



Feedback, Complaints & Appeals Policy and Procedure

Aligned to Standards for RTOs 2025 – Standard 2.7 & 2.8

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all feedback, complaints and appeals are managed fairly, promptly and transparently, in accordance with the requirements of Standards for RTO's 2025.

Policy Statement

The RTO is committed to providing clear and accessible systems for submitting feedback, complaints and appeals, managing all matters fairly, promptly and without bias. Ensuring the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied throughout every stage of the process. Complainants will not be victimised or disadvantaged for lodging a complaint or appeal, and all matters will be handled confidentially. The RTO maintains accurate records of all complaints and appeals and uses the outcomes to inform continuous improvement and self-assurance processes. If required, access to an independent external review will be made available. This policy is publicly available on the RTO website and in the Student Handbook.

The RTO values feedback and complaints as opportunities to improve training, assessment, student services and overall operations.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, customers, clients, staff, trainers and assessors, any third parties providing services on behalf of the RTO and any other stakeholders and covers feedback, complaints, academic and non-academic appeals (assessment decisions)

Definitions

Feedback – Comments, suggestions or observations (positive or negative) about training, assessment, services or operations.

Complaint – A formal expression of dissatisfaction with the RTO's services, staff, students, training, assessment, enrolment or operations.

Appeal – A request for a review of a decision made by the RTO, including:

- Complaint outcome (non-academic appeal)
- Assessment decision (academic appeal)

Natural Justice / Procedural Fairness includes:

- The right to be heard
- Decisions based on evidence
- Decisions made without bias
- Clear reasons for decisions

Feedback System

Feedback Collection

The RTO maintains a system for collecting, recording and responding to feedback. Feedback can be provided via course evaluation forms, online surveys, email, verbally to any staff member, meetings and informal discussions.

Recording Feedback

- Feedback (positive or negative) must be recorded when it relates to service quality, safety, training, assessment or student experience
- Feedback with potential systemic implications, which could affect students, the quality of training, assessment integrity, safety, or RTO systems must be entered into the Feedback & Complaints Register
- Feedback is reviewed during staff/management meetings and informs continuous improvement planning

The RTO will review feedback regularly analyse for trends and recurring issues and use feedback to inform and record improvements actions in the Continuous Improvement Register

Complaints and Appeals

All complaints/ grievances will be managed by applying the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness throughout the complaints/ appeals process. Complaints may relate to any of the following:

- Training delivery
- Assessment decisions
- Trainers or assessors
- Staff behaviour
- Other students
- Enrolment processes
- Fees and refunds
- Facilities or equipment
- Safety or wellbeing concerns
- RTO decisions or operations

Complaint and Appeal Management Principles

The RTO will ensure all complaints and appeals are handled according to the following principles:

- Natural justice and procedural fairness
- Confidentiality
- Transparency
- Timeliness
- Accessibility
- Evidence-based decision making
- No victimisation of complainants or appellants
- Independent review where required
- Accurate record-keeping
- Continuous improvement

Complainants may be accompanied by a support person at any stage of the process.

Assistance will be provided to complainants who require help lodging a complaint or appeal, including language, literacy or disability support.

Complaint Resolution Procedure

Informal Resolution

To resolve a complaint/ appeal as quickly as possible it is encouraged that the complainant raise the matter via email or speaking to the RTO manager/ assessor/ trainer/ administration staff or CEO.

Informal complaints may be resolved immediately; however, the matter must be recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register if:

- the issue is recurring
- it has systemic implications
- it relates to safety or compliance
- it involves staff conduct
- it may escalate to a formal complaint

Formal Complaint Process

Step 1 – Lodging a Complaint

- If not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, the complainant can lodge and submit a written **Formal Complaint** using the official complaints and appeals form (*found on the website/ or on request*) to the RTO.
- The form must include a detailed description of the issue, dates and names of people involved, any documentary evidence, i.e., emails, text messages, etc (if available) and any action/s already taken to resolve the outcome of the complaint.

Step 2 – Acknowledgement

- The RTO will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 2 working days, a copy of the complaint will be recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register.

Step 3 – Investigation

- The RTO will begin an investigation into the complaints within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. An independent person will be appointed to investigate the complaint if the complaint involves the CEO or investigator. All parties will be allowed to present their version of events and evidence. The RTO will maintain confidentiality and fairness throughout the process.
- If the process is likely to take longer than **60 calendar days**, the RTO will inform the complainant in writing, provide the reasons for the delay and will provide regular progress updates.

Step 4 – Outcome

- When the complaint has been resolved the RTO will provide a written outcome to the complainant with the reasons for the decision. The RTO will action any improvements identified and document and store the decision and reasons in the register

Appeals Process

Appeals Against Complaint Outcomes (Non-Academic Appeals)

- A student may appeal the outcome of the formal complaint decision within **10 working days** of receiving the report.
- The RTO must start the appeal process within 10 working days of receipt. The RTO can appoint an independent reviewer not involved in the original decision to consult with the complainant. If required, the complainant can bring a support person to any in-person interviews. All evidence is reviewed and documented and where possible the appeal to be finalised within 15 working days and a written outcome within 2 working days of the decision is provided.

Academic Appeals

Grounds for Academic Appeal

Academic appeals relate to assessment decisions and are dealt with according to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Grounds for appeal may include:

- Incorrect assessment decision
- Assessor error
- Unfair or inconsistent assessment
- Failure to consider submitted evidence

- Assessment process not conducted correctly
- Assessor bias

Students have a maximum of one month to appeal against a final assessment decision result of Competency Not Achieved (CNA).

Informal Academic Appeal

Students are encourage to discuss the appeal with the assessor, if the matter cannot be resolved they can contact and discuss the appeal with RTO staff or management. If the issue remains unresolved the student can lodge a formal academic appeal.

Formal Academic Appeal

- If not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, the complainant can lodge and submit a written **Formal Compliant** using the official complaints and appeals form (*found on the website/ or on request*) to the RTO.
- The RTO will acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing within 2 working days.
- Appeal panel formed (CEO and independent qualified assessor)
- An academic appeal panel (CEO and a qualified trainer/assessor other than the original trainers/ assessor) will be formed to review the assessment evidence, the student may present their case with the assistance of a support person if they require. Additional evidence or information may be requested by either part during the procedure to assist in making a decision.
- The decision and reasons for the decision will be reported to the student within 15 working days, unless otherwise discussed between the parties involved.

Possible outcomes of the appeal may be to:

- Uphold the original decision
- Re-assessment with a different assessor
- Additional evidence to be submitted
- Competency decision overturned

External Review

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeals process, they may request an external review through an independent third-party mediator or the relevant State Training Authority. The RTO will cooperate fully with any external review process.

Reporting

- Any systematic issues identified as a complaint, will be recorded in the complaints and appeals register and assigned to the RTO continuous improvement process. These issues will be discussed and actioned at staff/ management meetings.
- Any complaint that is vexatious (*a complaint that is falsely made, in bad faith and without evidence. Under the law a vexatious complaint is a form of abuse that has the power to hurt or disrupt an individual or business, affect their reputation and cause psychological injury*) with the intent or made simply to damage the reputation of the RTO, students, trainers, staff or anyone associated with the RTO, will be referred to the appropriate authorities – in the first instance the VET Regulator. The RTO will not tolerate unlawful vexatious complaints

Record-Keeping

The RTO will maintain a **Complaints & Appeals Register** that includes:

- Complaint/appeal details
- Dates
- Investigation actions
- Evidence
- Outcomes
- Reasons for decisions

- Improvement actions
- Communication records

Records are retained in accordance with the RTO Records Management Policy.

Continuous Improvement

Outcomes from complaints, appeals and feedback are:

- Recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register
- Reviewed at management meetings
- Used to improve training, assessment, services and operations
- Included in the RTO self-assurance processes

Links to Other Systems, Processes or Documents

- Complaints & Appeals Form
- Complaints & Appeals Register
- Continuous Improvement Register
- Student Handbook
- Enrolment Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Training and Assessment Policy

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes
2026.2	27-03-2026	Operations Manager	New policy aligned to the Standards for RTO's 2025 – Std 2.7 & 2.8

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