

Feedback, Appeals and Complaints Policy



- Purpose:** This policy provides a transparent system of recording, solving and monitoring complaints and appeals for stakeholders of Access Australia Group (AAG) and its trading divisions. Through this policy suggested improvements and lodged complaints are taken as positive attempts to improve the services and operations of AAG.
- Scope:** This policy applies to students, prospective students, clients, staff and any other stakeholders of AAG and its trading divisions. The ultimate responsibility lies with the CEO of AAG.
- Reference:** Standard 6 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
Section 1.5 of Schedule 1 of the 2016 VET Funding Contract.
AAG's Feedback, Appeals Complaints procedure (QP1-001)
AAG's Privacy Policy (QPOL1-008)

Definitions:

Appeals

A request to review a judgement that has previously been made on a complaint.

Appellant

A person requesting an appeal to a previous judgement.

Complaint

The informal or formal expression of dissatisfaction or concern regarding any aspects AAG's operations, services, staff or candidates.

Complainant

A person making a complaint.

Stakeholders

Any person with an interest or concern with AAG. This may include clients, customers, jobseekers, staff, students, prospective students, etc.

Policy

Complaints and appeals are a part of any business or organisation but they expected to be at a reduced through open and frank stakeholder feedback and continuous improvement processes. AAG will deal with all complaints about our organisation, third parties, staff, clients and students.

Complaints and appeals policy, procedure and form are accessible to all stakeholders through reception at each AAG site and on the Access Skills Training (AST) website www.ast.org.au/student-information. It is also available to staff via the intranet. The Feedback, Appeals and Complaints Form (QF1-003). The complaints and appeals process will be shared with clients, jobseekers and students at their initial meeting or through induction.

It is expected that stakeholders will expected to seek a resolution to the complaint, through mediation between both parties, prior to it becoming a part of the formal process.

The relevant member of the management team (e.g. for AST it is the Executive Manager - RTO) will nominate the appropriate person (independent of the parties named) to investigate the complaint. That person will meet with the parties individually named. Issues such as assessment decisions, incidents or other issues are to be lodged using the Feedback, Appeals and Complaints Form (QF1-003). Each of the parties shall be provided the opportunity, separately, to provide relevant information prior to a decision being taken by a neutral party who is independent of the decision being reviewed.

Appropriate nominated person/s who will investigate the complaint should meet with the parties individually. Issues such as assessment decisions, incidents or other issues are to be lodged using the Feedback, Appeals and Complaints Form (QF1-003).

Persons making a complaint or undertaking the appeals process with AAG will be treated with fairness and with respect. Additional support may be provided to the client to ensure their issues are appropriately presented.

AAG's complaints and appeals process will ensure that the person making a complaint or an appeal will have their right to privacy protected at all times. They will be treated with respect and be dealt with objectively. At every stage of the complaint and appeal process principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be maintained and the complaint or appeal finalised as soon as practicable.

All matters to do with the client feedback, complaint or appeal should be lodged through the Feedback, Appeals and Complaints Form (QF1-003).

The decision maker of the outcome will be independent of the decision being reviewed.

Where the complaint or appeal remains unresolved, the complainant may appeal to an independent mediator, which is to be appointed on a needs basis, by the CEO, or his/her representative.

As part of AAG's ISO Quality Assurance processes, AAG will ascertain the type of complaints, frequency, and the reasons for their occurrence. In this way, we aim to continually improve the quality of our services and internal processes.

Timeframes

The person making the complaint or appeal will be notified of the timeframes of the process in writing. The timeframes listed below commence from the time the formal written receipt of the complaint or appeal has been received by AAG:

- The complainant will be notified by the manager within ten (10) days as to the progress of the complaint or appeal.
- Regardless of the outcome, all parties are to be notified, in writing, of the outcome within thirty (30) days.
- When more than sixty (60) calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, AAG will inform the complainant or appellant in writing of why this time is required and will regularly update the complainant or appellant of the progress of the complaint or appeal.

Please note: You can also make a complaint externally to the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service / National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline on **1800 880 052**.

Note:

- If a criminal offence has been committed, it must be reported to the police.