- ✚ Appeals of academic and non-academic decisions
- ✚ Course progress
- ✚ Austra College, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- ✚ Education agent
- ✚ Any third-party providing services on Austra College's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- ✚ Assessment/RPL outcome;
- ✚ Fees and refunds/re-crediting
- ✚ Other operational related matters

Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	111



3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Feedback	Informal input (positive or negative) regarding Austra College services or experiences
Complaint	A formal expression of dissatisfaction about a decision, service, behaviour, or policy
Appeal	A formal request to review a decision that affects the student
Procedural Fairness	Ensures decisions are unbiased, evidence-based, and all parties are heard
Support Person	A nominated person who may accompany a student to any complaint or appeal meeting
Independent Reviewer	A third party not involved in the original decision who may review the appeal
CI Register	Continuous Improvement Register used to log and follow up systemic issues

4. Legislative References

- ✚ Standards for RTOs 2025 – Outcome Standards 2.7 & 2.8
- ✚ National Code of Practice 2018 – Standard 10 (CRICOS)
- ✚ National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- ✚ Australian Privacy Principles (Privacy Act 1988)

5. Policy Statement

This policy ensures overseas students can raise and resolve issues in a safe, respectful environment, free from disadvantage or retaliation. It is a core part of Austra College's commitment to student welfare, quality assurance, and continuous improvement.

Austra College values feedback and takes complaints and appeals seriously.

Austra College:

- ✚ Encourages informal feedback and early resolution where appropriate
- ✚ Provides a transparent, fair and timely complaints and appeals process
- ✚ Ensures all decisions are made with procedural fairness
- ✚ Respects student privacy and protects students from victimisation or retaliation
- ✚ Maintains appropriate records of all feedback, complaints and appeals
- ✚ Ensures international students are informed of their right to internal and external appeal pathways at no cost or minimal cost

Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	112



International students are additionally protected under the National Code 2018 and are provided with written outcomes, external review options, and information about contacting the Department of Home Affairs where their enrolment or visa conditions may be affected.

Austra College acknowledges that students may raise concerns or be dissatisfied with decisions, services, behaviours or policies affecting their study or welfare. To uphold the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, Austra College provides a structured complaints and appeals process that includes informal resolution, internal review and external review options where required.

Specifically, Austra College ensures that:

- ✚ All overseas students have access to a documented, free and easily accessible internal complaints and appeals process, which is outlined in the Student Handbook, on the website and during orientation
- ✚ If a matter cannot be resolved informally, students may formally submit a complaint or appeal using the appropriate form, with assistance from staff if required
- ✚ Respond to any complaint or appeal the overseas student makes regarding his or her dealings with the registered provider, the registered provider's education agents or any related party the registered provider has an arrangement with to deliver the overseas student's course or related services.
- ✚ Receipt of any formal complaint or appeal will be acknowledged in writing within 2 working days
- ✚ Assessment of any formal complaint or appeal will commence within 10 working days of lodgement and will be finalised as soon as practicable
- ✚ Students are provided with an opportunity to formally present their case and may be accompanied and assisted by a support person of their choice at no cost during any meeting or hearing
- ✚ All complaints and appeals are handled in a professional, fair and transparent manner by appropriately trained and impartial staff
- ✚ Students are issued with a written statement of the outcome, including detailed reasons for the decision, at the conclusion of the internal process
- ✚ A written record of each complaint or appeal, including the outcome and reasons, is maintained securely and retained for a minimum of two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student, or longer where required by Austra College's records management requirements
- ✚ If the internal process does not resolve the matter to the student's satisfaction, Austra College will advise the student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review of their right to access an appropriate external complaints or appeals process at minimal or no cost and provide the contact details of the relevant body.
- ✚ If any internal or external process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the student, Austra College will immediately implement the outcome and advise the student of the corrective or preventive action taken
- ✚ Students are advised to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs where the outcome of a complaint or appeal may affect their visa conditions.

6. Step-by-Step Procedure

Feedback Procedure

Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	113



Step	Action	Responsible
1	Provide access to Feedback Form via website, orientation, and PTR	Admin Officer
2	Encourage students to submit feedback informally through class discussions or surveys	Trainers/ Student Support Officer
3	Collect and review all feedback submissions (positive or constructive)	RTO Manager
4	Record feedback in the Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Register	RTO Manager
5	Use feedback insights to inform the Continuous Improvement Register and adjust services or operations	RTO Manager/ CEO

Complaint Procedure

Step	Action	Responsible
1	Make the Complaints and Appeals Form accessible through the website, orientation, Student Handbook and administration office	RTO Manager / Administration Officer
2	Encourage informal resolution of concerns before a formal complaint is lodged, where appropriate	Trainer/ Student Support Officer
3	If unresolved, the student completes and submits the Complaints and Appeals Form, or receives assistance from staff to do so	Student / Staff support if required
4	Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 2 working days	RTO Manager
5	Commence assessment of the complaint within 10 working days of lodgement	RTO Manager
6	Register the complaint in the Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Register	RTO Manager
7	Investigate the complaint fairly and transparently, including consultation with relevant staff or third parties where required	RTO Manager
8	Offer the student the opportunity to formally present their case and to be accompanied by a support person	RTO Manager
9	Issue a written outcome as soon as practicable, including the decision, reasons and any corrective action	RTO Manager
10	Record the outcome and any systemic issues in the CI Register	RTO Manager
11	Inform the student of appeal rights and any available external options if the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction	RTO Manager

Appeal Procedure

Step	Action	Responsible
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Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	114



1	The student completes and submits the Complaints and Appeals Form within 20 working days of the original decision, unless exceptional circumstances apply	Student
2	Acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing within 2 working days	RTO Manager
3	Commence assessment of the appeal within 10 working days of lodgement	RTO Manager
4	Record the appeal in the Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Register	RTO Manager
5	Review the appeal impartially, considering all evidence and consulting relevant parties as needed	RTO Manager/ CEO
6	Provide the student with an opportunity to formally present their case and be supported by a support person	RTO Manager
7	Appoint an independent reviewer where appropriate, including where the matter is complex or requires external review	CEO
8	Issue a formal written outcome as soon as practicable, including detailed reasons for the decision	RTO Manager/ CEO
9	If the appeal is unsuccessful, inform the student of their right to access an external complaints or appeals process and provide contact details	RTO Manager
10	If an internal or external appeal favours the student, implement the decision immediately and advise the student in writing of the action taken	RTO Manager
11	Record all appeal actions, outcomes and systemic issues for review and continuous improvement	RTO Manager

External Appeals:

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal complaints and appeals process, Austra College will advise the student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review of their right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process. For overseas students, Austra College will ensure access to an appropriate external complaints and appeals process at minimal or no cost in accordance with the National Code.

Austra College must advise the student of this right within 10 working days of concluding the internal review and provide the contact details of the appropriate external complaints and appeals body.

The external appeal bodies available are:

1. Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) – for international students

- Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au
- Phone: 1300 362 072

Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	115



- OSO provides a free and independent service to investigate complaints about private education providers
- 2. ASQA** – for complaints about Austra College’s compliance with the Standards for RTOs
 - Website: www.asqa.gov.au
 - ASQA accepts complaints about providers but is not generally an external merits review body for individual student decisions
- 3. Resolution Institute or another appropriate alternative dispute resolution service**
 - Website: www.resolution.institute
 - This may be used where mediation or independent dispute resolution is appropriate
- 4. Legal Aid or community legal services in the relevant State or Territory**
 - Students may seek independent legal advice or advocacy support if needed

Cost of Mediation or External Review

- ✚ Internal complaints and appeals processes are free of charge to the student
- ✚ Where an external body provides a free service, Austra College will advise the student accordingly
- ✚ Where an external mediation or review service charges a fee, Austra College will inform the student in advance
- ✚ For overseas students, Austra College will ensure that access to external complaints and appeals processes is available at no cost or minimal cost in accordance with the National Code

Implementation of External Review Recommendations

- ✚ Austra College will immediately implement any decision or recommendation arising from an internal or external review in favour of the student
- ✚ Austra College will advise the student in writing of the action taken

7. Additional CRICOS-Specific Provisions (National Code Standard 10)

Austra College ensures the following additional protections for overseas students:

- ✚ Access to a documented internal complaints and appeals process that is free and easily accessible
- ✚ The opportunity to lodge a formal complaint or appeal if a matter cannot be resolved informally
- ✚ Complaints and appeals may relate to Austra College, its education agents, or any related party delivering the course or related services
- ✚ Assessment of complaints and appeals will commence within 10 working days
- ✚ The right to formally present their case at no cost or minimal cost
- ✚ The right to be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting
- ✚ Written records are kept of every complaint and appeal, including the outcome and reasons

Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	116



- ✚ Written outcomes are always provided, including detailed reasons
- ✚ Advice about external complaints and appeals options if the student is not successful internally
- ✚ Immediate implementation of any decision or recommendation in favour of the student
- ✚ Information on contacting the Department of Home Affairs where enrolment status or visa conditions may be affected

8. Related Documents

- ✚ Feedback Form
- ✚ Complaint and Appeal Form
- ✚ Feedback, Complaint and Appeal Register
- ✚ Continuous Improvement (CI) Register
- ✚ Student Handbook

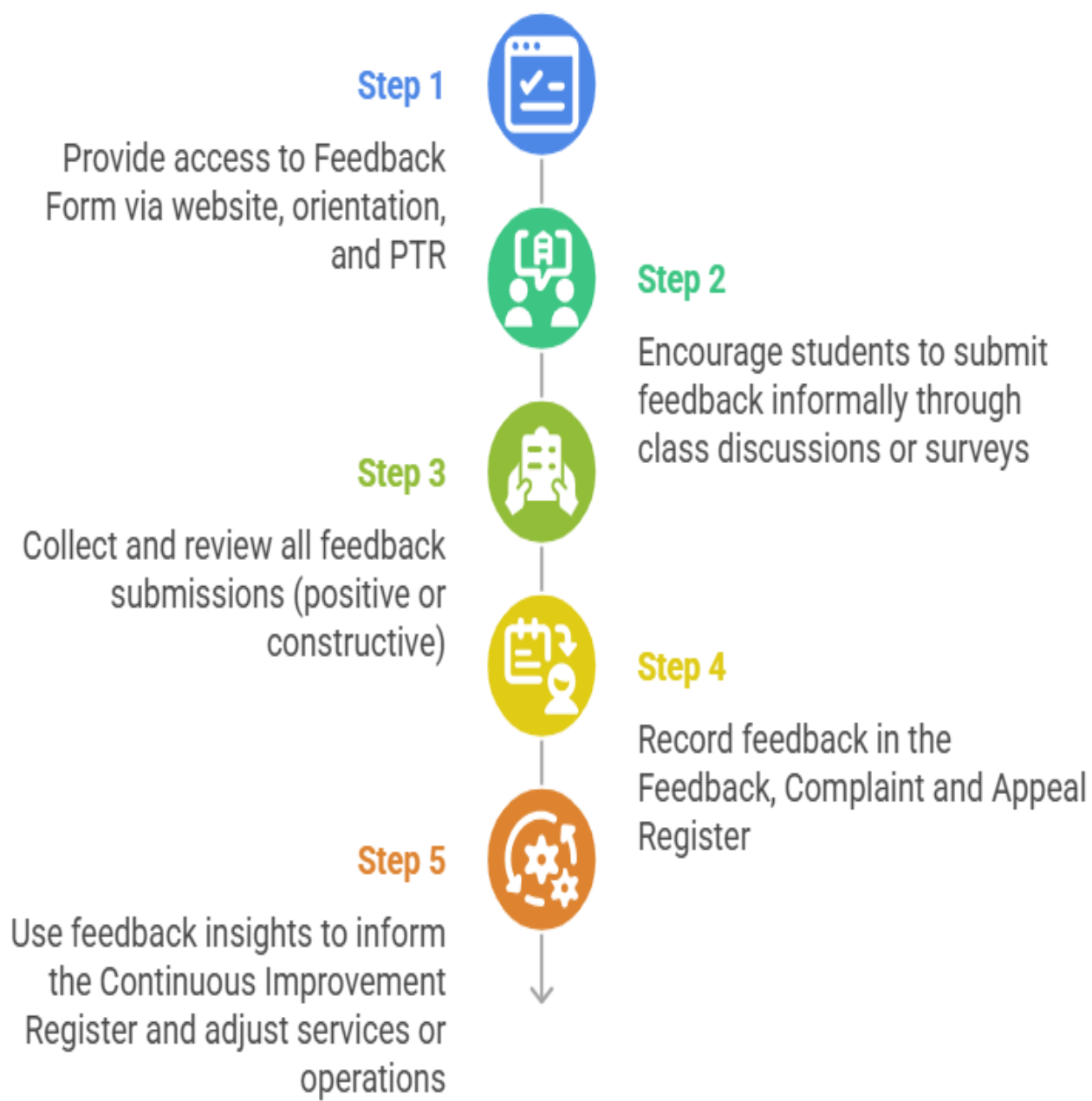
Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	117



9. Flow chart

1.

Feedback Procedure



Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	118



2.

Complaint Procedure



Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	119



3.

Appeal Procedure



Version	V2.1	Document Name	Policy and Procedure
CRICOS Code.	03187D	RTO Name	Austra College
RTO Code.	40336	Page number	120