

1. Policy Statement

AusQ Training is committed to providing candidates, staff and stakeholders the best possible environment on which to study or work. The organisation understands that on occasion, there may be instances of dissatisfaction and acknowledges that the cause(s) must be addressed and rectified promptly.

In such instances AusQ Training invites feedback from the dissatisfied party so that a resolution can be found and as an opportunity to consolidate the feedback into a review and improvement of the AusQ Training RTO policies, procedures and practices.

AusQ Training will address any and all complaints in a fair, constructive and timely manner. The complainant has the right for the complaint to be heard and for an impartial decision to be made at no cost to themselves. Complainants have the right to appeal a decision.

In doing so, AusQ Training:

- has written processes in place for collecting and dealing with appeals in a constructive and timely manner;
- ensures that these procedures are communicated to all staff, third party partners and customers;
- ensures that each appeal and its outcome are recorded in writing;
- ensures that each appeal is heard by an independent person or panel;
- ensures that each appellant has the opportunity to formally present his or her case;
- ensures that each appellant is given a written statement of the appeal outcomes, including reasons for the decision;
- takes appropriate action upon the subject of any appeal that is found to be substantiated; and
- utilises outcomes of appeals to review current practices which may potentially lead to continuous improvement.

This policy supports AusQ Training to provide a process for complaints and appeals to be heard and actioned. All complaints and appeals received by AusQ Training will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.

1.1 Purpose

AusQ Training is committed to providing quality training and assessment in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all appeals are dealt with in a constructive and timely manner.

This policy is based on providing and maintaining training and assessment services that are fair and reasonable and afford a forum where issues or inadequacies regarding assessment or services can be raised and resolved.

The objective of this policy is to ensure that AusQ Training staff and third party partners, act in a professional manner at all times. This policy provides customers with a clear process to register any complaint and/or appeal. It ensures all parties involved are kept informed of the resulting actions and outcomes.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

1. All AusQ Training employees
2. All contractors working on behalf of AusQ Training
3. All of AusQ Training's activities and operations

1.3 Principles

A complaint or appeal may include, but is not limited to;

Complaints

- Course advice and enrolment
- Suspension and/or cancellation of enrolment
- Program delivery
- Marketing and promotional activity

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Appeals Policy



- Personal safety
- Customer service and administration
- Issue of results certificates , statement of attainment
- Leading resources
- Fees & charges
- Equity, access, discrimination , harassment and bullying

Appeal

- Assessment process and decision
- Candidate progress and academic progress decisions

Underpinning Principles

- a) Customers have the right to lodge an appeal against an assessment decision if they feel they were unfairly treated during an assessment, and/or where they feel the assessment decision is incorrect and they have grounds for an appeal.
- b) Customers or stakeholders have the right to lodge a complaint if they feel they were dissatisfied by the service, behavior and/or conduct provided by AusQ Training.
- c) The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process.
- d) The Complaint & Appeal Policy is publicly available, via AusQ Training website.
- e) The appellant can provide detail of their appeal either verbally and/or in writing.
- f) All appeals must be lodged within 14 calendar days of the date of the assessment result notification to the customer.
- g) If the appeals process fails to resolve the appeal or the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the matter will be referred to an independent third party for review, at the request of the appellant. All costs incurred for the third party review will be advised to the appellant.
- h) Every appeal is heard by a suitably qualified independent assessor or panel, who will be asked to make an independent assessment of the application.
- i) All appeals are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable.
- j) AusQ Training may charge a fee for the appeals process where an external assessor is engaged. Should this be the case, all costs incurred will be advised to the appellant.
- k) If the appeal will take in excess of 60 calendar days to finalise AusQ Training will inform the appellant in writing providing the reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. The appellant will also be provided with regular updates on the progress of the appeal.
- l) AusQ Training strives to deal with any complaint and/or appeal issues as soon as they emerge, in order to avoid further disruption or the need for a formal complaint process.
- m) All appeals will be handled 'In-Confidence' and will not affect or bias the progress of the participant in any current or future training.

Grounds for Appeal

Valid grounds for an appeal against an assessment decision (where the customer feels the assessment decision is incorrect) could include the following:

- a) The judgement as to whether competency has been achieved and demonstrated was made incorrectly;
- b) The judgement was not made in accordance with the Assessment Plan;
- c) Alleged bias of the assessor;
- d) Alleged lack of competence of the assessor;
- e) Alleged wrong information from the assessor regarding the assessment process;
- f) Alleged inappropriate assessment process for the particular competency;
- g) Faulty or inappropriate equipment; and/or
- h) Inappropriate conditions.

Appeal Outcomes

An investigation into an Appeal may result in one of the following outcomes:

- a) Appeal is upheld; in this event the following options will be available:
 1. The original assessment will be re-assessed, potentially by another assessor.
 2. Appropriate recognition will be granted.
 3. A new assessment shall be conducted/arranged.

- b) Appeal is rejected/not upheld; in accordance with AusQ Training assessment policy the customer will be required to:
 1. undertake further training or experience prior to further assessment; or
 2. re-submit further evidence; or
 3. submit/undertake a new assessment.

Appeals Process

All appeals shall follow the below process:

- a) Appeal to be made in writing within 14 calendar days of notification of the assessment decision using the Complaint & Appeals Form.
- b) A submitted Complaint & Appeals Form will constitute a formal appeal from the appellant. Further detail may be provided by the appellant verbally.
- c) The RTO Manager shall be informed of receipt of any appeal.
- d) The RTO Manager may delegate responsibility for the resolution of the appeal, as appropriate.
- e) Appeals will be processed in accordance with the Complaint & Appeals flowchart – Annex A.
- f) Appeals, where possible, are to be resolved within 28 days of the initial application.
- g) In all cases the final conclusion will be endorsed by the RTO Manager.
- h) The appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, within seven (7) days of the resolution.
- i) If the appellant is not satisfied with the decision they have the option to seek outside assistance to pursue the appeal.

Records of all appeals and their outcomes are maintained securely.

Records of appeals will include:

- a) How the appeal was dealt with;
- b) The outcome of the appeal;
- c) The timeframes for resolution of the appeal;
- d) The potential causes of the appeal; and
- e) The steps taken to resolve the appeal.

All documentation from any complaint and/or an appeal are maintained in accordance with Records Management Policy.

All appeals practices are monitored by the RTO Manager and will be discussed at Management Meetings with areas for improvement identified and acted upon. Refer to Continuous Improvement Policy.

2. Accountabilities

The RTO Manager is the Appeals Resolution Officer. The RTO Manager may delegate responsibility for the resolution of the appeal if necessary.

Details concerning the scope of the Complaints & Appeals Policy are to be clearly displayed throughout the organisation and contained within the Staff Induction Process, Student & Employer Handbook and AusQ Training website.

3. Review

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the Director at least once in every three year period taking into account the purpose of the policy and the outcome of the compliance review. Review dates will be in accordance to those set by the Document Management System (DMS).

4. Definitions

Formal Complaint means a written expression of dissatisfaction where the complainant is seeking rectification / resolution in line with AusQ Training Complaints & Appeals policy and procedure.

Informal Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction where the complainant brings a matter to the attention of AusQ Training but does not wish further involvement in the resolution process. Informal complaints are of a low level of risk.

Appeal means the process by which a person disputes the outcome of a formal complaint.

The following words and expressions have the following specific meaning, as in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

Assessment means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.

Third party means any party that provides services on behalf of the RTO but does not include a contract of employment between an RTO and its employee.

5. Related Documents

- Complaint & Appeals Procedure
- Complaint Form
- Appeals Form

