



How to raise a complaint

If you have a complaint about your VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans provider, you may be able to lodge a complaint with us. Read this fact sheet first to see how to raise a complaint with your provider and with our Office.

Contact your provider first

You should try to resolve the problem with your provider before contacting us. Providers are required to have a two-step internal complaint-handling process that is published on their website.

Generally, we will not investigate complaints until they have been raised with the provider first. If you are dissatisfied with the provider's response to your initial complaint, you can request that the provider reviews its decision.

If this does not resolve your complaint, you can then contact our Office.

If the provider is closed and you cannot follow the complaints process, what you can do depends on whether you have a VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loans debt.

If the provider is closed, and you have a complaint about a VET FEE-HELP debt, you should make a complaint to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations because it has the legislative power to decide if a VET FEE-HELP debt can be re-credited.

If the provider is closed, and you have a complaint about a VET Student Loans debt, you can contact us in the first instance.

Tips to lodge a complaint with your provider

- Check your provider’s website for its complaints policy. This is sometimes called a grievance policy. The policy will give you information on how you can raise your concerns with your provider and how long it will take to respond to your complaint.
- Give your provider clear and relevant information. Usually, you will need to make your complaint in writing.
- Ask for a complaint reference number and keep copies of any written complaints you make.
- Give your provider time to resolve your complaint—at least 10 business days. You can ask the provider to confirm the timeframe when you first lodge the complaint.
- Follow-up with the provider if you do not get a response within the agreed or published timeframe.

How to lodge a complaint—phone or email

If you are not able to complain in writing, you may wish to ask a friend or relative to help you or you can call your provider to organise an alternative way to make your complaint.

If you make a complaint over the phone, or in person, you should note the date and details of any conversations you have with the provider during or immediately after the conversation.

What to include in your complaint

Set out your complaint as clearly and briefly as possible. Remember to:

- **be specific** rather than general
- **focus on the facts** that are relevant to your complaint and avoid going into excessive detail
- attach copies of relevant documents (**evidence**)
- explain what action or **outcome** you would like as a result of your complaint.



Keep records

Keep copies of all correspondence you receive and send, as well as any other important documents or notes. This includes details of telephone calls. It helps if you can easily locate relevant information so you can provide evidence to back up your claims.

Follow up

If the provider does not respond in its published timeframe, call your provider to ask about the progress of your complaint.

If you are unable to sort out the matter after making reasonable efforts to do so, you can consider contacting us.

When to contact the Ombudsman

If you are dissatisfied with your provider's response after you have gone through its internal two-step complaints process, you should consider contacting us by lodging a complaint online at ombudsman.gov.au or calling us on **1300 362 072**.

We may ask you to provide the following information:

- your name, date of birth and contact details
- the name of your provider, your Student ID number and your Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN)
- the date you enrolled in your course
- the date you lodged your complaint with your provider
- a copy of the written complaint you lodged with your provider
- a copy (or details) of your provider's response to your complaint
- the outcome you are seeking by approaching our Office.



Need more information?

We provide information about best practice complaint handling to help education providers manage their internal complaints effectively. We also publish reports on common or systemic issues identified through our investigations. Our resources can be found on our [website ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/vet-student-loan-complaints](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/vet-student-loan-complaints).

How to contact us

Students or their authorised representative can contact our Office and lodge a complaint online at [ombudsman.gov.au](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au) or call 1300 362 072.

For more information visit [ombudsman.gov.au](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au) or call **1300 362 072**

