Complaints & Appeals Policy

1. Policy Statement

AusQ Training is committed to providing a fair, accessible, transparent and timely process for providing feedback, making complaints and lodging appeals.

Complaints and appeals will be managed:

- fairly, objectively and consistently;
- using procedural fairness and natural justice;
- without victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage;
- without unreasonable barriers to access;
- confidentially and in accordance with privacy requirements;
- with reasonable adjustment and support where required; and
- in a manner that supports continuous improvement, risk management and self-assurance.

Making a complaint or appeal will not, in itself, affect a person's current or future dealings with AusQ Training or a student's enrolment, training or assessment.

AusQ Training retains responsibility for complaints relating to services provided by third parties acting on its behalf.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes the process for receiving, investigating, resolving and reviewing complaints and appeals.

It applies to:

- prospective, current and former students;
- employers, clients and stakeholders;
- workers and contractors; and
- third-party providers and partners.

It covers matters relating to AusQ Training's activities, including:

- enrolment and pre-enrolment information;
- training and assessment;
- assessment, RPL and credit transfer decisions;
- student support and reasonable adjustment;
- administration, fees and certification;
- academic integrity;
- bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation;
- privacy;
- workers and third parties; and
- any other service or activity provided by or on behalf of AusQ Training.

3. Access to the Process

Information about providing feedback, making a complaint or lodging an appeal will be:

- provided to prospective students before enrolment;
- available throughout participation;
- included in relevant student information;
- available on the AusQ Training website; and
- provided to relevant workers, employers, clients and third parties.

Information will be accessible and available in alternative formats or with reasonable assistance where required.

Website: https://www.ausqtraining.com.au/student-information/

There is no fee to lodge a complaint or appeal with AusQ Training.

Complaints and appeals may be lodged through the online form or by email to **enrol@ausqtraining.com.au**.

A person does not have to attempt informal resolution before lodging a formal complaint or appeal.

4. Complaints and Appeals

4.1 Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about AusQ Training, its workers, services, processes, facilities, training, assessment, support or a third party acting on its behalf.

4.2 Appeal

An appeal is a formal request for review of a decision made by AusQ Training, including assessment, RPL, credit transfer or other decisions where a review pathway is available.

A person may lodge an appeal without first making a complaint where the matter is appropriately dealt with as an appeal.

4.3 Assessment Appeals

Assessment appeals may consider:

- assessment requirements and conditions;
- evidence submitted;
- assessor judgement;
- reasonable adjustment;
- principles of assessment; and
- rules of evidence.

Assessment appeals will be reviewed by an appropriately qualified and credentialled person who was not responsible for the original decision, where practicable.

5. Lodging a Complaint or Appeal

A complaint or appeal should provide sufficient information to identify the matter and may include:

- relevant dates and people;
- supporting evidence;
- the decision being appealed, where applicable;
- the outcome sought; and
- any support or accessibility requirements.

AusQ Training will assist a person who requires assistance to lodge a complaint or appeal.

Appeals should normally be lodged within 10 business days of the decision being communicated. AusQ Training may accept a late appeal where reasonable circumstances exist, including disability, accessibility, illness, personal circumstances or where applying the timeframe would create an unreasonable barrier.

6. Acknowledgement and Triage

AusQ Training will acknowledge complaints and appeals within **2 business days, u**nless exceptional circumstances prevent this.

The acknowledgement will, where appropriate, explain:

- the process and expected timeframe;
- the person responsible;
- available support and the right to a support person;
- information required; and
- applicable review or external pathways.

Each matter will be recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register and assessed for:

- type and nature of matter;
- urgency and risk;
- safety or wellbeing concerns;
- conflicts of interest;
- need for interim action;
- need for escalation; and
- applicable external or independent review.

Serious, systemic or high-risk matters will be escalated to the Director/CEO or appropriately authorised person.

7. Investigation and Procedural Fairness

Investigations will be proportionate to the nature, complexity and seriousness of the matter.

AusQ Training may review records, evidence, assessment material, communications and statements and may speak with relevant parties.

Relevant parties will be given an appropriate opportunity to provide information and respond to relevant allegations or evidence.

Decision-makers must be impartial and free from conflicts of interest. A person must not investigate or decide a matter where they were directly involved, made the original decision, are the subject of the complaint or otherwise have a conflict.

Conflicts and reviewer appointments will be documented.

8. Accessibility, Support and Confidentiality

AusQ Training will provide reasonable assistance and adjustment to enable access to the complaints and appeals process, which may include:

- assistance completing forms;
- alternative formats or communication methods;
- language or interpreter support;
- additional time;
- flexible meeting arrangements; and
- other reasonable adjustments.

A complainant or appellant may have a support person. The support person may provide reasonable assistance but must not answer questions on behalf of the person or unreasonably interfere with the process.

Complaints and appeals will be managed confidentially. Information will only be disclosed where required for managing the matter, meeting legal or regulatory obligations or implementing an outcome.

Anonymous complaints may be accepted and considered where sufficient information is available. AusQ Training may be unable to investigate or provide an individual outcome where the complainant cannot be identified or contacted.

9. Third-Party Complaints

AusQ Training retains responsibility for complaints relating to services delivered by or through a third party.

Students and other stakeholders are not required to resolve a complaint directly with the third party before AusQ Training will accept or investigate the matter.

AusQ Training may seek information from the third party and require appropriate corrective action.

10. Interim Actions

Where necessary, AusQ Training may implement temporary arrangements to manage risks to safety, wellbeing, assessment integrity, other students, workers or regulatory compliance.

Any restriction or suspension must be:

- necessary and proportionate;
- risk-based;
- documented;
- communicated with reasons; and
- reviewed as appropriate.

Suspension will not be used as a punishment for a person making a complaint or appeal.

11. Outcomes and Timeframes

AusQ Training will seek to provide an outcome within 10 business days of receiving a complaint or appeal where practicable.

Where this cannot be achieved, the complainant/appellant will receive an update explaining the reason for the delay, progress and revised timeframe.

Where a matter exceeds 60 calendar days, AusQ Training will provide written reasons for the delay and regular progress updates until resolution.

Written outcomes will include, where relevant:

- the issue considered;
- findings and reasons;
- evidence considered;
- corrective action or remedy;
- responsibilities and timeframes;
- impacts on enrolment, assessment, fees, records or certification; and
- available internal, independent or external review pathways.

12. Internal Review and External Pathways

Where an internal review is available, a dissatisfied complainant or appellant may request a review of the outcome.

Internal reviews will be undertaken by an appropriately authorised person who was not directly involved in the original decision or investigation and has no conflict of interest.

Requests for review should normally be made within 10 business days of the outcome. Late requests may be accepted where reasonable circumstances exist.

Where a matter cannot be resolved internally, AusQ Training will provide information about appropriate independent external review or complaint pathways.

Where the applicable Standards require independent review to be available at no cost or low cost to the student, AusQ Training will ensure this requirement is met.

Where a matter concerns AusQ Training's compliance with VET regulatory requirements, the complainant may be able to refer the matter to the Training Accreditation Council (TAC), subject to TAC's jurisdiction and requirements.

TAC is not an alternative appeal body for every individual complaint or assessment decision.

13. Continuous Improvement

Complaints and appeals will be monitored and analysed to identify:

- recurring or systemic issues;
- trends and risks;
- root causes;
- accessibility issues;
- training or assessment issues; and
- opportunities for improvement.

Corrective and preventative actions will be assigned, monitored and checked for effectiveness.

Serious or systemic issues will be escalated to management.

14. Records and Evidence

AusQ Training will maintain records sufficient to demonstrate that complaints and appeals have been appropriately managed.

Records may include:

- complaint/appeal forms and lodgement details;
- Complaints & Appeals Register;
- acknowledgement and communication records;
- triage and risk assessments;
- evidence and investigation notes;
- statements and submissions;
- conflict of interest declarations;
- reviewer appointments;
- assessment evidence;
- outcome letters;
- corrective and preventative actions;
- continuous improvement records;
- effectiveness checks; and
- external review or regulatory referral records.

Records will be securely maintained in accordance with AusQ Training's records management requirements and applicable regulatory requirements.

15. Responsibilities

Director/CEO

The Director/CEO is responsible for:

- policy approval and governance;
- oversight of serious or systemic matters;
- ensuring adequate resources;
- monitoring significant risks and trends; and
- overseeing corrective action and continuous improvement.

RTO Manager

The RTO Manager is responsible for:

- managing complaints and appeals;
- ensuring acknowledgement and investigation;
- appointing appropriate reviewers;
- managing conflicts of interest;
- maintaining records and registers;
- monitoring timeframes;
- communicating outcomes;
- escalating significant matters; and
- monitoring continuous improvement.

Workers

Workers must:

- treat complaints and appeals respectfully;
- assist people to access the process;
- maintain confidentiality;
- declare conflicts;
- cooperate with investigations; and
- escalate serious or high-risk matters.

Third-Party Providers

Third-party providers must cooperate with AusQ Training's complaints and appeals process, provide relevant information, maintain confidentiality and implement required corrective actions.

16. Process

Matter raised → Complaint/Appeal lodged → Acknowledgement → Triage/Risk Assessment → Investigation/Review → Outcome → Corrective Action → Internal Review, where applicable → Independent/External Review, where applicable → Continuous Improvement

17. Key Timeframes

Activity	Timeframe
Acknowledgement	Within 2 business days
Investigation/review	Proportionate to complexity and risk
Outcome	Within 10 business days where practicable
Progress updates	Where resolution is delayed
Matters exceeding 60 days	Written reasons and regular updates
Appeal/review request	Normally within 10 business days
Late appeal/review	May be accepted where reasonable circumstances exist

18. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is to be read in conjunction with applicable legislation and regulatory requirements, including:

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011;
- RTO Standards 2025;
- Compliance Standards 2025;
- applicable WA Registration Standards and TAC requirements;
- Competition and Consumer Act 2010 and Australian Consumer Law;
- Privacy Act 1988;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992;
- Disability Standards for Education 2005;
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984;
- Age Discrimination Act 2004; and
- applicable Western Australian equal opportunity requirements.