SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT
IVY INSTITUTE is committed to a fair and equitable approach in resolving complaints, grievances and appeals relating to any aspects of its services and operations.

PURPOSE
To outline the policy and procedure for student complaints, grievances and appeals.

SCOPE
This policy and procedure applies to all students and prospective students.

This policy and procedure covers any perceived ground for complaint by a student or prospective student but it does not cover dissatisfaction in relation to an assessment process or outcome - that is an Assessment Appeal. Refer to Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure for further information.

Anyone is entitled to access the Complaints, Grievances & Appeals Policy and Procedure regardless of the location at which a grievance may have arisen, place of residence, their mode or course of study.
SECTION 2 – POLICY

PRINCIPLES
The Complaints, Grievances & Appeals Policy and Procedure is guided by the principles of access, equity, fairness and timeliness.

IVY INSTITUTE is committed to:
- ensuring a complainant or respondent is not victimised or discriminated against
- conducting complaints processes in accordance with the principles of natural justice
- considering complaints in a consistent, transparent, objective and unbiased manner
- making all details of the procedures publicly available
- informing students of the policy during their course orientation and advising students to read it at the commencement of a course
- specifying reasonable timelines for responses to each stage of the process and monitoring of these timelines
- allowing the complainant and / or respondent to be accompanied and / or assisted by a third party if desired
- providing reasons and full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures, if requested by the complainant and / or respondent
- keeping appropriate records of grievances for at least five years, and allowing parties to the complaint appropriate access to these records
- ensuring that such records are treated as confidential
- reviewing the complaints/appeals-handling process regularly

POLICY
1. IVY INSTITUTE will ensure fair and equitable management of complaints, grievances and appeals by providing a transparent, timely and consistent process for resolving complaints, grievances and appeals.

2. All students will be able to view this policy prior to enrolment and will be advised to read it at the commencement of a course with IVY INSTITUTE.
SECTION 3 – PROCEDURE

Informal Complaints

1. All students and prospective students are encouraged to resolve grievances by bringing the matter directly to the attention of the IVY INSTITUTE staff member concerned. If the student / prospective student is not satisfied with the outcome he/she may choose to lodge a formal complaint under this policy.

Formal Complaints

2. Students and prospective students must submit their formal complaint in writing via email to: complaints@ivy.edu.au or post to Complaints, Ivy Institute, PO Box 484 Freshwater NSW 2096.

It is essential that the following information is included in the email / letter:

a. details of the complaint;
b. supporting information that the complainant wishes to have considered;
c. an explanation of the steps already taken to try to resolve the complaint informally and why the responses received are not considered satisfactory; and
d. what the complainant thinks needs to be done to address his/her concerns.

3. Upon receipt of the formal complaint the Student Services Manager (SSM) will respond to the complainant in writing and acknowledge receipt of the complaint. The date of this notification becomes the commencement date of the complaint process. An entry is created in the Complaints Log and this register is continually updated each step of the remaining procedure.

4. The complaint will be investigated by the SSM who will discuss the issues with the person(s) concerned. If the complaint is about the SSM it will be handed to the CEO, who will follow the complaint through to a final solution.

5. The complainant will be provided with a written report of the steps taken to address the complaint within 21 days of the commencement date of the complaint process.

If the complaint is upheld the SSM will immediately notify relevant staff to implement the actions required to resolve the complaint.

If the complaint is not upheld then the complainant will be given a written explanation detailing the reasons for that decision. The complainant will also be advised of his/her right to access the internal appeals process if not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint.

The SSM will retain a written record of the complaint and its outcome.

Appeals

6. If a student or prospective student is not satisfied with a decision made by IVY INSTITUTE he/she has 21 days from the date nominated in the written notification by IVY INSTITUTE in
which to lodge an Appeal. This includes decisions relating to complaints outcomes and assessment appeals, as well as notifications of unsatisfactory academic progress, misbehaviour, refusals of transfer applications, and/or pending cancellation of enrolment.

7. Appeals must be lodged in writing via email to: appeals@ivy.edu.au or post to Appeals, Ivy College, PO Box 484 Freshwater NSW 2096.

It is essential that the following information is included in the email / letter:

a. details of the decision that is being appealed;
b. brief reasons why you believe the decision is wrong;
c. any other information the student/prospect wishes to be considered.

8. Upon receipt of the written Appeal the CEO will respond to the student / prospect in writing and acknowledge receipt of the Appeal. The date of this notification becomes the commencement date of the appeal process.

9. The Appeal will be considered by the CEO, who may decide:
   a. to make a determination based on the information provided; or
   b. that there are insufficient grounds to take further action, thus concluding the consideration of the matter under this process.

10. The student / prospect will be advised in writing of the decision and the reasons for it within 14 days of the commencement date of the appeal process.

If the appeal is upheld the student / prospect will be informed of the action to be taken to resolve the matter. IVY INSTITUTE will immediately implement any decision and/or action required.

If the appeal is not upheld the student / prospect may wish to seek external advice regarding other legal remedies.

**A summary of the external grievance procedures**

A student enrolled in a VET FEE-HELP eligible course who wishes to lodge an external appeal or complain about a decision made by the College, may apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) for review of a decision. He/she may have to pay an application fee; it depends on the circumstances. The application cannot proceed until the application fee has either been paid or waived. (The application fee is refunded when the review is completed if the AAT decides that it is finalised in the student's favour.) Further information about the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, including the required application forms and current costs, can be obtained from their website at: http://www.aat.gov.au/AboutTheAAT/IntroductionToTheAAT.htm.

Students who are enrolled in courses which are not VET FEE-HELP eligible who wish to lodge an external appeal or complain about a decision made by the College may take action under Australia’s Consumer Protection laws by contacting the Office of Fair Trading in their state, or the Australian Skills Quality Authority on http://www.asqa.gov.au/. Depending on the circumstances of the case some bodies may require that the College’s internal appeals process first be exhausted before
making an external appeal. Also, within each state there are Dispute Resolutions Centres; details of these can be accessed through the links following:

Student brings complaint/grievance to attention of staff

Issue resolved?

YES

Issue closed

NO

Student/prospect submits formal complaint in writing

Issue resolved?

YES

Issue closed

NO

Student Services Manager (SSM) acknowledges receipt & investigates

Written report sent to complainant within 21 days with outcome

Complaint upheld?

YES

Solution implemented. Issue closed.

NO

Complainant advised of Appeal process

Appeal upheld?

YES

Solution implemented. Issue closed.

NO

CEO considers appeal

Written advice of outcome sent to student/prospect within 14 days

Formal appeal submitted in writing within 21 days

Student Services Manager (SSM) acknowledges receipt

Student/prospect submits formal complaint in writing

Student/prospect advised of Appeal process

Issue closed

NO

Complainant appeals?

Issue closed
SECTION 4 – REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

DEFINITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word/Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grievance</td>
<td>Any perceived ground for complaint by a student or prospective student, excluding dissatisfaction in relation to an assessment process or outcome - that is an Assessment Appeal. Refer to Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure for further information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal complaint</td>
<td>The assertion of a grievance in an informal way i.e. speaking with a staff member.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal complaint</td>
<td>The assertion of a grievance in a formal way i.e. it is written down for official processing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complainant</td>
<td>The student or prospective student lodging the complaint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal</td>
<td>If a student is dissatisfied with a decision made by IVY INSTITUTE, he/she has 21 days from the date stated within the written notification in which to lodge an appeal to have the case reviewed. This includes decisions relating to complaints outcomes and assessment appeals, as well as notifications of unsatisfactory academic progress, misbehaviour, refusals of transfer applications, and/or pending cancellation of enrolment.</td>
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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<th>Links to supporting documentation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Complaints Log</td>
<td>Register</td>
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SECTION 5 – GOVERNANCE

CHANGE HISTORY

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<th>Version</th>
<th>Approval date</th>
<th>Approved by</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>17/09/2012</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>New Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1.1     | 3/04/14       | CEO         | Updated complaints and appeals email address  
Checked for compatability with other procedures and SGA/VFH policies  
Added summary of available external grievance avenues |

For Office Personnel:
- Printing this document may make it obsolete
- For the latest version of this policy always check the Master Document Directory
- When reviewing this policy always review the Policy & Procedure Issues Log
- Version [#.#] (use for draft versions only – delete for final version sent to approving manager)