

SC4: Complaints and Appeals Procedure

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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the Foresite Group's approach to managing dissatisfaction, formal complaints and appeals of students, clients, staff and other members of the community. It provides a transparent approach for all complaints and appeals to be acknowledged, addressed, and recorded in a fair, efficient and confidential manner. The Foresite Group acknowledges and agrees that it will respond to and co-operate in good faith with any complaints handling mechanism or process required by regulatory bodies, for the purpose of resolving student complaints or other issues in relation to the Foresite Groups Training Services.

This procedure ensures compliance with Standard 6 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, and relevant RTO Government Funding Contracts.

Definitions

ASQA means Australian Skills Quality Authority, the national VET regulator and the RTO's registering body

Appeal means a request for a decision made by the RTO to be reviewed

DET means Department of Education and Training

Government Subsidised Training is where the government contributes towards the cost of your training course referred to as a training fee subsidy. It is offered by providers who have a contract with one or more of the State or Territory Governments.

Complaint means a person's formal expression of dissatisfaction with any product or service provided by the RTO.

Services means training, assessment, related educational and support services and/or activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners. It does not include services such as student counselling, mediation or ICT support

Standards means the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 from the VET Quality Framework

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Procedure	Responsibility
<p><i>Report</i> so it includes the outcome of the complaint.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the <i>Continuous Improvement Register</i> if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome. Keep a copy of the complaint and supporting documents in the Complaints file and in the student or staff file (where relevant). 	
<p>D. Review complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the complaints process and its outcome at the next management meeting to consider whether there are any improvements to be made to prevent recurrence. 	Senior Management team

2. Appeals management

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>A. Receive and acknowledge appeal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon receipt of a request for an appeal, acknowledge receipt of appeal in writing by sending a letter to appellant within 3 work days of receipt to ensure appellant receives it within 1 week (7 days). Record details of appeal on the <i>Complaints and Appeals Register/VETtrak Client Event Report</i>. 	CEO and/or Delegate
<p>B. Respond to assessment appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the case of appeals against assessment decisions, the original assessment decision will be reviewed by having an assessor independent of the original decision, mark the assessment task again. The assessment decision made during the appeals process will be considered the actual assessment outcome for the task. Advise the student of the outcome of the appeal. 	CEO and/or Delegate Assessor/s
<p>C. Respond to appeals against non-academic decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon receiving the appeal, the matter is to be investigated to identify the original decision made and the reasons for the decision. Further details from the appellant, respondent, the person who made the original decision, or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face. If the matter is in relation to a third party delivering services on behalf of the Foresite Group, the third party should be involved in the resolution of the appeal. The appellant may request for an independent party (mediator) to be involved in the process. Where this is requested by the appellant, they will bear the costs associated. Additionally, the Foresite Group may decide to call upon an independent mediator to assist to resolve the issue where a decision cannot be reached internally. This will be at the Foresite Group's cost. The Foresite Group's Management team will review all relevant information and decide on an appropriate response. 	CEO and/or Delegate Management team

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: The appeal must be resolved within 4 weeks (28 days) of receipt of the original appeal. If the matter is particularly complex and it is going to take longer to resolve, the appellant must be advised in writing along with reasons for the extra time. They must be provided with progress updates on a weekly basis thereafter until the matter is resolved. 	
<p>D. Advise appellant of the outcome and update records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a written response to the appellant outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Foresite Group's understanding of the reasons for the appeal The steps taken to investigate and resolve the appeal Decisions made about resolution and reasons for the decisions If relevant, areas that have been identified as possible causes of the appeal and improvements to be recommended Their right to, and information on, the external appeals process. Update the <i>Complaints and Appeals Register/VETtrak Client Event Report</i> so it includes the outcome of the appeal. Update the <i>Continuous Improvement Register</i> if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome. Keep a copy of the appeal and supporting documents in the Complaints file and in the student or staff file (where relevant). 	<p>CEO and/or Delegate</p> <p>Quality and Compliance Manager</p> <p>Administration Team</p>
<p>E. Review appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the appeal and its outcome at the next management meeting to consider whether there are any improvements to be made to prevent recurrence. 	<p>Management team</p>

3. External complaint or appeal

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>A. External complaint or appeal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If dissatisfied with the internal processes, the complainant/appellant may initiate an external complaint or appeal. Additionally, a complainant or appellant who has been through the internal processes may request the Foresite Group to appoint an independent party to review the matter. For students, complainants and appellants are able to seek their own external parties at their own cost. Students may access the external services listed in the policy free of charge. The Foresite Group will co-operate fully in the process of the external party to investigate and review the matter. This will include and not be limited to providing full access to the relevant student file/s and the internal complaints records where permitted to do so by law. All staff will be instructed to cooperate in such instances and to give an accurate account of the events as they understand them. 	<p>CEO and/or Delegate</p> <p>Staff as required</p>

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Procedure	Responsibility
<p>B. Review external complaints or appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event that the external party finds in favour of the student, immediately organise a management meeting to discuss the external process and its outcome. At the meeting, discuss the decision made and actions to be taken to implement the decision, including both corrective/preventative actions. Following the meeting immediately implement actions. Advise the student of the outcome of the complaint or appeal and the actions taken. 	<p>CEO and/or Delegate</p> <p>Management team</p>

Supporting Documents

SC4 Complaints and Appeals Policy
 SC4.3 - Complaints and Appeals Flow Chart
 SC4.4 - Complaints and Appeals Form
 VETtrak – Client Event Report
 Complaints and Appeals Register
 Continuous Improvement Register
 QA1.7 - Continuous Improvement Flow Chart

Document Control

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