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## **Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure**

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## Introduction

Entry Education ensures that it maintains a robust Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure as per Division 5 (standard 2.7 and 2.8) of the Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations (2025).

## Purpose

This policy is based on providing and maintaining training services that are fair and reasonable and afford a forum where issues or concerns can be informally resolved and formally, if required. This process provides an opportunity for complaints and appeals to be escalated to Entry Education's management where required, and in all circumstances, in a timely and confidential manner.

## Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all learners and stakeholders enrolled in nationally recognised courses offered by Entry Education. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Entry Education is the Complaints Resolution Officer. The Complaints Resolution Officer may delegate responsibility for the resolution of a complaint or appeal if necessary. In the event that the complaint or appeal is against the CEO or the delegated Complaint Resolution Officer, Chief Operating Officer (COO) will be responsible for managing that complaint and/or appeal.

## Responsibilities

CEO, COO, General Manager Training, General Manager Compliance, Student Support Team and Administration Team.

## Alignment

### Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025

#### 2.7 Standard 2.7

##### *Outcome Standard*

1. Feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement of the NVR registered training organisation.

##### *Performance Indicators*

1. An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates:
  1. it operates a complaints management system that:
    1. allows feedback and complaints about the organisation, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the organisation;
    2. ensures all parties are afforded procedural fairness;
    3. identifies reasonable timeframes for responding to and resolving complaints; and
    4. provides avenues for further action where complaints are not resolved;
  2. information about how to provide feedback and make complaints through the complaints management system is publicly available and easily accessible by VET students;
  3. VET students are supported to provide feedback and make complaints;
  4. outcomes of complaints are documented by the organisation and communicated to all parties to the complaint; and
  5. feedback and complaints are used by the organisation to inform continuous improvement.

#### 2.8 Standard 2.8

##### *Outcome Standard*

1. Effective appeal processes are available to VET students where decisions of the NVR registered training organisation or a third party adversely affect the student.

### *Performance Indicators*

1. An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates:
  1. it operates an appeals management system that:
    1. allows VET students to appeal decisions of the organisation, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the organisation, where those decisions adversely affect the student;
    2. ensures all parties to the appeal are afforded procedural fairness;
    3. specifies reasonable timeframes for actioning appeals; and
    4. provides avenues for review by an independent party if requested by the appellant (at no or low cost to the appellant);
  2. information about how to appeal an adverse decision through the appeals management system is publicly available and easily accessible by VET students;
  3. outcomes of appeals are documented by the organisation and communicated to the appellant; and
  4. the outcomes of appeals are used by the organisation to inform continuous improvement.

## Policy Statement

Entry Education is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and efficient complaints and appeals process for all stakeholders. This policy ensures compliance with the Standards, this policy and procedure confirms that Entry Education will address issues or concerns promptly, confidentially, and equitably.

Complaints and appeals may be related to any part of the learner's journey, including pre-enrolment, marketing, recruitment, and enrolment, as well as completion. This policy and procedure provides the framework for Entry Education's response to requests for a review of decisions made by Entry Education include, but are not limited to:

- a. Operational decisions related to any part of the learner journey.
- b. Assessment decisions.
- c. Any decisions that relate to a third-party provider of Entry Education where one exists.

All complaints and appeals will be managed confidentially, objectively, in accordance with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness at every stage of the resolution process. The complaints and appeals process is publicly available, identifies the procedure for the management of complaints and appeals and provides for a review of the complaint and/or appeal by an appropriate party who is independent of both Entry Education and the complainant or appellant.

Entry Education encourages informal resolution where possible but provides formal processes when necessary and/or preferred. Complaints may be lodged verbally or in writing, while appeals must be submitted in writing within 20 working days of the decision being appealed. All complaints and appeals are considered serious, and an investigation of the complaint or appeal will commence within 24-hours of receiving the said complaint or appeal.

Entry Education will acknowledge all complaints and appeals within 3 working days and aims to resolve them within 60 calendar days. If more time is required, the complainant or appellant will be informed in writing of the delay in resolving the complaint or appeal and the reasons for the delay. The complainant or Appellant will be and updated regularly on progress of the complaint and appeal until resolution is achieved.

All complaints and appeals and their outcomes will be securely recorded in our Complaints and Appeals Register. While all complaints and appeals are managed at an individual level and where appropriate, changes may be made in response to a specific complaint and/or appeal, generally speaking, the outcomes of resolved complaints and appeals will be used to inform continuous improvement in our operations and training and assessment services. Complainants and appellants have the right to be accompanied by a support person at any stage of the complaints and/or appeals process and to escalate their case to external authorities if unsatisfied with the outcome.

Importantly, through its complaints and appeals process, Entry Education identifies the potential cause or the cause of the complaint and appeal and initiates immediate appropriate corrective action to mitigate or eliminate the likelihood of the issue raised re-occurring.

Where an independent party is required or preferred, initial costs will be shared between each party. Should the independent party find in favour of the student or other stakeholder, the appellant's component of the fees for the appeal will be refunded to the student or stakeholder by Entry Education. Where the fee has not yet been paid at the time of the independent reviewer delivering their findings, and those findings are in favour of the student or stakeholder, Entry Education will cover the cost entirely.

This policy applies to all learners, staff, and other stakeholders of Entry Education, regardless of the location of training and assessment, mode of study, or funding arrangements. All complaints will be managed as Staff- In-Confidence. The complaints process will not affect or bias the progress of the complainant in any current or future training. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be adhered to throughout the process.

## Procedure

The steps in the complaints and appeals process are:

- A) Local level resolution:** Any stakeholder, including students with a complaint or appeal is encouraged to firstly raise the matter directly with the other party concerned. Where appropriate, a meeting should be requested by the stakeholder, at which time, the issue or concern can be raised and a resolution sought. In other words, the stakeholder will speak directly to the person they have an issue or concern with and try to sort out the issue or concern between themselves.
- B) Resolution by a trainer and/or assessor:** Should the matter remain unresolved following local level resolution or should local level resolution be considered inappropriate, the stakeholder is encouraged to contact a Trainer and/or Assessor, who will help to sort out a solution which might include referral to the stakeholder to the formal complaints and appeals process. Other informal suggestions might include a mediated discussion or by talking individually with each person involved in the dispute.

- C) Referral by the CEO:** Should the matter remain unresolved following a resolution at a local level or through a trainer and/or assessor or should a resolution at a local level or through a trainer and/or assessor be considered inappropriate, the stakeholder is encouraged to contact the CEO who will investigate the matter further. The CEO will ask you to put your issues or concerns in writing and will review the complaint and/or appeal in accordance with this policy and procedure. The CEO will provide you with a written response to your complaint explaining the outcome including the reason for the decision. Where the issue or concern is about the CEO, the Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for managing the issue or concern in conjunction with an independent third party that Entry Education has engaged to assist with the management of its complaints and appeals processes.
- D) Resolution by arbitration:** Should the matter remain unresolved following a resolution at a local level or through a trainer and/or assessor, or through referral to the CEO of Entry Education, or should a resolution at a local level or through a trainer and/or assessor or a referral to the CEO be considered inappropriate, the CEO and Chief Operating Officer will appoint the independent third party to review the issues and/or concerns and suggest an amicable solution. Where the independent third party's recommendation for a resolution is not accepted between the parties, one final attempt at mediation between the parties is provided.
- E)** If mediation does not result in a resolution, it will be recommended that the aggrieved stakeholder be referred to the National Training Complaints Hotline. The National Training Complaints Hotline can also be contacted at any point in the complaints and appeals process. It can be found by going to its website <https://www.dewr.gov.au/national-training-complaints-hotline> and completing the form on the website or by calling 13 38 73. It should be noted however that the National Training Complaints Hotline is only for students.

## Complaints Process

All complaints will follow the below process:

### Informal Resolution

1. The complainant is encouraged to first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the party concerned.
2. If unsuccessful or inappropriate, the complainant should proceed to the formal complaint process.

### Formal Complaint Lodgement

1. The complainant must submit the complaint in writing using the Complaints and Appeals Form (CAF) within 5 calendar days of the incident.
2. The completed CAF constitutes a formal complaint.

### Initial Processing

1. The CEO must be informed of all received complaints.
2. The CEO may delegate responsibility for complaint resolution to appropriate staff.
3. All complaints will be entered into the Complaints and Appeals Register.

### Investigation

1. The CEO or delegate will initiate a transparent, participative investigation to identify the issues within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.
2. If the complaint is against the CEO, the Chief Operating Officer will manage the process with an independent third party.

### Resolution Process

1. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days.
2. Entry Education aims to resolve complaints within 60 calendar days.

3. If more time is required: a. The complainant will be informed in writing, including reasons for the delay. b. Regular updates on progress will be provided to the complainant.

## Decision and Notification

1. The CEO will assess the final conclusion, except in cases where the complaint is against the CEO.
2. The complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome, including reasons for the decision.

## Appeal of Decision

1. If unsatisfied with the outcome, the complainant may seek an appointment with the (or appropriate senior manager if the complaint involves the CEO), CEO by submitting an appeals form.
2. The complainant has the right to be accompanied by a support person at any stage of the process.

## External Resolution

1. If still unsatisfied after the appeals, the complainant may seek outside assistance, such as the National Training Complaints Hotline.
2. Entry Education will provide information on accessing external complaint resolution services.

## Appeals

Entry Education strives to deal with appeal issues as soon as they emerge, to avoid further disruption or the need for a formal complaint process.

All appeals shall follow the below process:

### Lodging an Appeal

1. The appellant must submit the appeal in writing using the Complaints and Appeals Form (CAF) within 20 working days of the decision being appealed.
2. The completed CAF constitutes a formal appeal.

### Initial Processing

1. The CEO must be informed of all received appeals.
2. The CEO may delegate responsibility for the resolution of the appeal to appropriate staff. If the appeal is against the CEO, the Chief Operating Officer will manage the process with an independent third party.
3. All appeals will be entered into the Complaints and Appeals Register.
4. Entry Education will acknowledge all appeals in writing within 3 working days of receipt.

### Investigation

1. The CEO or delegate will initiate a transparent, participative process to deal with the issues at hand within 24 hours of receiving the appeal.
2. If the appeal is against the CEO, the Chief Operating Officer will manage the process with an independent third party.

### Resolution Process

1. Entry Education aims to resolve appeals within 60 calendar days.
2. If more time is required: a. The appellant will be informed in writing, including reasons for the delay. b. Regular updates on progress will be provided to the appellant.

### Decision and Notification

1. In all cases, the final conclusion will be endorsed by the CEO, except where the appeal is against the CEO.
2. The appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including reasons for the decision.

### Further Action

1. If unsatisfied with the outcome, the appellant may seek an appointment with the CEO.

2. The appellant has the right to be accompanied by a support person at any stage of the process.

## External Review

1. If still unsatisfied, the appellant has the option to seek outside assistance to pursue the appeal.
2. Entry Education will provide information on accessing external appeal services, such as the National Training Complaints Hotline.

## Actioning the Outcomes

Where the complaint or appeal is upheld, Entry Education will implement the required corrective action immediately and advise the stakeholder of the outcome. A copy of the outcome will be provided via email.

## Administration

All complaints and appeals will be discussed at Management Review Meetings as part of the continuous improvement process. All complaints and appeals are to be held in the learner's file.

## Related Documents

Complaints and Appeals Form

Access and Equity Policy

Records Management