

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

policy and procedure

REIQ is committed to providing a fair complaints and appeals process and respects the right of stakeholders to lodge complaints and requests for appeals about decisions. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be adopted at each stage of the complaint and appeal process and all people involved will be treated with courtesy and respect. The lodgement of a complaint or a request for an appeal will not disadvantage any stakeholder in their dealings with REIQ.

The policy is made publicly available by including it here, in the Student Handbook, which is available from the REIQ's website.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a specific action or service of REIQ or an allegation involving the conduct of:

- REIQ, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- a third party providing services on behalf of REIQ, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- a student of REIQ.

What is an appeal?

An appeal is a request for a review of a decision made by REIQ (or a third party providing services on REIQ's behalf), including decisions about assessment.

Value of complaints and appeals

REIQ values complaints and requests for appeals as opportunities to identify operational improvements to quickly and appropriately respond to changes in the marketplace or stakeholder expectations. The subject of complaints and requests for appeals and outcomes are recorded on a register to allow analysis of matters over time and identify any common factors that may need action.

It is preferable, to all parties, that matters are resolved as quickly and effectively as possible and stakeholders, including students, are encouraged to raise issues of concern directly with their trainer and assessor or the Director at the earliest opportunity with the view to addressing the matter in an informal but effective matter.

Procedures for making a complaint or lodging an appeal

If a stakeholder, including a student, is unable to raise issues of concern directly with their trainer and assessor or the Training Services Manager with the view to addressing the matter in an informal manner, or if the stakeholder, including the student, is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal approach, a formal complaint or request for appeal may be lodged.

A complaint or request for appeal:

- must be made within 15 calendar days of the event, circumstance or decision that is the subject of the complaint or request for appeal;
- must be made in writing using the Complaint & Appeals Form available at www.reiq.com or otherwise in writing provided the following information is included:
 - o whether you are lodging a complaint or requesting an appeal;
 - o your name, home phone number, mobile number and email address;
 - o the date of the event, circumstance or decision that is the subject of the complaint or request for appeal;
 - o details of the complaint or appeal (you may attach supporting documentation if required);
 - o any steps you may have taken to resolve the issue;
 - o what outcome would you like to see from raising this complaint / appeal;
 - o a statement that the information provided is, to the best of your knowledge, true and correct, that you acknowledge that REIQ may use the information provided to investigate the complaint and that you understand that this information may also be used for the continuous improvement of the RTO's operations; and
 - o your signature and the date (unless submitting by email).
- will be acknowledged in writing within two (2) calendar days of receipt of a complaint or request for appeal.

Complaints and appeals policy and procedure

Procedures for investigating a complaint or appeal

Complaints and requests for appeals will be investigated by a person or persons who was not/were not involved in the event, circumstance or decision that is the subject of the complaint or request for appeal.

Details of complaints and requests for appeals will only be made known by those directly concerned.

The person or persons conducting the investigation will interview the person making the complaint and, if the complaint was about a person, will separately interview the person the complaint is about. They may also review documentation, including RTO policies and procedures and may, if relevant, interview other stakeholders and staff.

In the case of an appeal against an assessment or other decision, the person or persons conducting the investigation will review the decision and the evidence used to make the decision. If it is an assessment decision being appealed, the assessor and student will be interviewed separately to find out whether there is any relevant information not contained in the learner's file.

A complainant or appellant may be accompanied by and/or assisted by a support person at any time.

Regardless of the outcome, and while complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable, the complainant or appellant will be notified of the outcome, and reasons for the outcome, in writing within 30 calendar days of the complaint or appeal being lodged.

Where REIQ considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise a complaint or appeal, the complainant or appellant will be:

- informed in writing of the reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and
- regularly updated on the progress of the matter.

Review by a third party

If the complaints and appeals process fails to resolve a complaint or appeal, the complainant or appellant may request a review by a party independent of themselves and REIQ. A mediator can be provided by the Australian Mediation Association; however, the complainant or appellant must organise the mediation and meet all costs of engaging a mediator. The RTO will reasonably cooperate in any organised mediation session/activity.

Use of complaints and appeals to inform continuous improvement

The causes of complaints and appeals are identified and corrective action is taken to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence and to inform the continuous improvement of RTO operations. The *Complaints and Appeals Form* ensures that such causes and opportunities are captured in the RTO's continuous improvement records and procedures for monitoring compliance and continuous improvement ensure the systematic consideration of these causes and opportunities for improvement.