

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Grievances, Complaints and Appeals

POLICY

Purpose and Scope

The Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure outlines <RTOs> approach to managing dissatisfaction or concern of our stakeholders, so that any issue(s) can be dealt with promptly and effectively. This policy and procedure supports natural justice, procedural fairness and is designed to bring about reconciliation.

This policy and procedure applies to all Students, prospective Students, clients, referral agents, staff and other stakeholders of Work Savvy. This policy and procedure is relevant to both academic and non-academic complaints and grievances.

This policy and procedure supports compliance with Standard 6, Clauses 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 and the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011.

Definitions

Academic matters	Relate to student enrolment, progress, assessment, course content or awards in a VET course of study.
Appeal	A formal request to review a decision that has been made on an issue such as assessment(s), withdrawal and refund, or on a previously submitted grievance(s) or complaint(s).
Complaint	Dissatisfaction with any service provided by, or on behalf of, < RTO>. A complaint may be formal or informal.
Complaint types	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The enrolment, induction/orientation process• The quality of training and resources provided• Training and assessment matters, including student progress, timeframes for completion, assessment results, curriculum and awards in a course of study• Withdrawals and refunds• Access to personal records• Bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment• Decisions made• The way someone has been treated• Staff concern
Grievance	A problem or concern of an academic or non-academic nature raised by a stakeholder which is believed by that stakeholder, to disadvantage them in the course of their study or employment that is to be investigated formally.
Non-academic matters	Relate to to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the Student. Non-academic matters may arise from events occurring at an RTO or from decisions made by the RTO. Non-academic matters may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discrimination• Vilification

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual harassment• Other forms of harassment• Student amenities• General complaints including dissatisfaction with services• Complaints about financial matters• Payments, application procedures, exclusions from events and facilities and the use or misuse of personal information.
Stakeholder	Any party that has an interest in the operations of Work Savvy

Policy

1. Complaints and appeals systems

Work Savvy is committed to an accessible, effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints and appeals system.

This will be achieved by:

- A culture that views complaints and appeals as an opportunity to improve the organisation and how it works.
- A complaints and appeals handling system that is client focused and helps Work Savvy to improve practices and prevent reoccurrence.
- Ensuring a complaint or appeal is resolved promptly, objectively, confidentially and with sensitivity.
- Ensuring the views of each party are respected and that each party is not discriminated against nor victimised.
- Ensuring there is a consistent response to complaints and appeals.

The following timeframes will be met:

- Attempts to resolve any complaints, concerns and appeals fairly and equitably within ten (10) working days from receipt of a notice of complaint/appeal.
- Where more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint/appeal, the complainant or appellant is notified of the reason why more than 60 calendar days are required.

Record keeping will be maintained:

- All formal complaints and appeals, and their outcomes will be recorded in the Complaints and Register.
- All informal complaints and their outcomes will be recorded on the Complaints Register.
- A written record of all complaints and appeals handled under this Policy and Procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of five (5) years to allow all parties appropriate access to these records.
- The register is reviewed by management and used for improvement and learning.
- All records relating to complaints and appeals will be treated as confidential and will be covered by the Work Savvy Privacy Policy.

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Enrolment status of student:

- The student will remain enrolled throughout the complaint investigation process.
- Where there is a threat to the safety or well-being of the student, staff or other stakeholders the student's enrolment may be suspended. This will be determined by the CEO.
- A student may be suspended from attending class while the complaint is being investigated. This is at the discretion of the CEO.

2. Resolving issues before they become a complaint

Work Savvy will provide support to the student to assist in resolving issues before they become complaints.

- Complaints and grievances are to be resolved, preferably informally and directly between the involved parties. Student support is available to assist students to resolve issues.
- Any complaint about the conduct of a staff member should be raised directly with the relevant line manager, CFO or CEO or via email ceo@stridelearning.com.au
- Any issues or complaints resolved informally should be recorded.

3. Lodging a complaint

Where an issue is unable to be resolved informally, a formal complaint can be submitted and will be investigated according to the procedure.

4. Appealing a complaint outcome decision

Where a Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal the decision.

All appeals must be made in writing.

5. Assessment Outcome Appeal

Students are entitled to appeal an assessment outcome within 21 days.

Where an independent assessment is undertaken all parties will be bound by the independent assessor's decision.

6. External Dispute Resolution

Where a complaint or appeal is unable to be resolved internally to the satisfaction of all parties, it may be appropriate for an independent party to mediate. Work Savvy will offer to arrange this mediation, at cost recovery charge to the complainant.

7. Non-limitation of policy

This policy and related procedure do not replace or modify those or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this policy and related procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under the Australia's Consumer Protection laws. Also, this policy does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

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1. Lodgement and receipt of a complaint

Procedure		Responsibility
1.1	Where complaint is made in writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where an issue cannot be resolved informally, it can be escalated by emailing a completed Work Savvy Complaint Lodgement form to ceo@stridelearning.com.au 	Complainant
1.2	Where complaint is made verbally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant staff member will document the complaint and email it to ceo@stridelearning.com.au Details of the complaint are to be treated confidentially by the receiving staff member. 	Relevant staff member
1.3	Acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint will be sent within 48 hours of the form being emailed to ceo@stridelearning.com.au	Manager, Quality and Compliance
1.4	The complaint is added to the Complaints Register, allocated a code (year_order) and an investigation folder established.	Manager, Quality and Compliance

2. Investigation of a Complaint

Procedure		Responsibility
2.1	A lead investigator is allocated to investigate the complaint. This will be a member of the Quality Team.	Manager, Quality and Compliance
2.2	Other members of the investigation team may be allocated as appropriate.	Manager, Quality and Compliance
2.3	The investigator will determine the actions required to undertake the investigation. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview with the complainant Interview with witnesses Review of student or staff files Review of relevant policies and procedures Research external information, as appropriate. 	Investigator
2.4	The investigator will maintain detailed records of investigation activities.	Investigator

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2.5	The investigator will complete the Complaints Investigation Form to document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of complaint • Actions taken during investigation • Summary of findings • Recommended outcomes 	Investigator
2.6	Any issues or concerns during the investigation are escalated to the Manager, Quality and Compliance or CEO, as appropriate, for guidance or action.	Investigator

3. Approval of Investigation Outcome (include communication)

Procedure		Responsibility
3.1	The investigator will submit the Complaint Investigation Report to the Manager, Quality & Compliance or CEO, as appropriate, for review and consideration.	Investigator
3.2	Where appropriate, the investigator or Manager, Quality and Compliance will meet with the CEO to brief them on the findings of the investigation.	Manager, Quality and Compliance CEO
3.3	The CEO will review the Complaints Investigation Form and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the findings and outcomes in full, or • Partially approve the findings and outcomes, with an addendum, or • Not approve any findings or outcomes, instead rendering a different finding or reinvestigation into the Complaint. 	CEO
3.4	The Manager, Quality and Compliance, or delegate, will action the outcomes of the investigation.	Manager, Quality and Compliance
3.5	The Complainant will be advised of the outcome of the investigation within five (5) working days.	Manager, Quality and Compliance

4. Appealing a decision or outcome

Procedure		Responsibility
4.1	All appeals must be made in writing within five (5) working days of the decision being made to the CEO via email ceo@stridelearning.com.au . All request for appeal must include the reason(s) for the appeal.	Complainant
4.2	Where a Complainant requests a face-to-face meeting, the CEO will consider the request and respond within two (2) days.	CEO

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4.3	The Work Savvy will advise the Complainant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting details including date, time and format That they are able to have a support person present at the meeting. This support person is unable to actively participate in the meeting. 	Manager, Quality and Compliance
4.4	The Complainant is required to advise Work Savvy the third party attending the meeting at minimum of two (2) days prior to the meeting.	Complainant
4.5	Minutes of the meeting will be taken by the Manager, Quality and Compliance or appropriate delegate. The minutes of the meeting will be made available to the Complainant within two (2) days.	Manager, Quality and Compliance
4.6	The CEO will advise in writing within five (5) business days after the meeting, the outcome of the appeal and the reason(s) for the decision.	CEO

5. Assessment outcome appeal

Procedure		Responsibility
5.1	Where a student wishes to appeal an assessment outcome, they are required to notify the General Manager, Operations via email studentsupport@stridelearning.com.au	GMO
5.2	An initial internal review will be completed by the General Manager, Operations and Manager, Quality and Compliance. This internal review will determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the initial assessment outcome stands If the initial assessment outcome should be reviewed by an independent assessor. 	GMO, Manager, Quality and Compliance
5.3	The student is advised of the outcome of the initial internal review by the General Manager, Operations.	GMO
5.4	An independent review of the assessment evidence and outcome are undertaken by a qualified, independent assessor. This will be completed within ten (10) days. This will be at cost recovery basis to the Student and payable upfront.	Independent Assessor
5.5	The student is advised in writing of the outcome of the independent assessor.	GMO
5.6	All parties are bound by the assessment determination of the independent assessor.	All

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6. External Dispute Resolution

Procedure		Responsibility
6.1	Where a complaint or appeal is unable to be resolved internally to the satisfaction of all parties, it may be appropriate for an independent party to mediate. The CEO will make arrangements for this mediation, at cost recovery charge to the complainant.	CEO
6.2	Work Savvy will engage the Resolution Institute as its external referring agency. The complainant will be responsible for any charges laid by the external agency.	CEO
6.3	The CEO or CFO delegate will represent Work Savvy during mediation activities.	CEO, CFO
6.4	All parties are bound by the outcomes agreed to during mediation activities.	All
6.5	Where a complaint remains unresolved after the external dispute resolution process, complainants may decide to refer the matter to an independent complaint's agency such as ASQA (http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/making-a-complaint.html).	Complainant

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Related Documents

POLICY AND PROCEDURE Access and Equity

POLICY AND PROCEDURE Fair Treatment and Equal Opportunity

POLICY AND PROCEDURE Privacy Policy

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Complaint Lodgement Form

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Complaint Investigation Report

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Assessment Outcome Appeal form

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Complaints Register

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Continuous Improvement Register

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Student Handbook

Responsible Officer

The responsible officer for the implementation of this Policy and Procedure is the Manager, Quality and Compliance.

Publishing details

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5	23.10.2023	Updated for currency of practices.