

# Complaints about providers subject to legal action in the Federal Court

If you have a complaint about a VET FEE-HELP debt with Phoenix Institute of Australia Pty Ltd (Phoenix), Cornerstone Investment Aust Pty Ltd (Empower), Australian Institute of Professional Education (AIPE) or Unique International College (Unique), you should read this fact sheet.

## Providers subject to legal action

The four providers listed above are currently the subject of legal action in the Federal Court of Australia by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and the Department of Education and Training (DET). The legal proceedings relate to the conduct of providers when enrolling students during specific periods. The providers and periods are:

- Unique 1 July 2014–30 September 2015
- Empower 1 March 2014–30 June 2015
- AIPE 1 May 2013–1 December 2015
- Phoenix 19 January–November 2015.

Orders are being sought for the providers to cancel the debts of students who were enrolled within the above periods and repay the Commonwealth.

It is expected that these Court proceedings will take some time. There is no guarantee that the outcome will result in the cancellation of debts incurred during the above periods.

## How we can help you

If you have a complaint about your VET FEE-HELP loan with one of the above providers please contact us directly.

It is important when you contact us to have the following documents available:

- correspondence between you and the provider
- enrolment documents (such as a Commonwealth Assistance Notice)
- notes of telephone conversations between you and the provider.

## Complaints about enrolment practices

If your complaint includes issues relating to how you enrolled in (signed up to) the course you have a debt for, we will generally not investigate your complaint. This is

### Contact us

[ombudsman.gov.au/vslo](http://ombudsman.gov.au/vslo)  
1300 362 072

The Ombudsman has offices in:

- » Adelaide
- » Brisbane
- » Canberra
- » Melbourne
- » Perth
- » Sydney

### Steps to make a complaint with us:

1. Gather any documents or evidence about your enrolment.
2. Contact us to see if we can help.
3. Regularly seek updates from the ACCC by visiting [acc.gov.au/media/media-releases](http://acc.gov.au/media/media-releases)

because your debt may be affected by the Court's decision. However, our Office is interested in tracking these complaints and may be able to assist you in other ways, such as:

- providing you with further information about your VET FEE-HELP debt
- advising you of the best place to receive updates
- discussing your options while the Court case is ongoing
- discussing your options when the Court case and proceedings have concluded.

### Complaints about other matters

If your complaint does not relate to issues about how you were enrolled, please contact us and we may be able to help you.

For more information about how to lodge a complaint, and what information you'll need to provide, read the [How to Raise a Complaint fact sheet](#).

### Updates on the legal action

To receive updates on the ACCC and DET legal action against the four providers, regularly visit [acc.gov.au/media/media-releases](http://acc.gov.au/media/media-releases)

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More information is available at [ombudsman.gov.au](http://ombudsman.gov.au).

Please note: This document is intended as a guide only. For this reason, the information should not be relied on as legal advice or regarded as a substitute for legal advice in individual cases. To the maximum extent permitted by the law, the Commonwealth Ombudsman is not liable to you for any loss or damage suffered as a result of reliance on this document. For the most up-to-date versions of cited Acts, please refer to the [Federal Register of Legislation](#).