



Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy

NNZMC Pty Ltd — Trading as Industry Skills Solutions

Registered Training Organisation #45974

VERSION 3.6 · JULY 2025 · RTO_POL_4.6

Document control

Version	Date	Author	Summary of change
2.0	02/03/2023	HM	Post-registration review
3.0	07/2025	HM	Full review and update to align with the Standards for RTOs 2025: references updated to Quality Area 2 and the 2025 Compliance Standards; complaints and appeals reaffirmed as feeding continuous improvement (Quality Area 4); ASQA added as an external complaints body; progress-update interval aligned to fortnightly.
3.1	07/2025	HM	Compliance review update: corrected the role reference from "General Manager" to "Compliance Manager" and standardised the contact number; added an availability statement; added an acknowledgement timeframe (2 business days); and added an anti-victimisation commitment.
3.2	07/2025	HM	Added an accessibility commitment (no cost, interpreter, support person, alternative format); clarified the range of appealable decisions (assessment results, RPL and credit-transfer outcomes, certification decisions); added the 5-year retention period and a Privacy Policy cross-reference; noted a person may contact ASQA or another external body at any time; and added a "Learning from complaints and appeals" section feeding continuous improvement (4.4).
3.3	07/2025	HM	Corrected the external consumer body to NSW Fair Trading and the national body to the National Training Complaints Hotline (13 38 73); broadened the definition of "appeal"; added handling of complaints involving a third party acting on our behalf; stated a complaint or appeal is handled by a person not involved in the original decision, and that a complaint involving the CEO is referred to the independent reviewer or governing body; standardised timeframe units; detailed the continuous-improvement mechanism; added a provision for vexatious or bad-faith complaints; standardised the form name to the Complaints and Appeals Form; and added a Privacy Act 1988 / s.20 mapping row.
3.4	07/2025	HM	Reconciled the confidentiality clause with the investigation and independent-review provisions; added a 10-business-day timeframe to advise and implement the outcome after an independent review; confirmed third parties are informed of this policy and must cooperate with investigations; clarified that appeals are for learners about decisions affecting them while employer/other-party concerns use the complaints process; added management of conflict where a complaint concerns a trainer currently delivering to the complainant; and clarified the 28-business-day appeal window.
3.5	07/2025	HM	Compliance-manager review update: separated the appeals content into its own paragraph for clarity; used the full legal name (NNZMC Pty Ltd T/a Industry Skills Solutions) in the independent-review conflict provision and named the governing

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			body as the Board of Directors of NNZMC Pty Ltd where a complaint or appeal concerns the CEO; and tidied the version-control notes.
3.6	07/2025	HM	Administrative update: standardised terminology to “Compliance Standards” to match the registered instrument title (the Compliance Standards Instrument 2025).

Operational owner	Compliance Manager (day-to-day administration of this policy)
Authorised by	Harrison McMahon, Chief Executive Officer
Next review	July 2027, or earlier if regulatory requirements change
Approved and released. Version 3.6 is the approved, current version of this Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy, released July 2025 and authorised by Harrison McMahon, Chief Executive Officer. No further changes are to be made except by issuing a new version.	

Purpose and commitment

We are committed to a fair and transparent process for handling complaints and appeals, with access to an independent external party where required. We treat complaints and appeals as opportunities for improvement and channel findings into our continuous improvement and self-assurance activities. This policy is published on our website and is available on request. No person is disadvantaged or victimised for making a complaint or appeal in good faith. The process is accessible and free of charge, and where a person needs help to take part — for example an interpreter, a support person, or the information in an alternative format — we provide reasonable assistance on request.

Definitions

- **Complaint** — negative feedback about services or people that has not been resolved locally. A complaint may concern our organisation, our trainers, assessors or staff, a third party acting on our behalf, or the conduct of a learner, and may be made by an employer, a trainer or a learner.
- **Appeal** — an application by a learner for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding that affects them — including an assessment result, a recognition of prior learning (RPL) or credit-transfer outcome, a decision about their certification, or another decision made during their training and assessment.
- **Complainant / appellant** — the person who lodges the complaint or appeal.

Early resolution

Wherever possible, issues should be resolved at the time they occur, between the people involved. Proper communication and mutual respect help prevent disputes from escalating.

Making a complaint or appeal

Complaints may be received in any form and do not require a formal document, though the Complaints and Appeals Form is recommended (available on our website or from our office). Submit to the Compliance Manager electronically at kerry@industryskillsolutions.com.au or in hard copy at 13L Yarrandale Rd, Dubbo NSW 2830; phone 1300 IND SKL (463 755) if you need help to lodge. If you need an interpreter, a support person, or the information in an alternative format, tell us before or at the time of lodgement and we will arrange reasonable assistance at no cost.

An appeal must be made in writing within 28 business days (about six calendar weeks) of the decision or finding being communicated, using the Complaints and Appeals Form, and submitted to the Compliance Manager as above. Appeals are available to learners in respect of decisions affecting them, as defined in this policy; complaints from employers, trainers or other parties are handled through the complaints process. Learners are informed of this process at enrolment, through the Student Handbook.

How we handle complaints and appeals

- We keep comprehensive written records of lodgement, response and resolution in a chronological complaints and appeals register, stored securely against unauthorised access and retained for at least 5 years;
- We acknowledge receipt in writing promptly, within 2 business days;
- The complainant or appellant may present their case at no cost and may be accompanied by a support person;
- Natural justice and procedural fairness apply — all parties are informed and given the opportunity to present their case, the complainant is entitled to access relevant information and a right of reply, and the matter is handled by a person who is impartial, unaffected by the outcome, and was not involved in the original decision or matter being reviewed, deciding on logical evidence and relevant considerations only;
- Where a complaint or appeal involves a third party acting on our behalf (for example a contracted trainer or auspicing partner), we retain responsibility for investigating and resolving the matter, and the same procedural fairness and timeframes apply; such third parties are informed of this policy through their written agreement with us and are required to cooperate with any investigation;
- Where a complaint involves a trainer or assessor who is currently delivering training or assessment to the complainant, we take reasonable steps to manage any conflict of interest or risk to the learner during the investigation — for example by arranging alternative supervision or assessment where practicable;
- Handling commences within 7 business days of lodgement;
- A written response, including reasons, is provided within 14 calendar days;
- Matters are resolved within 60 calendar days (with a 30-calendar-day benchmark); if more than 60 calendar days is required, the CEO advises the person in writing with reasons and provides updates at least every 2 weeks;
- The person's enrolment is maintained throughout the process;
- Decisions favouring the learner are implemented immediately;
- Matters are handled in the strictest confidence and are not disclosed more widely than necessary; disclosure without the CEO's permission and the person's written consent (via an Information Release Form) is limited to what is necessary to investigate and resolve the matter — including giving a person named in a complaint a fair opportunity to respond under procedural fairness, and providing information to an independent reviewer as provided in this policy — and complaints and appeals records are handled in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

Review by an independent third party

Where a person is dissatisfied after our internal process is complete, they may request an independent review via the Compliance Manager, who escalates to the CEO. The CEO identifies an independent person or body with no affiliation to NNZMC Pty Ltd T/a Industry Skills Solutions, who reviews the handling and provides recommendations within 14 business days. We meet the full cost, accept the recommendations as final, advise the person in writing, and implement the outcome without prejudice. Within 10 business days of receiving the reviewer's recommendations, we advise the person in writing of the outcome and the steps we are taking to implement it. Disclosure of relevant information to the independent reviewer for the purpose of the review is authorised by this policy and does not require separate sign-off. Where the CEO has a conflict of interest — including where the complaint or appeal is

about the CEO — the matter is referred directly to the independent reviewer or to the Board of Directors of NNZMC Pty Ltd, and any disclosure authorisation that would otherwise rest with the CEO is exercised by the Compliance Manager or the Board of Directors instead.

External escalation

After our internal process is complete, a person who remains dissatisfied may refer the matter to a relevant external authority, including: NSW Fair Trading (consumer issues); the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73 (VET service delivery); and the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) at asqa.gov.au/complaints (the RTO regulator). While we encourage you to use our internal process first, you may contact ASQA or another external authority at any time.

Learning from complaints and appeals

We record all complaints and appeals in our register and review them for trends and systemic issues. The Compliance Manager reviews the register at least annually and reports the findings and any recommended actions to the CEO; the resulting improvements are recorded in our continuous improvement register and tracked to completion. This ensures complaints and appeals are used to address root causes, not only individual matters, as part of our continuous improvement and self-assurance activities (Outcome Standard 4.4 — Continuous improvement, within Quality Area 4). The Compliance Manager may also initiate an out-of-cycle review at any time where a serious individual complaint, or a pattern of complaints, raises a concern about training quality or learner safety.

Vexatious or bad-faith complaints

We take every complaint and appeal seriously. Very occasionally, a complaint may be vexatious or frivolous, or made in bad faith to harass staff or other learners. In such a case we may decline to investigate the matter, and we advise the person of that decision, and the reasons for it, in writing. This does not affect any person's right to make a genuine complaint or appeal in good faith, for which no person is disadvantaged or victimised.

Mapping to the Standards for RTOs 2025

The Standards for RTOs 2025 comprise two instruments on the Federal Register: the Outcome Standards Instrument 2025 (F2025L00354), which contains the Outcome Standards (Standards 1.1–4.4, grouped into four Quality Areas); and the Compliance Standards Instrument 2025 (F2025L00355), which contains the Compliance Standards (numbered sections s.7–s.20). This policy is cross-referenced to both — only the standards and requirements it addresses are listed, with the section of this document that addresses each.

Standard or requirement	What it requires	Addressed in this policy
Outcome Standard 2.7 — Feedback and complaints	An accessible, fair complaints process with documented outcomes.	Making a complaint or appeal; How we handle complaints and appeals
Outcome Standard 2.8 — Effective appeals	An effective appeals process with procedural fairness and independent review.	Making a complaint or appeal; Review by an independent third party; External escalation
Outcome Standard 4.4 — Continuous improvement	Complaints and appeals inform continuous improvement.	Purpose and commitment; Learning from complaints and appeals
Compliance Standards 2025, s.20 — Compliance with laws	Complaints and appeals records are handled in line with the Privacy Act 1988 and privacy obligations.	How we handle complaints and appeals

Related documents and legislation

This policy should be read together with: the Student Handbook, the Complaints and Appeals Form and the Privacy Policy; the Standards for RTOs 2025, and the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Authorisation

This policy is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of NNZMC Pty Ltd T/a Industry Skills Solutions.

Name	Harrison McMahon
Position	Chief Executive Officer
Signature	
Date	01/07/2025