

# Student Complaints & Appeals Policy/ Procedure



## 1. Policy

This policy/ supports Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations in providing a process for complaints and appeals to be heard and actioned. This can be utilised by students (who for the purposes of non-academic grievances includes persons seeking to enrol in a course with the RTO) to submit a complaint, grievance or appeal of an academic or non-academic nature.

Complaints, grievances or appeals of an academic nature include issues related to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study. Those of a non-academic nature cover all other matters including personal information that the RTO holds in relation to an individual.

During all stages the RTO will take all steps to ensure that:

- the complainant and the respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against;
- the complainant has an opportunity to formally present their case and each party to the grievance may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings;
- a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided to all parties to the grievance;
- where the internal or external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, the RTO will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome;
- there is no cost to domestic students utilising these grievance and appeals procedures.

## 2. Procedure

### ***Stage one - Complaint:***

Any complaints should be directed to the course coordinator in the instance in an attempt to address the issue.

Any complaints can be raised:

- Verbally direct with the coordinator/ trainer or Lead co-ordinator
- Via evaluation forms completed at the end of each module
- Directly with the RTO manager either verbal or email

All complaints will be resolved within 5 working days and all efforts will be made to address the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties involved in a timely manner. However if the complaint can not be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties the issue may progress to stage two – grievance.

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## ***Stage two – formal grievance:***

Formal grievances must be discussed and then submitted in writing marked to the attention of the Manager, Learning and Development as follows:

Manager, Learning and Development

PO Box 5

Brighton, SA 5048

Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within five working days and the grievance handling process will commence within ten days of the receipt of the formal grievance and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

The Manager will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve. Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face interview with the complainant. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview the complainant or respondent may ask another person to accompany them.

The Manager will then endeavour to resolve the grievance and provide a feedback to the complainant on the steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within ten working days. The report will also advise the complainant of their right to access the internal appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance.

## ***Stage three – internal appeal:***

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance they may lodge an appeal with the Executive Manager, People and Culture (who is senior to the original decision maker). The Executive Manager will consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within ten working days.

Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these interviews.

Following the consultation, the Executive Manager will provide a feedback to the complainant advising the further steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within ten working days. The feedback will also advise the complainant of their right to access the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal.

## ***Stage four- external appeal:***

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of this formal grievance, they may lodge a complaint with the National Training Complaints hotline. This information can be found at <http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/making-a-complaint.html>.

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### **3. Enrolment status**

Where a student chooses to access this policy and procedure, the RTO will maintain the student's enrolment while the grievance handling process is ongoing.

### **4. Record keeping & confidentiality**

A written record of all grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of at least five years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the Manager. These records will be maintained at 12- 16 King George Ave, Brighton 5048.

All records relating to grievances will be treated as confidential and will be covered by the RTO's *Privacy and Personal Information Policy*.

### **5. Approval, publication and training**

This Policy and Procedure will be made available to students and persons seeking to enrol with the RTO through publication in the Student Handbook and on the RTO's website ([www.minda.asn.au](http://www.minda.asn.au)).

For the purposes of communicating to and training staff, this Policy and Procedure will be included in the Staff Handbook and form part of the staff induction process (which will be facilitated by the Manager).

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