



# PIMPAMA STATE SECONDARY COLLEGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the steps for handling complaints received from learners, clients, staff and stakeholders.

## 2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all complaints that impact on the organisation's management systems; quality of training and assessment; quality of client service; and compliance with the VET Quality Framework, inclusive of complaints about:

- the RTO and its trainers, assessors and other staff;
- an RTO's third party/ies, its trainers, assessors and other staff;
- A learner of the RTO.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**Complaint** is any expression of dissatisfaction with an action or service of the Registered Training Organisation.

**Appeal** is the application for a decision to be reversed

**Complainant** is a person who makes a complaint

**Appellant** is a person who applies to the RTO or higher management position for a reversal of the decision made by the RTO

### **VET Quality Framework (VQF) means the following:**

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- Australian Qualifications Framework;
- Fit and Proper Person Requirements;
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements;
- Data Provision Requirements.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 All staff who receive a complaint or appeal are responsible for:

4.1.1 The documenting of complaints/appeals as per the scope of this procedure.

4.1.2 Sending the details of the complaint/appeal to the Director (or delegated person).

4.2 The CEO (or delegated person) is responsible for:

4.2.1 Reviewing the complaints and appeals;

4.2.2 Determining the root cause of the complaint or appeal, through investigation, review or other appropriate means

4.2.3 Determining the action, if any, to be taken and recording in the Improvement Register.

4.2.4 Implementing action to prevent or limit the likely the reoccurrence of the determined cause of the complaint/appeal.

4.2.5 Following up on the complaint/appeal and/or with the complainant/appellant to ensure that it has been finalised and that corrective action has been implemented satisfactorily and the client is satisfied.

4.2.6 Ensuring the current complaints policy is publicly available.

File Location: G:\Coredata\Teachers\SENIOR SECONDARY\VET\VET Register of Documents\Complaints and Appeals

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## 5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1 If the complainant/appellant meets with any staff member to make a complaint,
- 5.1.1 The staff member should discuss with the complainant/appellant (and their support), the complaint/appeal details
  - 5.1.2 Complete with any assistance a complaints/appeals form.
  - 5.1.3 Determine:
    - 5.1.3.1 who to refer complaint to for actioning

5.2 Consider privacy issues

5.3 Receipt of an Oral Complaint/appeal (when the complainant/appellant wishes the complaint to be considered using the Complaints Procedure and the RTO's complaint form)

The staff member taking the complaint/appeal will record the following information:

- Complainant's/appellant's full name, address, phone/email address.
- Why the complaint/appeal has been escalated from a concern or is not to be treated as a concern.
- If the complaint/appeal relates to another person(s), that person(s) full name and position or if the student is not able to provide these details as much information as possible.
- The concerns raised by the complainant/appeal.
- The complainants/appellants desired outcome to the complaint/appeal.
- The complaint/appeal should receive a copy of the complaint/appeal form.

5.4 If a complainant/appellant raises an issue but is not willing to proceed with the complaint/appeal then they should be advised that because of the requirements of procedural fairness, in most circumstances no further action can be taken by the RTO

5.5 If the staff member resolves the complaint/appeal and the nature of the complaint/appeal is in regards to the RTO management systems, the quality of training and assessment, the quality of client services or a non-compliance of the VET Quality Framework; the staff member should

- 5.5.1 Clarify and document the details of the complaint/appeal with the complainant/appellant
- 5.5.2 Record the complaint/appeal and its outcomes in the Student Management System (SMS)
- 5.5.3 Inform the Director (or delegated person) of the details of the complaint/appeal and the action implemented
- 5.5.4 Generate an acknowledgement letter from the SMS to the complainant/appellant of the complaint/appeal and its outcome.

- 5.6 If the staff member receiving the complaint/appeal is unable to resolve the issue, or it is outside of the staff member's area of responsibility; then the staff member should
- 5.6.1 Record the complaint/appeal in the SMS
  - 5.6.2 Request the complainant/appellant put the complaint/appeal in writing to the CEO (or delegated person).
  - 5.6.3 Provide advice about anonymous complaints
  - 5.6.4 Direct or assist in directing the person to another person who could assist
  - 5.6.5 Provide assistance with a Complaints and Appeals form.
- 5.7 The CEO (or delegated person) will
- 5.7.1 Provide an acknowledgement in writing of the complaint/appeal including the Complaints and Appeals Procedure, a review of the complaint/appeal (for clarification) and the anticipated outcome by the complainant/appellant. If a complaint/appeal cannot be investigated by the RTO (for whatever reason), then the CEO should inform the complainant/appellant at this point and refer them to the most appropriate body.
  - 5.7.2 Review the complaint/appeal within five (5) working days and make a decision about the complaint/appeal;
  - 5.7.3 Interview the respondent to the complaint/appeal, outlining the specific allegations that have been made about them, and giving them the opportunity to make a full response. (During the investigation process, the complainant/appellant must be given the opportunity to present his/her case (with the provision of a mutually acceptable support person and/or independent adviser in attendance, if required). This will be at no cost to the student)
  - 5.7.4 Determine the appropriate action, if any;
  - 5.7.5 Advise the parties of the action and their recourse to further action/appeal
  - 5.7.6 Record the actions in the Improvement Register; and implement the actions.
- 5.8 No action relating to an enrolment status is to be taken until such time as the complaint/appeal has been resolved. However, the CEO retains the right to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the student and/or of others.
- 5.9 After the investigation process is complete, the CEO (or delegated person) will provide a written response within fourteen (14) working days to the complainant/appellant, of the action taken and the reasons for the decision.
- 5.10 If, at any stage, the process exceeds the timelines stated, or more than 60 calendar days are needed to process and finalise the complaint/appeal; the RTO will:
- 5.10.1 Inform the complainant/appellant in writing of the delay, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and
  - 5.10.2 Regularly update the complainant on the progress of the matter and ensure these are recorded in the SMS.
- 5.11 The CEO (or delegated person) will review the action to determine its effectiveness and client's satisfaction.
- 5.12 If the client is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they can appeal the outcome in accordance with the RTO's procedure Appeals Procedure.
- 5.13 Any complaint/appeal which appears to be related to any illegal activity such as theft, assault, etc., will be referred to the appropriate authority after discussion with the person making the complaint/appeal.

5.14 Written records of the complaint/appeal will be retained in the complaints/appeals file and a copy included in the relevant student's file, where applicable. All records of complaint will be maintained in accordance with the procedure Records Management.

5.15 The organisation seeks to prevent complaints by ensuring that students are satisfied with their training experience and their training product and its outcomes. Personnel are expected to be fair, courteous and helpful in all dealings with students.

6. REFERENCES

- Student Handbook;
- PSSC VET Quality Manual
- Appeals Procedure;
- Records Management Procedure;
- VET Quality Framework;

7. RECORDS

- Improvement Register;
- Complaint files.

*For more information regarding complaints and appeals with all VET subjects studied at Pimpama State Secondary College, please contact Tony Byrnes (RTO manager) [abyrn53@eq.edu.au](mailto:abyrn53@eq.edu.au) or 55409333*