



Complaints and Appeals Policy

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1. Purpose

Orange College (OC) has a complaints policy to address concerns, inform continuous improvement, and manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of:

- OC, its trainers, assessors or other staff,
- A third-party providing services on the OC's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff or
- A student of OC.

OC has an appeals policy to manage requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by the OC or a third- party providing services on the OC's behalf.

This process provides opportunity for complaints and appeals to be forwarded to OC management in a timely and confidential manner.

The policy has been developed in accordance with Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2025 (SRTOs 2025) Outcome Standards 2.7 and 2.8 and The National Code Standard 10.

2. Scope

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with OC's services or conduct, while an appeal is a formal request for the review of a decision made by OC or its representatives about a complaint. Each complaint and appeal are allocated to the resolution officer per department and all appeals regarding a complaint will be allocated to the Compliance department or training manager.

The objective of this policy is to ensure learners/students are provided with clear processes in registering or lodging complaints or an appeals. It ensures all parties involved are kept informed of the resulting actions and outcomes.

3. Policy

OC's Complaints and Appeals policy is guided by the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, and complies with the SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standards 2.7 and 2.8. The policy ensures that:

- All complaints and appeals processes are fair, confidential, and handled promptly and objectively [Outcome Standards 2.7a(ii) and 2.8a(ii)]
- Information about complaints and appeals is publicly available and accessible to all VET students via the OC website, student handbook, and upon request (Outcome Standard 2.7b; 2.8b);
- Students are supported in lodging complaints or appeals, including the right to be accompanied by a third party (family member, friend, interpreter, or support person) (Outcome Standard 2.7c);
- OC maintains a formal system to manage feedback, complaints, and appeals, including matters involving third parties delivering services on behalf of OC [Outcome Standard 2.7a(i); 2.8a(i)];
- Complaints and appeals must be acknowledged within 5 working days, with a resolution goal of within 20 working days, and must commence within 10 working days of receipt [Outcome Standard 2.7a(iii); 2.8a(iii)];
- If more than 60 days is required to process a complaint or appeal, OC will inform the student in writing, provide reasons for the delay, and regularly update them on progress [Outcome Standard 2.7a(iii); 2.8a(iii)]

Specifically, OC ensures that:

- Complaints may be lodged about the organisation, its staff, contractors, or any third parties acting on OC's behalf [Outcome Standard 2.7a(i)];
- Appeals regarding any decision by OC or its third-party providers, if any, that adversely affects the student may be submitted [Outcome Standard 2.8a(i)];
- Complainants and appellants receive a written explanation of decisions and reasons at each stage of the process (Outcome Standard 2.7d; 2.8c)

- An independent and impartial party will review the matter upon request if internal processes fail to resolve it, at no or low cost to the student [Outcome Standard 2.7a(iv); 2.8a(iv)];
- Investigations are impartial, with decision-makers recused in cases of real or perceived conflict of interest [Outcome Standard 2.7a(ii); 2.8a(ii)];
- All parties involved have the opportunity for a fair hearing, are informed of allegations or claims made, and may respond before a final decision is taken [Outcome Standard 2.7a(ii); 2.8a(ii)];
- Legal avenues remain open to students outside of OC's internal procedures [Outcome Standard 2.7a(iv); 2.8a(iv)];
- All outcomes are documented, communicated in writing, and securely stored in the Ticketing system (Outcome Standard 2.7d; 2.8c)
- No complaints or appeals will be accepted more than six (6) months after the course completion date (defined as the CoE end date or date of cancellation, whichever is earlier);
- The outcomes of complaints and appeals are reviewed to inform continuous improvement of OC's operations, training, and student support services (Outcome Standard 2.7e; 2.8d).

4. Complaints Procedure

4.1 Informal

If a learner/student has a complaint, they are encouraged to speak immediately with OC staff to resolve the issue. If the complainant is not satisfied with how the issue has been resolved, they will be asked to file a formal complaint following the Formal Complaints Procedure.

4.2 Formal

All formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the Complaints and Appeals form or via the Complaint Ticket System.

1. Complaints may relate to any OC staff member, student, or third-party service provider acting on behalf of OC. Formal complaints must be made in writing within 20 days of the incident using the Complaint ticket available through the ticketing system.
2. A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person, such as a friend, family member, colleague, or interpreter, at any stage of the process, regardless of the nature of the Complaint/Appeal.
3. OC staff will assist students in understanding and lodging complaints where needed. A submitted Complaints ticket will constitute a formal complaint from the complainant.
4. If additional documents are requested from the student, he/she will need to submit additional documents within 5 days from the date requested.
5. The Complaint Ticket System operates as the central Complaints and Appeal Register, and a record of the ticket will be created and maintained in the same as soon as student raises complaint. Upon based receipt of a complaint, OC staff shall assess and classify the matter to determine the appropriate level of response. This assessment includes consideration of:
 - a) Severity: Whether the complaint involves matters such as safety, harassment, discrimination, wellbeing, or legal concerns that require urgent attention.
 - b) Urgency: The timeframe within which the issue requires resolution, particularly where the matter may affect the student's ability to participate in training, access support, or feel safe and respected in the learning environment.
 - c) Nature of the Complaint: Whether the matter relates to training and assessment, staff behaviour, access to support services, administrative processes, or learning facilities.

Following this assessment, a priority level is assigned as follows:

- a) Critical: Complaints with legal, safety, or wellbeing implications requiring immediate action

- b)* High: issues significantly affecting training quality, participant wellbeing, or OC operations, such as trainer conduct or course content concerns
- c)* Medium: matters of moderate concern, including scheduling issues or general administrative matters
- d)* Low: Minor complaints, administrative requests, or feedback not requiring urgent action.

Appropriate escalation processes and timeframes for response will be applied based on the assessed priority.

6. Complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of filing.
7. The Compliance department will have admin access of Complaints and Appeals Ticket System to investigate all complaints outcomes. To facilitate the resolution of the complaint, each department's Complaint Resolution Officer will initiate a transparent and participative investigation to identify the issues. Actions which may be taken include, but are not limited to:
 - a)* Discussing the facts of the complaint with the complainant.
 - b)* Providing written notice to the respondent or to the relevant parties, detailing the nature of the complaint, and offering the opportunity to respond before any decision is made. [Outcome Standard 2.7a(ii)].
 - c)* Facilitating informal mediation between the parties where appropriate and applicable.
 - d)* Conducting individual and private interviews with all parties and any witnesses.
 - e)* Ensuring that all interviews are held privately and confidentially.
 - f)* Communicating the outcome of the process to all parties involved.
 - g)* Seeking the preferred outcome from each of the parties.
8. Assessment-related complaints will be processed in accordance with the Complaints Procedure (Annex - A)
9. Complaints, where possible, are to be resolved within 10 working days of the initial lodgement. If the process requires more than sixty (60) calendar days to be resolved, the complainant will be informed in writing of the reason and be provided with regular updates.
10. A summary of the complaint and its resolution will be recorded in the ticketing system by the Complaint Resolution Officer. Refer to the [summary example document](#) for more information.
11. The complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their complaint, as well as reasons for the decision, in a resolution letter. (National Code Standard 10)
12. All documentation related to the complaint will be stored in the Ticketing system to maintain records securely. [SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standard 2.7(d)]
13. The Complaint Resolution Officer will ensure that any systemic issues identified through the complaint are referred for review, and progressing through continuous improvement processes, as appropriate. (SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standard 2.7).
14. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, they will be advised of their right to access the appeals process.
15. All complaints will be handled in strict confidence and will not affect or bias the progress of the student's ongoing enrolment, training progress, or future training. The student enrolment must be maintained whilst the complaint is in progress.
16. Where the complaint is upheld, OC will implement the required corrective action within 28 days and advise the student of the outcome.

5. Appeals

OC ensures that effective appeal processes are available to all students where decisions made by the College or any third party delivering services on its behalf adversely affect the student. Appeals are afforded the same level of structure, fairness, and responsiveness as complaints. Appeals may relate to, but are not limited to

- Complaint's outcome
- Assessment decisions
- Reported breaches of academic performance
- Deferral, suspension, or cancellation of enrolment

5.1 Appeals Procedure

All appeals shall follow this procedure:

1. Appeals must be made in writing within 20 days of notification of the assessment decision or complaint outcome using the Appeals Ticketing System.
2. A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person throughout the appeal process, regardless of the nature of the same.
3. The Appeals Ticket System is designed to operate as a Complaints and Appeal Register where the record of the ticket will be made as soon as a student raises an appeal. The submission of an appeal ticket constitutes a formal appeal by a student.
4. If additional evidence is required from the student, he/she will need to submit additional documents in 5 days from the date requested.
5. The Compliance department will have Admin access of all the Appeals Ticket System to manage and investigate all Appeals.
6. Appeals will be acknowledged in writing within five (5) working days and resolved, where practicable, within 10 working days of the initial application. If resolution of the appeal requires 60 calendar days, OC will inform the student in writing, explain the delay, and provide regular updates.
7. Procedural fairness will be ensured for all parties. Relevant parties will be informed in writing of the appeal and given a fair opportunity to respond. [SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standard 2.8(a)(ii)].
8. Appeals will be independently reviewed by a party not involved in the original decision. If requested, students will be referred to an external, independent party at no or low cost [SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standard 2.8(a)(iv)].
9. In all cases, appeal outcomes and its justifications will be endorsed by the Compliance department to the appellant in writing (National Code Standard 10)
10. A summary of the appeal will be recorded in the Appeals ticket by the Compliance department, Training Manager or Administration Manager.
11. Upon finalising of the appeal, all the documentation and further action required will be entered in the Ticketing system to maintain records securely [SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standard 2.8(c)]
12. Any substantiated appeal outcomes will inform the review of related documents, policies, and procedures, and will be progressed through continuous improvement processes, as appropriate [SRTOs 2025 Outcome Standard 2.8(d)].
13. If the outcome is not to the satisfaction of the complainant, they may seek an appointment with a CEO Delegate. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, they will be advised of their right to access OC's external arbitrator within 10 working days. The complainant can access an external appeal process at their own cost (See Appendix 1). Complainants must ensure they have accessed the internal processes first. (National Code Standard 10).
14. Appeals will remain confidential and will not prejudice the student's current or future enrolment. The student enrolment must be maintained whilst an appeal is in progress, unless the College fears for the safety and wellbeing of the student and/or people the student may encounter any extenuating circumstances* in which case OC may cancel the student's enrolment. The student, however, can still appeal from his or her Australian residence or home country
15. The Student has the right to formally present their case to OC at no cost.

16. OC will immediately implement any decision or recommendation in favour of the student through the internal or external appeals process. (National Code Standard 10)
17. Where the complaint or appeal is upheld, OC will implement the required corrective action within 28 days and advise the student of the outcome.

5.2 Appeal Against Assessment Outcome Decision

Assessment appeals shall follow the procedure below:

1. Where a student has already lodged an assessment query to get his/her assessment reviewed and is still not satisfied with the reviewed assessment decision outcome, they can further appeal the decision formally by completing an assessment appeals form available in the college website at www.orange.edu.au.
2. The student will be advised of their right to appeal the decision, referring them to the Complaints and Appeals policy and providing them access to the Appeals Ticket System.
3. The training manager shall be notified and shall seek details from the Trainer/Assessor involved and any other relevant parties. A decision shall be made regarding the appeal, indicating either the assessment decision stands or details of a possible reassessment by a 'third party'. The Training Manager will nominate, within five working days, an independent assessor or panel to review the appeal and decide the outcome.

5.3 Appealing to report breach of academic performance.

Academic Performance appeals shall follow the below procedure:

1. Where a student wishes to appeal the decision of OC to notify Department of Home Affairs (DHA) of a breach of academic requirements, the student shall fill up Appeals Ticket outlining the details of their appeal. The student should be able to explain and justify circumstances that have lead to a breach of their requirements and must be able to provide evidence of the same
2. The Administration Manager shall be notified, shall seek details regarding the initial documentation of the breach, and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal. After meetings and/or interviews are held with all relevant parties, the appeal outcome shall be determined.
3. Where a student has decided to access the appeals process in relation to a reportable breach, OC will not report the breach until the appeals process has been undertaken. OC is required to maintain all relevant responsibilities until the breach has been reported to DHA via PRISMS.

5.4 Appealing against deferrals, suspension or cancellation of enrolment decisions.

Deferrals, Suspension or Cancellation appeals shall follow the procedure below:

1. Where a student wishes to appeal a decision relating to deferment, suspension, or cancellation of their enrolment, the student shall lodge an appeal by completing an Appeals Form outlining their reasons and attaching supporting evidence for the appeal.
2. The Administration Manager shall be notified and shall seek details regarding the initial documentation of the decision and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal.
3. Where a student has decided to access the appeals process in relation to deferment, suspension or cancellation of their enrolment, OC will not update the student's course status on PRISMS until the appeals process is completed. OC is required to maintain all relevant responsibilities until the change in enrolment status has been recorded in PRISMS.

5.5 Appealing against a complaint outcome.

Complaint appeals shall follow the procedure below:

1. Where a student wishes to appeal a decision related to a complaint outcome, the student shall lodge an appeal by completing an Appeals Form outlining their reasons, together with supporting evidence for the appeal.

2. The Compliance department shall be notified and shall seek details regarding the initial documentation of the decision, details from any other parties involved and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal.

All complaints and appeals are managed with impartiality, transparency, respect for natural justice, and procedural fairness, ensuring parties have the opportunity to respond and be heard.

6. Administration

All complaints and appeals will be discussed at Management Review Meetings for continuous improvement of the College's processes. The Compliance department will investigate each complaint/appeal outcome and, on the basis of the complaints/appeals, will advise if continuous improvement of the processes is required or not. Details concerning the scope of the Complaints and Appeals Policy are to be clearly displayed throughout the organisation and on the OC website.

Appendix 1

OC acknowledges the need for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant or appellant and the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter. Costs associated with independent parties to review a matter must be covered by the complainant/appellant unless the decision to include an independent party was made by OC.

Complainants have a number of external complaint or appeal options, including:

Resolution Institute

Email: infoaus@resolution.institute

Contact Number: 1800 651 650

Website: <https://www.resolution.institute/>

Consumer Affairs Victoria

P: 1300 558 181

consumers@justice.vic.gov.au

www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Administrative Appeals Tribunal

P: 1300 366 700

<http://www.aat.gov.au>

Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria

P: 03 9603 8370 or 1800 658 528

dscv@justice.vic.gov.au

<https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/about-us/contact-us>

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

P: 1300 891 848 F: 1300 891 858

information@veohrc.vic.gov.au

<https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/>

Training Complaints Hotline

If a complainant is not comfortable with disclosing a complaint, then they can call the National Training Complaints Hotline on 1800 000 674 and lodge the complaint with them. They will advise the complainant of what actions may be required to deal with the complaint.

<http://www.industry.gov.au/skills/nationaltrainingcomplaintshotline/Pages/default.aspx>

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

Please note: ASQA do not investigate complaints about refunds, apprenticeships or traineeships or personal disputes between

students and trainers/assessors. ASQA is not able to act as the independent third party for reviewing complaints.

Domestic Students:

<https://asqaportal.asqa.gov.au/Make-a-Report/?From=complaint>

International Students/Overseas Students:

<https://asqaportal.asqa.gov.au/Make-a-Report/?From=complaint>

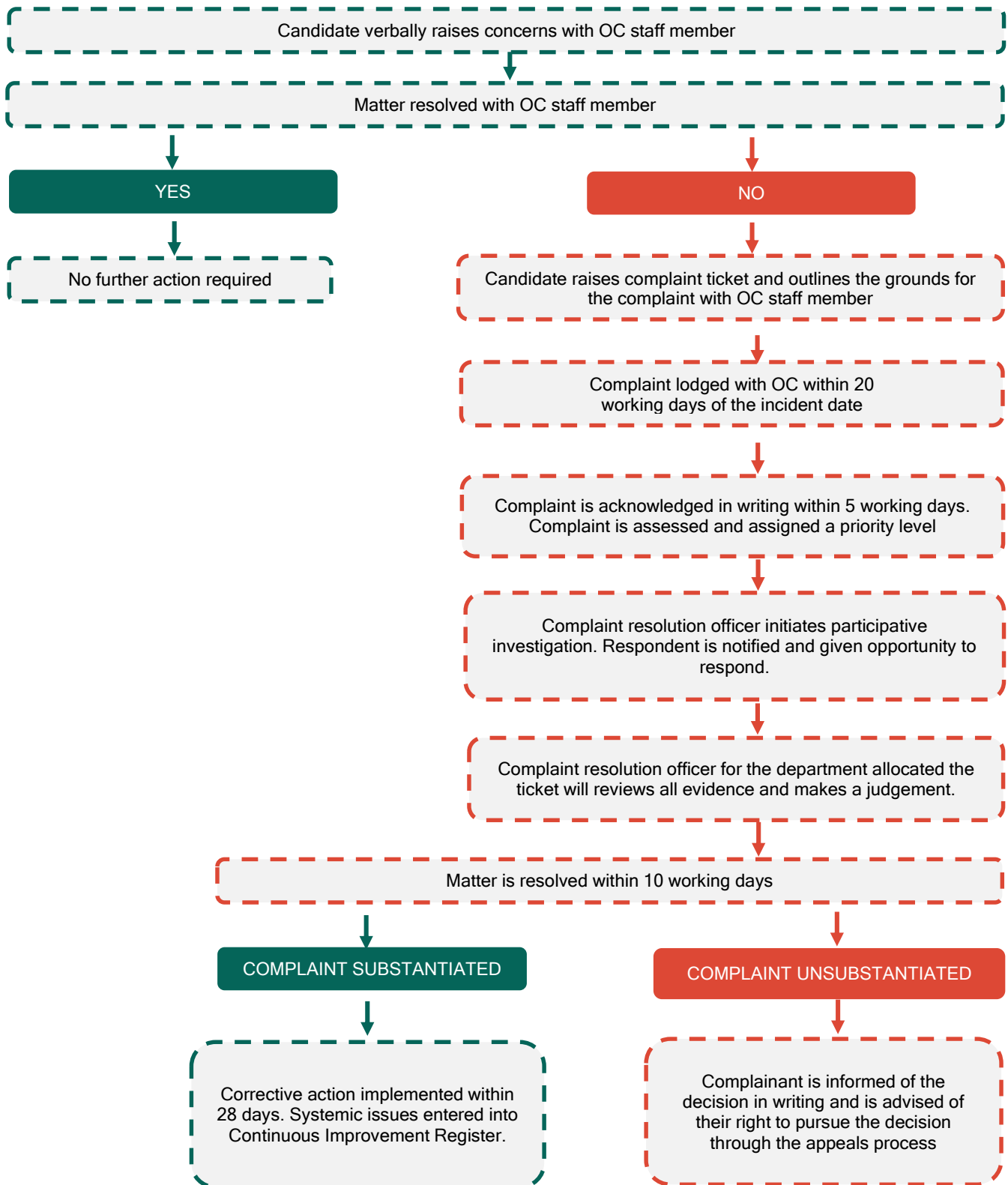
Overseas Students Ombudsman

Tel: 1300 362 072

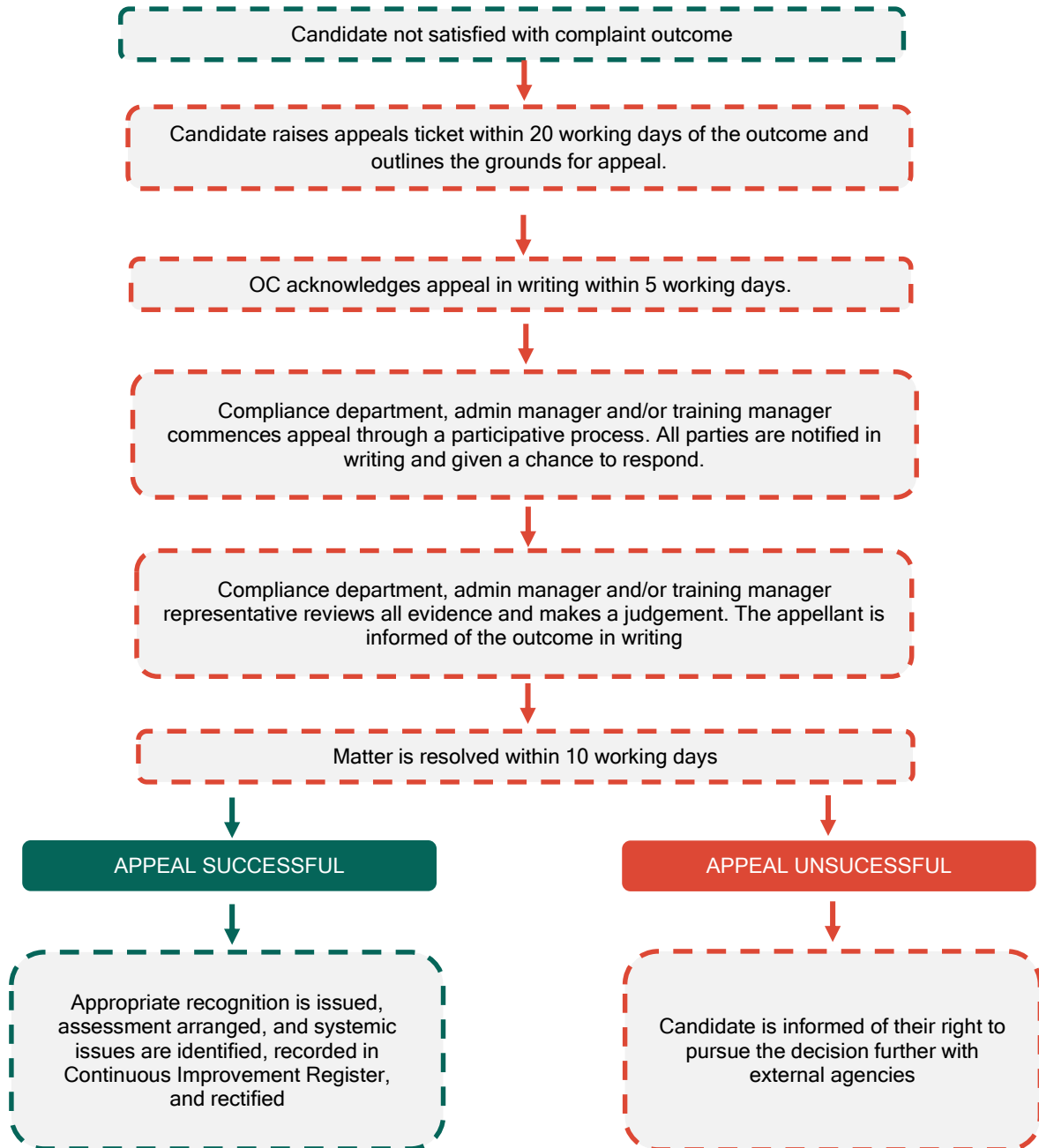
Website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

The Overseas Students Ombudsman investigates complaints about problems that overseas students have with private education and training in Australia. The Ombudsman also provides information about best practice complaints handling to help private education providers manage internal complaints effectively. It also publishes reports on problems and broader issues in international education that we identify through investigations.

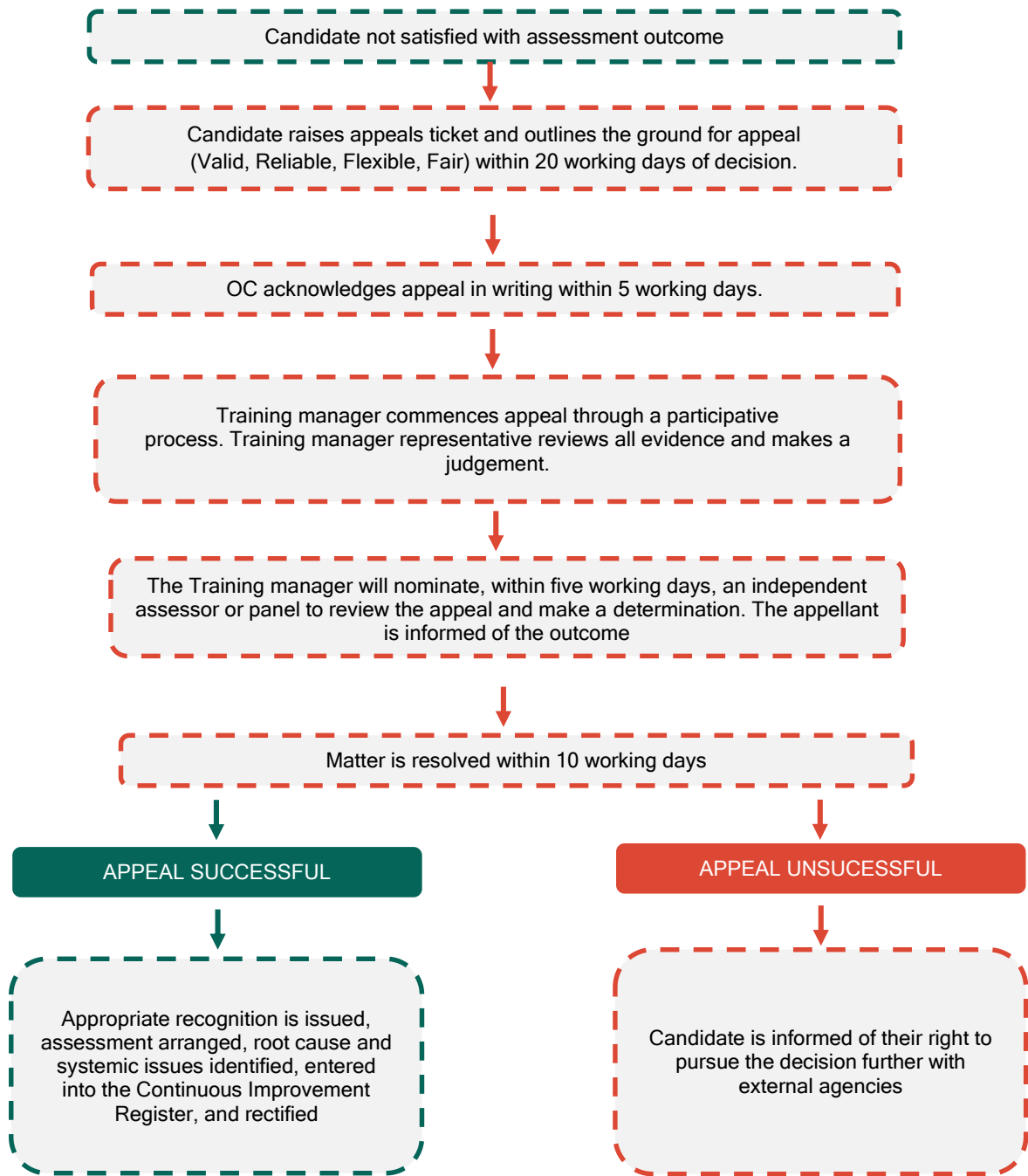
ANNEX A: Complaints Process



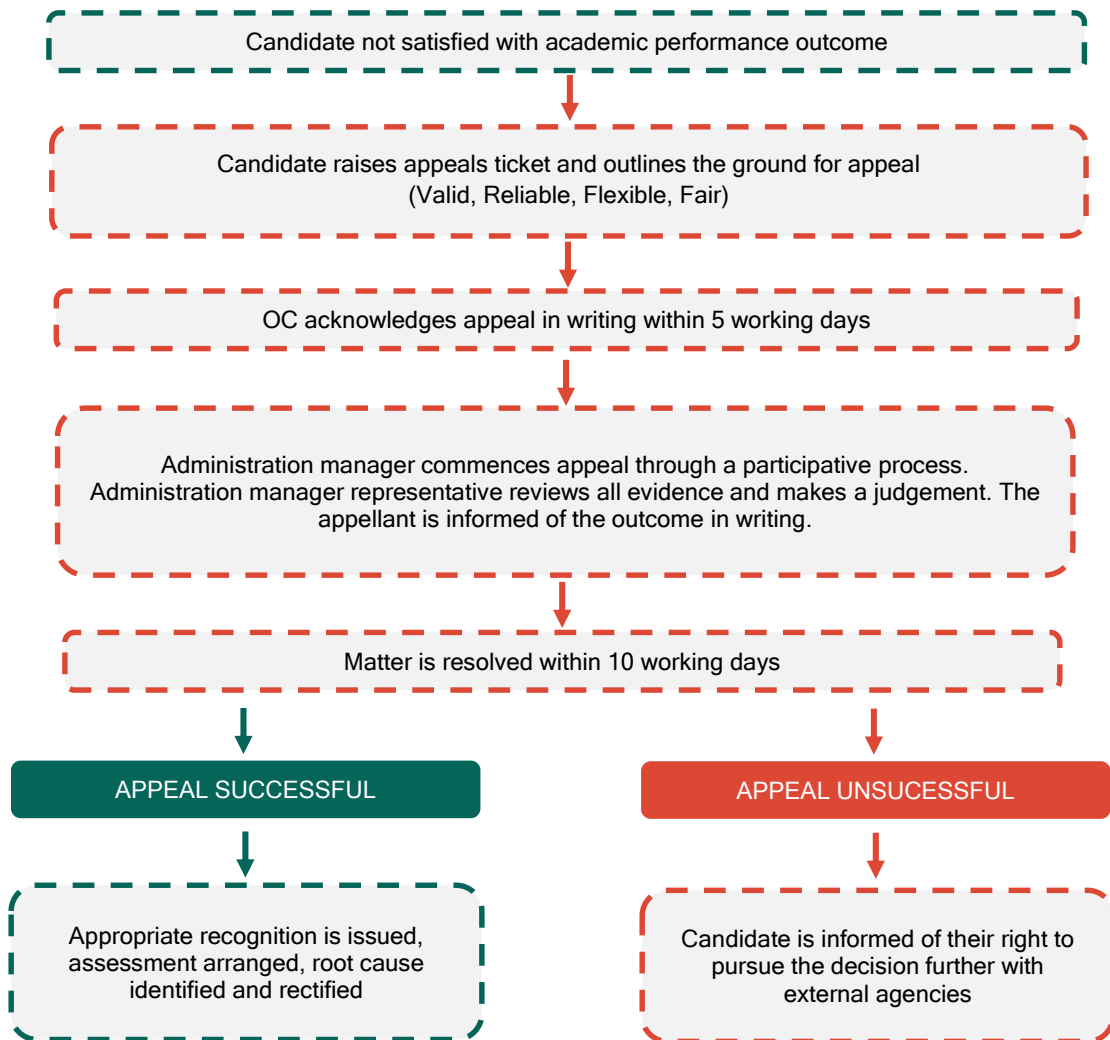
ANNEX B: Complaints Appeals Process



ANNEX C: Appeal Against Assessment Outcome Decision Process

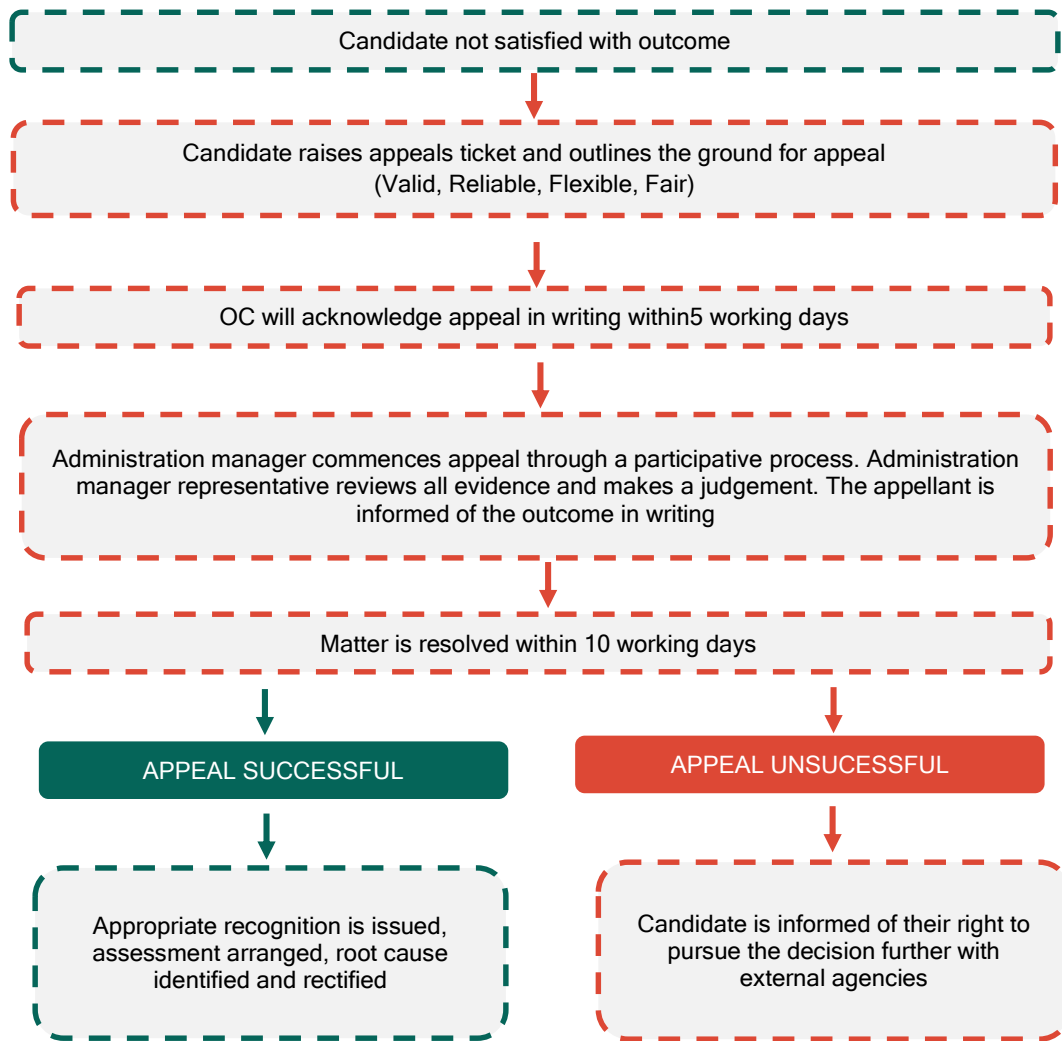


ANNEX D: Appealing to report breach of academic performance process



Student enrolment is maintained in PRISMS during the appeal process.

ANNEX E: Appealing against deferments, suspension or cancellation of enrolment decisions process



Student enrolment is maintained in PRISMS during the appeal process.