



Complaints & Appeals

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all complaints and appeals raised by learners, staff or other stakeholders are managed fairly, transparently and in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2025.

The RTO is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment where concerns can be raised without fear of disadvantage and where issues are handled promptly, fairly and professionally. Feedback, complaints and appeals are used to inform the RTO's continuous improvement and self-assurance processes, including the identification and resolution of systemic issues across training, assessment and support services.

This policy aligns with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2025, particularly Standards 2.7 Feedback and Complaints, 2.8 Appeals and 4.4 Continuous Improvement.

2. Overview

The RTO is committed to managing complaints, appeals and feedback in a fair, transparent and timely manner. Learners are encouraged to raise concerns about training, assessment, services, staff or third-party arrangements so matters can be addressed promptly and constructively.

The RTO maintains a complaints and appeals management system that:

- allows learners to lodge complaints or provide feedback about the RTO, its staff, contractors or third-party providers
- ensures all parties are treated with procedural fairness and impartiality
- sets clear and reasonable timeframes for acknowledging, reviewing and resolving matters
- provides escalation pathways where issues are not resolved at the initial stage
- documents outcomes and communicates decisions to all relevant parties
- uses complaints and feedback to inform continuous improvement activities

All complaints and appeals are managed at no cost to the learner. The RTO ensures that each matter is acknowledged, reviewed and resolved in a timely, fair and transparent manner. Complaints and appeals are not handled by conflicted individuals and are not dismissed without proper consideration.

Information about how to provide feedback or lodge a complaint or appeal is publicly available on the RTO's website and in learner and staff information materials.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all RTO learners, staff, trainers, assessors, contractors and any other stakeholders involved in RTO training and assessment services.

It covers complaints about training, assessment, services, facilities, staff conduct, administrative processes, or any other matter related to the RTO's operations.

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4. Definitions

Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the RTO's services, training, assessment, staff conduct, facilities, administrative processes or the behaviour of another learner. Complaints may relate to both training and non-training matters.

Appeal

An appeal is a request to review a decision previously made by the RTO.

This includes decisions about assessment outcomes, course progression, refunds, or any decision resulting from the complaints process.

An appeal may relate to decisions affecting a learner, including decisions relating to enrolment, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), credit transfer, assessment or other matters affecting their progression through a training product.

Third-Party Support Person

A person chosen by the learner (e.g. friend, family member, advocate) who may be present during discussions or meetings as support. This person does not act on behalf of the learner unless formally authorised.

Feedback

Feedback is any information provided by a learner, employer, stakeholder or member of the public regarding the RTO's services, training, assessment, staff conduct or administrative processes.

Feedback may include suggestions, comments, compliments, concerns or criticism. Feedback is not considered a formal complaint unless the learner indicates they wish the matter to be treated as one or where the issue cannot be resolved informally.

Working Days

Refers to Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays in Western Australia.

5. Policy Principles

The RTO is committed to managing all complaints and appeals in a fair, transparent and timely manner. The following principles underpin this policy:

5.1 Right to Raise Issues Without Disadvantage

Learners, staff and stakeholders may lodge a complaint or appeal without fear of discrimination, disadvantage or negative consequences. No learner will be penalised for making a complaint or appeal.

5.2 Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness

All parties will be given the opportunity to present their version of events.

Decisions will be made impartially, based on evidence, and by a person who was not involved in the original matter.

5.3 Transparency

Information about how to make a complaint or appeal is publicly available through the Code of Practice, Learner Information Pack and on the RTO website.

5.4 Timeliness

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- Complaints and appeals will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- The RTO will aim to resolve all matters within a reasonable timeframe.
If more time is required, the learner will be informed in writing with reasons and an updated timeframe.

5.5 Accessibility

The complaints and appeals process is accessible, simplified and free of charge to learners. The RTO provides clear forms and guidance and will assist learners to complete documentation if required. Learners may request information in an alternative format and may bring a support person to any meeting. No learner will be disadvantaged for lodging a complaint or appeal.

5.6 Confidentiality

The RTO will manage all complaints and appeals confidentially.

Information will only be shared with those involved in resolving the matter or when disclosure is required by law.

5.7 Documentation and Record Keeping

All formal complaints and appeals are recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register, including outcomes, actions taken and any improvements identified. General feedback that does not meet the definition of a complaint is recorded and monitored through the RTO's Continuous Improvement processes.

All records relating to complaints, appeals and feedback are securely stored in the learner management system in accordance with the RTO's Record Management Systems Policy. Documentation is retained for audit and regulatory purposes.

5.8 Continuous Improvement

Findings from complaints and appeals may lead to improvements in training, assessment, systems or learner support.

Outcomes will be discussed in management meetings and recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register as required.

5.9 External Review Rights

If a learner remains dissatisfied after the RTO's internal complaints or appeals processes are completed, they may request review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO. Independent review will be made available at no or low cost to the learner.

Where a complaint remains unresolved, the learner may also lodge a complaint with the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) where the matter relates to the RTO's compliance with the Registration Standards 2025.

Learners may also seek information or assistance from other appropriate external agencies depending on the nature of the matter. The RTO will provide learners with the appropriate contact details and guidance on how to access these services.

5.10 No Cost to the Learner

There is no fee for submitting a complaint or appeal, including internal reviews. Where an independent review is requested, it will be made available at no or low cost to the learner.

6. Complaints & Appeals Procedure

6.1 Raise the Issue (Informal Complaint) Resolution

1. Learners are encouraged to raise concerns directly with RTO staff as early as possible.
2. Where appropriate, the staff member will attempt to resolve the issue informally through discussion.
3. If the concern is resolved informally, no further action is required.

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- If the issue cannot be resolved or the learner prefers to proceed formally, they will be directed to complete the **Complaints & Appeals Form**.

6.2 Formal Complaint

- A formal complaint must be submitted in writing using the RTO Complaints & Appeals Form.
- The RTO staff will **acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 working days**.
- The complaint will be reviewed by the Administration Manager, CEO or delegated staff member who was not involved in the issue.
- The learner may request a support person to assist them during meetings or discussions.
- RTO will investigate the matter, which may include:
 - speaking with relevant staff or learners
 - reviewing training or assessment records
 - examining relevant evidence
 - additional meetings with the learner
- RTO will provide the learner with a written outcome that includes:
 - the decision
 - reasons for the decision
 - any actions to be taken
- All formal complaints will be recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register and used to inform continuous improvement processes, including consideration of the root cause of the issue. Where relevant, the identified root cause will be recorded in the register. If the matter cannot be resolved within the expected timeframe, the RTO will inform the learner in writing, provide reasons for the delay and confirm a revised timeframe.

6.3 Internal Review (Appeal of Complaint Outcome)

- If the learner is dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal complaint, they may request an internal review.
- The request must be submitted in writing within **10 working days** of receiving the decision.
- An internal review will be conducted by a senior staff member or management representative who was not involved in the original decision.
- The learner may present additional information or evidence during the review.
- The RTO will provide a written outcome within a reasonable timeframe, referencing evidence and reasons for the decision.
- The internal review outcome will be recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register.
- If a learner remains dissatisfied after the internal review process is completed, they may request review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO in accordance with Section 6.5
- The RTO will provide information and guidance about how to access the independent review process.

6.4 Appeal of Assessment Decision

- A learner who disagrees with an assessment outcome may lodge an appeal using the Complaints & Appeals Form.
- The RTO will acknowledge the appeal within **5 working days**.
- The assessment appeal will be reviewed by another appropriately qualified Trainer and Assessor who:
 - was not involved in the original assessment, and
 - meets the applicable credential, vocational competency and currency requirements.
- The reviewing assessor may:
 - review the assessment materials
 - review evidence submitted by the learner
 - speak with the original assessor

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- conduct a re-assessment if appropriate
- 5. The learner will receive a written outcome explaining:
 - whether the original decision is upheld or overturned
 - reasons for the decision
 - any further steps or opportunities for re-assessment
- 6. All assessment appeals are recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register.

6.5 Independent and External Review

1. If a learner remains dissatisfied after the RTO's internal appeal process has been completed, they may request review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO.
2. The RTO will arrange access to an appropriate independent reviewer at no or low cost to the learner.
3. The RTO will provide the learner with information about the independent review process, including any applicable cost, expected timeframe and how the review will be conducted.
4. Where a complaint remains unresolved, or a learner has concerns regarding the RTO's compliance with the Registration Standards 2025, the learner may lodge a complaint with the Training Accreditation Council (TAC).
5. Learners may also seek information or assistance from other appropriate external agencies depending on the nature of the matter.
6. The RTO will consider the findings of an independent or external review and take appropriate action, including continuous improvement action where required.

6.6 Timeframes

1. All complaints and appeals will be acknowledged within **5 working days**.
2. RTO aims to resolve all matters within reasonable timeframe.
3. If more time is required, RTO will:
 - inform the learner in writing
 - explain the reasons for the delay
 - provide an updated resolution timeframe
4. Timeframes apply to both complaints and appeals.

6.7 Recordkeeping and Confidentiality

1. All complaints and appeals will be:
 - recorded on the Complaints & Appeals Register
 - stored securely in RTO's learner management system
 - treated confidentially and accessed only by authorised staff
2. Information will not be shared with third parties except where required by law or for audit purposes.
3. Records of complaints and appeals will be retained according to the RTO's Record Management Systems Policy.

6.8 Access to the Policy

1. Information about the complaints and appeals process is provided in the Learner Information Pack and Code of Practice, and this policy is publicly available on the RTO website.
2. RTO staff are required to review and acknowledge relevant policies annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

CEO

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- Provides overall accountability for the complaints and appeals system.
- Ensures complaints and appeals are managed fairly and in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2025.
- Reviews significant complaints, appeals, systemic issues and continuous improvement actions.
- Ensures appropriate resources and delegations are available to manage complaints and appeals.

Quality and Compliance Officer

- Maintains oversight of the complaints and appeals process.
- Monitors trends, systemic issues and improvement opportunities.
- Ensures complaints and appeals outcomes are considered through continuous improvement processes.
- Provides assurance information and identified risks to the CEO.

Administration Manager

- Supports the operational management of complaints and appeals processes.
- Ensures complaints and appeals procedures are implemented consistently.
- Supports the review and resolution process where delegated.
- Escalates matters requiring management review.

Administration Officer

- Receives, records and acknowledges complaints and appeals.
- Maintains the Complaints & Appeals Register and supporting documentation.
- Provides learners with forms, information and guidance on how to lodge a complaint or appeal.
- Supports communication between learners, trainers and management throughout the resolution process.
- Escalates matters to the appropriate responsible person.

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Trainers and Assessors

- Respond to informal concerns in a respectful and timely manner to support early resolution.
- Provide clear assessment feedback and information that may help prevent unnecessary appeals.
- Refer learners to the formal complaints or appeals process where informal resolution is not possible.
- Cooperate with investigations and provide required evidence or documentation.

Learners

- Raise concerns as early as possible so they can be addressed promptly.
- Participate respectfully in the complaints or appeals process and provide accurate information.
- Follow RTO procedures for lodging a complaint or appeal.
- Notify the RTO if additional support is required to participate in the process.

Review

This policy is reviewed at least annually, or earlier if required due to changes in legislation, the Standards for RTOs 2025, RTO operations, or feedback from learners, staff or external stakeholders. Any updates to this policy are reviewed by the Quality and Compliance Officer and approved by the CEO. Changes are communicated to staff and learners where relevant.

Related Policies and Forms

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following RTO policies:

- Code of Practice
- Informing Protecting Learners Policy
- Assessment Systems Policy and Procedure
- RPL Policy & Procedure
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- Record Management Systems Policy
- Privacy & Confidentiality Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Regulatory Compliance & Governance Policy
- Training Staff Policy

Associated Forms and Registers

- Complaints & Appeals Form
- Complaints & Appeals Register
- Record of Conversation / Raise the Issue (Informal Complaint)
- Continuous Improvement Register

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Appendix 1: Learner Quick Guide to Complaints & Appeals

Step 1 — Raise the Issue (Informal Complaint)

Speak with your trainer or RTO staff member. Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally.

Step 2 — Lodge a Formal Complaint

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, complete the Complaints & Appeals Form. RTO will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.

Step 3 — Investigation & Outcome

The RTO investigates your complaint and provides a written outcome within a reasonable timeframe. If more time is required, the RTO will inform you in writing, explain the reason for the delay and provide an updated timeframe.

Step 4 — Internal Review (Appeal the Decision)

If you disagree with the outcome, you may request an internal review within 10 working days. A manager not involved in the original decision will review the matter.

Step 5 — Independent Review

If you remain dissatisfied after the RTO's internal appeal process, you may request review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO. The RTO will provide information about how to access an independent review at no or low cost.

Where a complaint remains unresolved, or you have concerns about the RTO's compliance with the Registration Standards 2025, you may also lodge a complaint with the Training Accreditation Council (TAC).

You are not disadvantaged for making a complaint or appeal.

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