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Contact Officer: Compliance Manager	Review Date: As required by legislative instrument, change of relevant standards, internal or external review.

VET STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES (ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC)

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document the following applies:

The organisation refers to Shafston House College Limited (National RTO Provider Code: 32004), trading as Service Skills Academy and Mary McConnel School of Early Childhood.

VET Quality Framework refers to the standards, financial and administrative requirements applying to the delivery of vocational training by organisations registered by the national VET regulator.

Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003 refers to the Act which provides for the Commonwealth to give financial support for higher education and certain vocational education and training:

- a) Through grants and other payments made largely to higher education providers and:
- b) Through financial assistance to students usually in the form of loans.

VET Guidelines 2015 refers to the purposes of clause 6(1A) of Schedule 1A to the HESA Act:

- a) the kinds of bodies that may be approved as a VET provider under clause 6(1A) of Schedule 1A to the Act;
- b) the requirements that a body must comply with to be approved under clause 6(1A) of Schedule 1A to the Act.

Academic grievances relate to student academic progress, assessment, subject/unit content or academic/attendance records in a program or course of study.

Non-Academic grievances do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the Student. Non-academic grievances generally arise from events occurring at a provider or from business decisions made by a provider.

Complainant refers to Students (as defined above) who have lodged a grievance or complaint with Service Skills Academy or Mary McConnel School of Early Childhood.

1. Overview

The organisation is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling procedure for all Students in accordance with the Australian VET quality framework. This policy covers both academic and non-academic grievances and appeals.

- 1.1 An informal complaint or grievance** is a concern about academic matters, perceived discrimination, a situation, a process, a person or people, a facility or a support service provided by the organization, which the student brings to the attention of the organisation in an informal way, i.e. it is spoken about to a staff member, not submitted in writing.
- 1.2 A formal complaint or grievance takes** place if grievance cannot be resolved informally (for example, the affected parties discussing the matter), and is written down for official processing.
- 1.3 Academic matters** include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content, RPL application results, Credit and Credit Transfer application results or awards in a VET course of study.
- 1.4 Non-academic matters** include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a course and include grievances in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the student. Non-academic grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider.

2. Responsibility

The Principal Executive Officer/Director is responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation and Students and Complainants are made aware of its availability.

3. General principles

These principles, which will be adhered to by the organisation and apply to all stages of this grievance procedure:

- The Complainant and any respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
- The VET Student Grievance Policy and Procedure is assessable to students via the Service Skills Academy and Mary McConnel School of Early Childhood websites.
- A Complainant shall have access to this grievance procedure at no cost.
- The Complainant and any respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) at any relevant meeting.
- The Complainant and any respondent will not be discriminated against or victimized.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing.
- The Complainant will be given a written statement of the outcome of the complaint, including full details of the reasons for the outcome.
- If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Grievance Review Panel, they are then able to take their case to an external independent body. Complainants may refer their appeal to the Queensland Ombudsman's Office.

Contact details for the Queensland Ombudsman are:

Queensland Ombudsman
 Level 18, 53 Albert Street
 Brisbane Qld 4000
 GPO Box 3314, Brisbane Qld 4001
 Tel: (07) 3005 7000
 1800 068 908 (Toll Free for outside of Brisbane)

- Any recommendations made by the Ombudsman will be implemented within 30 days of the Ombudsman's decision.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and retained by Shafston House College Limited, 46 Thorn Street, Kangaroo Point QLD 4169. Parties to a complaint will be given appropriate access to records.

4. Informal Grievance Procedure

Informal grievance raised about an unfavourable and/or unreasonable decision may be made verbally or in writing to the relevant staff member(s) involved.

If a Complainant is uncomfortable with submitting a complaint direct to the involved staff member, proceed to the Formal Grievance and Appeal Procedure.

5. Formal Grievance and Appeal Procedure

5.1 Stage One

Formal grievances for **Academic Matters** should be submitted in writing using the [Student Formal Grievance and Appeal Form for Academic Decision](#) to the Executive Director (Academic) (Phone: 07 3249 4182) at Shafston House College Limited, 46 Thorn Street, Kangaroo Point QLD 4169.

Formal grievances for all **Non-Academic Matters** should be submitted in writing using the [Student Formal Grievance and Appeal Form](#) to the CEO/Director (Phone: 07 3249 4101) at Shafston House College Limited, 46 Thorn Street, Kangaroo Point QLD 4169.

The following information needs to be provided in writing on or accompanying the form:

- 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
- e. The relevant staff member will assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within 10 working days. The Complainant will be advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

The relevant staff member will assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision within 10 working days. The Complainant will be advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

5.2 Stage Two

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing using the [Student Formal Grievance and Appeal Form for Academic Decision](#) or using the [Student Formal Grievance and Appeal Form](#) with the Student Grievance Committee at Shafston House College Limited, 46 Thorn Street, Kangaroo Point QLD 4169.

The Complainant's appeal will be determined by the Grievance Review Panel who will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The Complainant will be advised in writing by the Student Grievance Committee of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 10 working days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

5.3 Stage Three

Domestic students:

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two and they are a domestic student studying within Australia they may lodge an external appeal to the Queensland Ombudsman. Refer to the Queensland Ombudsman's website <https://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/> or phone (07) 3005 7000 or Toll Free (for outside of Brisbane on 1800 068 908).

Overseas students:

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal and they are an overseas student then they may lodge an external appeal by contacting the Overseas Students Ombudsman.

The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their training provider. Refer to the Overseas Students Ombudsman website www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.

Remedial action:

The organisation agrees to be bound by any external reviewer's recommendations and the Principal Executive Officer/ Director will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within 30 days of receipt of the report from the external reviewer.

6. Publication

This *Student Grievance Policy and Procedure (Academic and Non-academic)* will be made available to students and those seeking to enrol with the organisation through publication on its website/s.

7. Approval

This Policy and Procedure was agreed to and ratified by the VET Management Group on 19 December 2016.

8. Essential Supporting Documents

Internal

Student Formal Grievance and Appeal Form for Academic Decision
Student Formal Grievance and Appeal Form (Non Academic Issues)

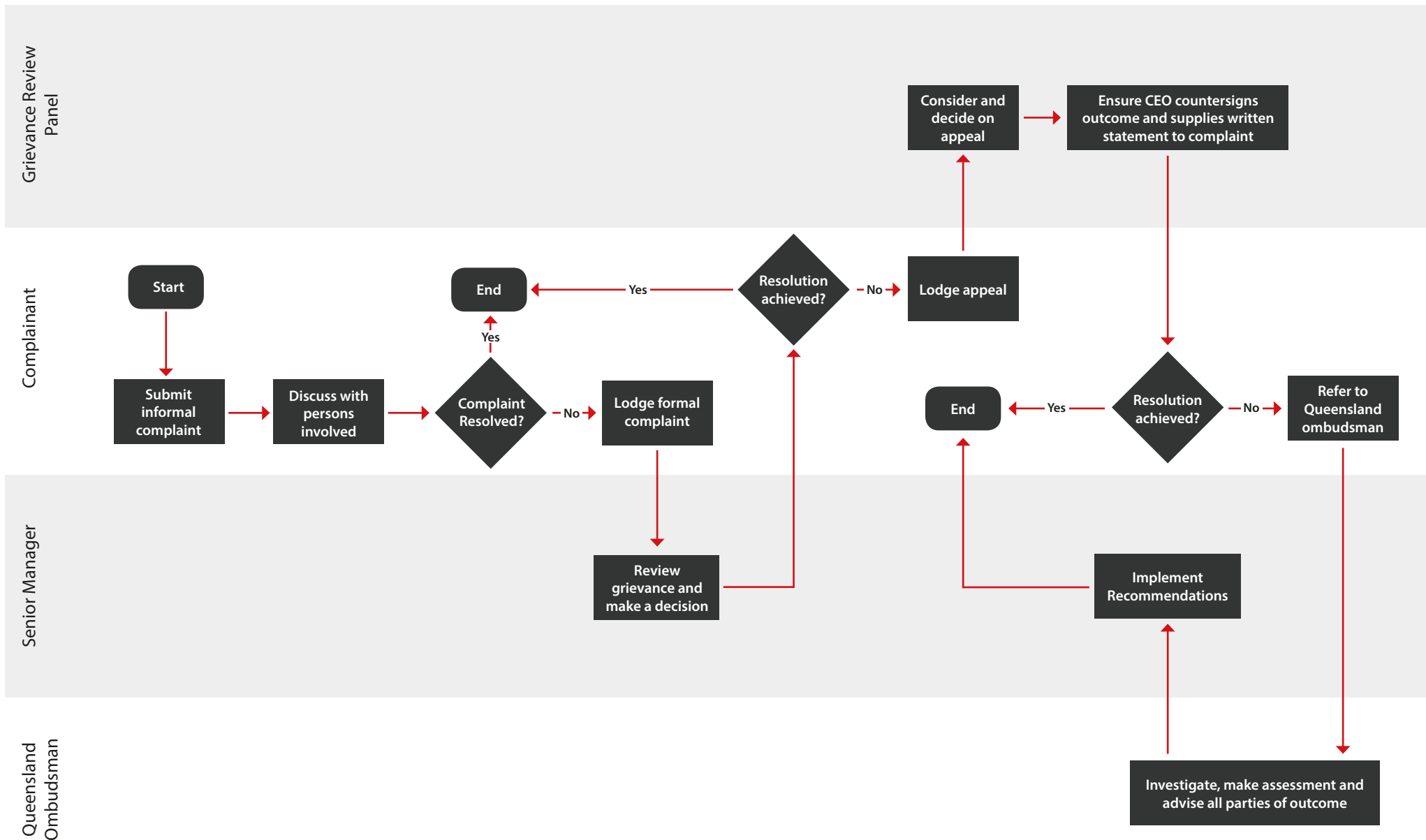
Legislative/Statutory Requirements

Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations 2015
Higher Education Support Act 2003
Higher Education Support Act – VET Guidelines 2015

Workflows

The following workflow diagram and procedural tables describe the steps for enacting the VET Student Grievance Policy and Procedures (Academic and Non-Academic).

WORKFLOW



DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date Approved	Effect Date	Approved By	Brief Description
1.0	01/08/2012	06/08/2012	Director	Document creation
2.0	N/A	18/12/2014	QA Manager	Minor change – Logo/Style
3.0	N/A	May 2014	QA Manager	Minor change – Office Title
4.0	10/10/2014	10/10/2014	Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove ref to HESA Act 2003 to broaden scope to all VET students and courses (Not only VFH eligible students). Include ref SNR 16.7 Formatting/Style changes in line with version control principles
4.1	19/07/2016	22/07/2016	Compliance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-brand Addition of MMSEC to policy
4.2	22/12/2016	22/12/2016	Executive Director (Academic)	Add ref to HESA Act 2003 to broaden scope to all VET students, including VFH and VSL.
4.3	03/03/2017	06/03/2017	Executive Director (Academic)	Rebrand Addition of workflow chart