

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS

The complaints and appeals procedure of Explore English will ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a constructive and timely manner at no cost to the complainant.

Handling Complaints Involves:

Any parties who have a complaint in the first instance are encouraged to approach the respondent with the object of informal resolution. However, it is recognised that this is not always appropriate, e.g. in cases of sexual harassment. If the complaint is not able to be resolved at this stage, the individual with the complaint can consult, in confidence, any one of the following staff members:

- Teacher
- Student Welfare officer
- Director of the Language Centre
- Managing Director

The staff member approached by the complainant will:

- Discuss the details of the complaint or problem with the complainant.
- Discuss the options available for resolution.
- Help obtain any necessary information.
- Assist the complainant in dealing with the problem themselves if this seems appropriate and acceptable or,

If the staff member believes he or she is not the most appropriate person to assist the complainant, they will refer and/or accompany the complainant to another staff member.

Where it has not been possible to resolve the complaint informally, the complainant(s), together with the person assisting, may seek the advice and assistance of the Student Welfare officer. With the concurrence of the complainant(s), the Student Welfare officer may take appropriate steps to resolve the matter informally or, with the concurrence of the complainant(s) and the respondent(s), the Student Welfare officer may call together those persons involved in the complaint or who might assist in its resolution with the aim of solving the problem to the satisfaction of the complainant(s).

A nominee of the student may be included at any stage of informal resolution processes if the student so chooses with the nominee being appointed by the student.

If the matter is unable to be resolved at this level, the complaint can be formalised in writing to the Student Welfare officer and emailed to welfare@exploreenglish.edu.au. If the complaint is made verbally, the Student Welfare officer must summarise the complaint in writing and have it signed off by the person making the complaint. The Student Welfare officer will respond in writing within three working days acknowledging that he/she has received the complaint.

The Student Welfare officer will investigate the matter and the complainant will be given an opportunity to attend an interview and to formally present his or her case which may include the respondent. A nominee of the student may be included at any stage of formal resolution processes if the student so chooses with the nominee, who is not a legal practitioner, being appointed by the student.

At the end of the hearing the outcome will be communicated in writing, including reasons for the decision, to all concerned parties. Under normal circumstances the complainant can expect an outcome within three working days, however if an outcome takes longer the complainant will be kept informed on the progress

In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, he/she can appeal in writing to the Director of the Language Centre or the Managing Director.

If the complainant finds no satisfactory outcome with the internal Explore English Complaint and Appeals process then students can request mediation through the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO).

The contact details for OSO are as follows:

Overseas Students Ombudsman

GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601
P: +61 2 6276 0111
F: +61 2 6276 0123
www.oso.gov.au
ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, Explore English will immediately implement any decision, and/or corrective and preventative action required.

About the Process:

- The relevant Explore English staff member (as per the matrix) will investigate the appeal
- The investigation may involve contacting the parties who were involved in making the decision and allowing them to respond in writing in relation to the appeal, alternatively a meeting may be arranged with all parties involved. The student will have the right to appoint an independent nominee to attend all discussions
- At the end of the investigation the outcome will be communicated in writing, including reasons for the decision, to all concerned parties (within three working days)

If the student disagrees with the outcome of the appeal, they can request mediation through the Overseas Students Ombudsman. If the internal or any external appeals process results in a decision that supports the student, Explore English will immediately implement any decision, and/or corrective and preventative action.

Additional Notes:

All matters will be treated with confidentiality, and professional respect at all times.

The original written complaint/appeal together with a copy of the acknowledgement and any responses or correspondence related to the complaint/appeal is retained in the student's hard file record and the Complaints and Appeals file.

The students enrolment is maintained and except in exceptional circumstances approved by Department of Education or DIBP the student is expected, and advised to continue attending classes, while the appeal is in progress.

If a student appeal relates to Explore English reporting them to DIBP for breach of Visa conditions is dismissed by the Explore English, irrespective of any further actions or appeals entered into by the student, Explore English will continue with step one of the process