

# SC 7 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and clients have a fair, simple, and easily understood way to make complaints, or lodge appeals.

The RTO values feedback as an opportunity to improve its training, assessment, and support services.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, prospective students, and clients of the RTO.
- All RTO staff, trainers, assessors, and contractors.
- All training and assessment activities (both nationally recognised and non-accredited) across all delivery modes (classroom, workplace, and online).

## Definitions

**Complaint:** A formal statement of dissatisfaction about the RTO's services, decisions, or actions.

**Appeal:** A request to review or reconsider a decision made by the RTO, such as a complaint, outcome, or assessment result.

**Resolution:** An outcome that fairly addresses the issue raised.

**Independent Reviewer:** A staff member or authorised person who was not involved in the original issue, has no conflict of interest, and is trained in complaints and appeals handling

# Policy Statements

## Fairness and accessibility

- a. The RTO is committed to maintaining a fair, transparent, and accessible system for handling feedback, complaints, and appeals.
- b. All students and clients are entitled to express concerns or dissatisfaction without fear of disadvantage.
- c. The RTO fosters a culture of respect, openness, and responsiveness where issues are viewed as opportunities to learn and improve.

## Lodging complaints and appeals

- a. All complaints and appeals are handled in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- b. Decisions are made objectively, based on evidence, and by individuals not involved in the original matter.
- c. Everyone involved in a complaint or appeal is given a genuine opportunity to be heard and to present their case.

## Transparency and accountability

- a. The RTO ensures that processes for lodging and managing complaints and appeals are clearly communicated, easy to understand, and consistently applied.
- b. Outcomes are documented, explained to the parties involved, and used to inform continuous improvement.
- c. Responsibility for managing complaints and appeals rests with the Senior Management Team, supported by staff who act with integrity and impartiality.

## Confidentiality and support

- a. All matters are managed sensitively and in confidence.
- b. Information is only shared with those directly involved in the resolution process.
- c. Students and clients are encouraged to seek support or bring an advocate to any meeting related to their concern.
- d. The RTO recognises that raising a complaint or appeal can be stressful and ensures that wellbeing and counselling support are made available when required.

## Timeliness and communication

- a. Complaints and appeals are managed promptly and resolved as quickly as possible while ensuring fairness and accuracy.
- b. Students and clients are kept informed of progress and expected timeframes throughout the process.
- c. If additional time is needed, the RTO communicates the reasons and revised timelines in writing.

## Self-assurance

- a. Feedback, complaints, and appeals are viewed as valuable sources of information that help strengthen quality and service delivery.
- b. The RTO analyses trends and outcomes to identify potential improvements in its systems, training, and student experience.

- c. Corrective actions and quality improvements arising from complaints and appeals are documented, monitored, and reviewed through the Quality Assurance framework.

### Right to external review

- a. Students and clients have the right to escalate a complaint or appeal to an external agency if they are not satisfied with the RTO's internal process or outcomes.
- b. The RTO cooperates fully with external regulatory bodies.
- c. External review outcomes are used to enhance internal processes and strengthen compliance.

## Procedures

### A. Procedural fairness

Procedure	Responsibility
<b>1. Communication, fairness, and support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All complaints and appeals will be handled without charge, without prejudice, and without disadvantage to the student.</li> <li>▪ The RTO will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaint or appeal is being processed.</li> <li>▪ Students may nominate a support person or advocate (e.g., family member, counsellor, or legal representative).</li> <li>▪ Interpreters or additional communication support will be provided where needed.</li> <li>▪ All correspondence, records, and evidence will be managed confidentially in line with the Privacy Policy.</li> </ul>	The RTO

### B. Making a complaint

Procedure	Responsibility
<b>1. Attempt to resolve informally</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students or clients are encouraged to first raise their concern informally with the relevant staff member (e.g., trainer, assessor, or support officer).</li> <li>▪ If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the person may proceed to lodge a formal complaint.</li> </ul>	Complainant
<b>2. Lodging a formal complaint</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complaints must be lodged as soon as possible after the incident occurring.</li> <li>▪ The complaint is submitted electronically through the RTO's JotForm Complaints Form, available on the RTO website via the following link <a href="#">Complaints Form</a></li> </ul>	Complainant







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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trends, root causes, and improvement opportunities are discussed at the Quality Assurance Committee.</li> <li>▪ Outcomes are recorded in the Corrective Actions and Improvements Register and followed up to ensure completion.</li> <li>▪ The process is reviewed annually or following significant changes to legislation, contracts, or Standards requirements.</li> </ul> |  |
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## Responsibilities

### The Chief Executive Officer:

- Ensure independence, resources, and cooperation with external reviews.

### Quality and Compliance Manager:

- Oversee complaints and appeals, maintain registers, ensure fairness and timeliness.

### Trainers and Assessors:

- Address informal issues respectfully and escalate where needed.

### Review Panel:

- Conduct impartial reviews and document findings.

### General Manager (Finance and Administration):

- Maintain secure records.

### All Staff:

- Treat all complaints respectfully and report to management.

## Related Documents

SC 7.1 Complaints Process Flowchart

SC 7.2 Complaints and Appeals Register

SC 7.3 Complaints Form

SC 7.4 Appeals Form

QA 1.13 Corrective Actions and Improvements Register

QA 1.1 Quality Assurance Committee Terms of Reference

QA 2 Document Management Policy and Procedures

SC 1 Student Information Policy and Procedures

SC 5 Student Support and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures

TA 6 Assessment Policy and Procedures

## Monitoring and Review

The Quality and Compliance Manager monitors the complaints and appeals process and reviews this policy annually or when required by changes to legislation, standards, or funding contracts.

## Document Control

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