

## Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

### 1. Purpose

This policy is to ensure that all Envirotech Education (“Envirotech”) students know and understand that they have a clear right to fair and equitable treatment in all dealings with Envirotech. Any expressed dissatisfaction is valuable feedback and regarded as an important learning opportunity and input to our continuous improvement process.

Should a student feel as though they have received unfair or inappropriate treatment in their dealings with Envirotech, they should first address the issue directly with their assigned trainer.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1. Students studying off and on shore at Envirotech, including full fee for service students and students under funding
- 2.2. Staff of Envirotech, including but not limited to managers, academic staff, administration and marketing staff, consultants, contractors and subcontractors.
- 2.3. Any third party who represents Envirotech or are in partnership with Envirotech such as other educational providers, employers and supervisors in work placements or education agents.
- 2.4. These policy and procedures apply to all campus locations and off- site activity which involves Envirotechs’ students or prospective students.

### 3. Relevant Standards

- 3.1. Standard 6 of the Standards for RTOs 2015
- 3.2. Standard 8 of the National Code 2017

### 4. Relevant links:

- 4.1. <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/National-Code/nationalcodepartd/Pages/ExplanatoryguideD8.aspx>
- 4.2. <http://www.oso.gov.au/>
- 4.3. <http://www.oso.gov.au/frequently-asked-questions/for-private-education-providers/index.php>
- 4.4. <http://www.asqa.gov.au/users-guide-to-the-standards-for-registered-training-organisations-2015/about-the-standards-for-rtos/standard-six/standard-six.html>
- 4.5. [www.asqa.gov.au/media-and-publications/meeting-trainer-and-assessor-requirements.html](http://www.asqa.gov.au/media-and-publications/meeting-trainer-and-assessor-requirements.html)

### 5. Associated documents

- 5.1. Students’ Complaints Application Form, available on Envirotech website ([www.envirotech.edu.au](http://www.envirotech.edu.au))
- 5.2. Students’ Appeal Form, available on Envirotech website ([www.envirotech.edu.au](http://www.envirotech.edu.au))
- 5.3. [Students’ complaint and appeal approval letter](#)
- 5.4. [Students’ complaint and appeal refusal letter](#)
- 5.5. Withdrawal and Cancellation form

## 6. Policy

- 6.1. Envirotech ensures that all students will have access to a fair and equitable process for dealing with concerns, complaints and appeals (grievances) and will provide an avenue for students to appeal against any such decisions which may affect the students' progress.
- 6.2. Every effort will be made by Envirotech to resolve students' grievances. At the time of enrolment these concerns, complaints and appeals (grievance resolution) procedures will be outlined to students through the student's offer letter, Student Handbook, Envirotech website and during the orientation day.
- 6.3. Envirotech staff members are equipped to accept and act on verbal or written advice of a complaint at any time. Academic staff should be the first point of contact for a student with a concern, and are responsible to find an immediate resolution if possible. If no resolution can be found or a consultation regarding compliance standards are required, academic staff will report the complaint to the relevant departmental manager.  
Staff should support students in the process and provide them access to this policy and relevant documents, including explaining them their rights.
- 6.4. Students should bring up to the attention of Envirotech staff any complaint as soon as possible after they arise usually within twenty (20) working days. The student is to be advised to represent their concerns in writing, outlining all relevant aspects of the complaint unless the complaint can be immediately resolved. Envirotech is generally not able to investigate complaints that are notified outside of this time frame, unless special circumstances prevail.
- 6.5. When students feel that the academic staff did not provide a resolution to their satisfaction, the next step is to lodge an internal formal complaint using the Complaint Application Form available on Envirotech website. Formal complaints will automatically be sent to the relevant Envirotech staff and a review of the complaint will begin within 10 working days of receiving the formal Complaints Application Form.
- 6.6. All documents and related information must be kept on the Envirotech intranet (SP) under the student's complaint folder, listed under the Complaints and Appeals Register.
- 6.7. Nothing in this policy negates the right of a student to pursue other legal remedies, however it is recommended to initially solve the complaint internally and if still not solved, to seek external advice.
- 6.8. Envirotech maintains a supportive and fair environment which allows students to lodge complaints or appeal decisions. Complaints and appeals are ideally resolved as amicably as possible.
- 6.9. Envirotech will endeavour to always have a complaints and appeals process which is:
  - 6.9.1. Well publicised, explained and easily accessible, including being clear and easy to understand for all parties with the steps involved.
  - 6.9.2. Fair and with no costs to the students.
  - 6.9.3. Handled in a manner that protects the privacy of relevant parties.
  - 6.9.4. Formally documented.
  - 6.9.5. Transparent, equitable, objective and unbiased.

- 6.9.6. Comprehensive so that it effectively resolves a variety of complaints such as student dissatisfaction, assessment outcomes, poor service, fraud, misconduct etc.
- 6.9.7. Implemented effectively and efficiently to ensure complaints and appeals are resolved within an acceptable timeframe.
- 6.9.8. Handled professionally and confidentially to achieve a satisfactory resolution.
- 6.9.9. Monitored, recorded and reported to the appropriate parties and,
- 6.9.10. An input or trigger point to the continuous improvement process for Envirotech.
- 6.10. Complaints cannot be anonymous. An anonymous complaint is considered to be unfair and in most cases, unable to be effectively resolved as ongoing discussion/ mediation cannot take place to resolve the issue between the concerned parties.
- 6.11. Information submitted to the trainer or any staff member is treated with respect and taken as an opportunity to improve the organisation's practices and management system. Privacy requirements and student/ individual rights are maintained.
- 6.12. Students' who lodge a complaint will be invited to represent his or her case formally by phone or face to face, and will be invited to have a support person present at the meeting.
- 6.13. Complaints include any perceived problems relating to student perceptions of any unreasonable treatment at the hands of Envirotech staff or other parties or students at Envirotech.
- 6.14. All reasonable measures will be taken to investigate and finalise the process to the satisfaction of all parties as soon as practicable and preferably within no more than twenty (20) working days upon receiving the formal complaint or appeal in writing.
- 6.15. Initial investigations are to be undertaken by the students' trainer, Student Registrar and Compliance Manager, if the complaint is not in any way directed at the said trainer. If the trainer is the subject of the complaint, then the investigation will be conducted without the appointed trainer.
- 6.16. In the completion of the initial investigation, Envirotech will provide the student with a formal report regarding the complaint, including recommendation and action items to be followed.
- 6.17. Where a matter is resolved internally, the Student Registrar shall then determine whether any adjustment to the policies, procedures, culture or other aspect of Envirotech operations might require modification. This is achieved through input to the continuous improvement process.
- 6.18. Where cases require to be referred beyond an initial investigation, or when student would like to appeal on the initial complaint investigation decision, students will have to submit an official appeal to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Envirotech will provide the student with all the information necessary to place the matter in the hands of the CEO.
- 6.19. The CEO will conclude the decision and inform the student in writing about the outcome of their appeal within 10 working days. The CEO may invite the student to represent his or her case formally by phone or face to face, and will be invited to have a support person present at the meeting. The final outcome will be provided to the complainant in writing including reasons for the decision and will outline the results of the investigation and any action proposed to be undertaken as a result
- 6.20. When internal complaint and appeal process ends with the student being unsatisfied, the student may submit a complaint with an external mediator:

- 6.20.1. Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) on the website <https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint-domestic-students>
- 6.20.2. The Ombudsman is the official external independent mediator for students to be contacted. When students wish to lodge an external appeal, or complaint against an Envirotech decision, they can contact the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by Envirotech. The Ombudsman has different departments for different students' types:
- 6.20.2.1. Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO):  
 Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
 Call: 1300 362 072\* within Australia. Outside Australia call +61 2 6276 0111.  
 Enquiries: 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, Australian Eastern Standard Time (Australian Eastern Daylight Time when daylight savings is in effect)  
 Fax: 02 6276 0123 within Australia. Outside Australia +61 2 6276 0123.  
 Postal: GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601.
- 6.20.2.2. Domestic Students Ombudsman:  
<http://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/> or phone [1800 773 048](tel:1800773048) for more information
- 6.20.2.3. VET Student Loan (VSL) Ombudsman  
<http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/vet-student-loans-ombudsman>
- 6.20.2.4. VSL students can also complain to The National Training Complaints Hotline (13 38 73), [www.education.gov.au/NTCH](http://www.education.gov.au/NTCH)
- 6.21. Envirotech may refer the student with any complaints that do not directly concern Envirotech Institute of Education but may affect students' ability to achieve competency to the appropriate external support groups for assistance.
- 6.22. Where the complaint is not internally resolved, the Student Registrar will facilitate the student's access to the external mediator.
- 6.23. Envirotech will maintain the enrolment of students who make a complaint against Envirotech until the matter is resolved. In every case, it is Envirotech policy to resolve matters as quickly and as efficiently as possible to the satisfaction of all parties.
- 6.24. All expenses attached to such appointment will be shared equally by the student and Envirotech.
- 6.25. The submission and final outcome of the appeal or complaints are recorded and communicated to all parties in writing. The communication must contain the outcome of the appeal or complaint and the reasons for the decisions made. A copy of the communication is placed in the student folder under the register, on individual employee files when relevant and on the continuous improvements register if any changes and improvements to the Envirotech systems have been made.
- 6.26. No further appeal mechanism exists beyond this point in the process.
- 6.27. If the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, Envirotech must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

If the external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports an Envirotech decision, the student must comply with the external decision made and act accordingly. Envirotech will then act according to the decision made and relevant legislation.

## 7. Procedures

Steps students to follow:

- 7.1. Address any complaint with Envirotech academic staff and seek for an immediate resolution and response.

It is recommended to send the complaint details in writing (can be via email). Students must raise the issue within 20 days from the date it occurs as mentioned above, unless special circumstances apply.

- 7.2. If the resolution provided does not meet the satisfaction on the student, the student should complete a formal complaint, by completing the official Complaint Application Form, available on Envirotech website. Students who cannot find the form online can get a copy from Envirotech office or request a link from any staff member. The completed form will automatically be sent to the Envirotech relevant staff.

- 7.3. Students should expect a response within 10- 20 working days from the date they lodged their official complaint.

Envirotech management will conduct an internal investigation, and will provide a written response describing the findings, relevant recommendation and actions to be followed. As part of the investigation, students may be contacted by the Compliance Manager to represent their case by phone or face to face. Students will be invited to have a support person present with them if they like.

- 7.4. In case the internal investigation response still doesn't meet the students' satisfaction, they may appeal on the decision, and submit an official appeal by completing the Appeal Form (Available on Envirotech website) to the CEO within 7 working days from receiving the written response for their complaint. Students require to submit their official appeal to [director@envirotech.edu.au](mailto:director@envirotech.edu.au)

- 7.5. Students should expect a response within 10 working days and should know that the CEO may contact them to represent their case by phone or face to face. Students will be invited to have a support person present with them if they like.

The CEO will response in writing to the students with the final decision.

- 7.6. In case students still believe that they have been treated unfair and are not satisfy with the outcome of the internal complaint, they can lodge a complaint with an external mediator

## 8. VSL students

- 8.1. Students who find themselves with a HELP debt due to a provider's unacceptable conduct in relation to their application for a VET Student Loan may be able to apply to have the HELP debt cancelled.

Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, misleading or deceptive conduct; advertising tuition fees for the course where there are reasonable grounds for believing

that the provider will not be able to provide the course for those fees; the use of physical force, or harassment or coercion in connection with the application or enrolment in the course.

Students will need to apply to the department and provide details of what led to the debt being raised and any correspondence or paperwork received about their study and debt. To find out more information about unacceptable conduct remissions, visit the Complaints and Grievances webpage at [www.studyassist.gov.au](http://www.studyassist.gov.au)

- 8.2. Students who applied for re-credit, after their census date and under special circumstances must complete and submit a written appeal by completing the online Appeal Form available on Envirotech website. Above procedures will apply.
- 8.3. It is at the discretion of Envirotech to determine whether the student has sufficiently demonstrated compelling or special circumstances in which to grant a re-credit of the Help Debt. If a student has not sufficiently demonstrated their circumstances, they will be offered an appeal of the decision.
- 8.4. When an appeal is submitted, the CEO will review both the initial request and the appeal.
  - 8.4.1. If on appeal the student does not demonstrate sufficient evidence, the initial decision will remain.
  - 8.4.2. If on appeal the student satisfactorily demonstrates sufficient evidence, the CEO can decide to re-credit the student in full or partially.
  - 8.4.3. Under the re-crediting section 68 of the ACT, applications must be made within 12 months after the census date.
- 8.5. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, they may seek additional support through the Department of Education VET Student Loan Ombudsman within the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman to manage and investigate complaints regarding the VSL program. Appeals lodged to the Department must be within 5 years after census date.