

STUDENT COMPLAINT AND APPEAL POLICY

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

To ensure a fair, safe and supportive environment where students can learn and work effectively.

To ensure the complaints and appeals process feeds back into Centacare Employment and Training to correct the causes of problems and prevents recurrence of issues.

ALIGNMENT TO STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS (RTOs) 2015

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015	
Standards	6

RELATED POLICIES

- Centacare Employment and Training Grievance and Taking Action Responsibly Policy (HR)

RELATED FORMS AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

- Centacare Employment and Training Student Complaint and Appeal Procedure (RTO)
- Centacare Employment and Training Student Complaint and Appeal Form (RTO)
- Centacare Employment and Training Complaints & Appeals Register (Management)
- Centacare Employment and Training website
- Centacare Employment and Training VET Student Handbook (VET)
- Centacare Employment and Training SEE Student Handbook (SEE)
- Centacare Employment and Training VET Trainer Handbook (VET)
- Centacare Employment and Training SEE Teacher's Handbook (SEE)
- Centacare Employment and Training Grievance and Taking Action Responsibly Procedure (HR)

INTRODUCTION

At Centacare Employment and Training, we seek to provide a fair, safe and supportive environment where students can learn and work effectively. All students will be treated in a fair, courteous and respectful manner.

Student complaints and appeals will be acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively.

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An effective complaints and appeals system must not only solve an individual's problem, it must also feed information back through the organisation to correct the cause of the problem.

This policy covers student complaints or appeals relating to:

- a) The RTO, its teachers, trainers, assessors or other staff;
- b) Any third party providing services on behalf of the RTO; or
- c) Another student of the RTO.

Centacare Employment and Training has a separate complaints process for staff and volunteers. This process is managed by HR and relevant documentation is found in the HR policy and procedure folders.

All complaints and appeals are entered onto the Complaints and Appeals Register which is overseen by the management team and reviewed on a regular cycle to ensure systemic issues are identified.

Staff members who require further explanation, information or assistance in understanding aspects of this policy are encouraged to seek clarification from their Manager. If ever you are in doubt, ask – seek out the advice you need before you act.

DEFINITIONS

Appeal	<i>A request to review a decision, including assessment decisions made by the Centacare Employment and Training staff or a third party providing services on the Centacare Employment and Training's behalf.</i>
Appellant	<i>Person making an appeal.</i>
Complaint	<i>An expression of dissatisfaction with the behaviour or action of another, which has an unreasonable negative impact upon the complainant. In this context, complainants will be students of Centacare Employment and Training.</i>
Complainant	<i>Person raising a complaint.</i>
Concern	<i>A low level and/or initial matter brought to the attention of a staff member. Something that can be resolved easily and simply and is not symptomatic of a larger problem. This does not require a written response to a complainant.</i>
Serious Misconduct	<i>Serious Misconduct - wilful or deliberate behaviour by an employee of such a nature that it would be unreasonable to require the employer to continue employing the employee.</i>

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	<p><i>Examples of serious misconduct include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>theft</i> • <i>fraud</i> • <i>dishonesty</i> • <i>assault</i> • <i>being under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol at work to an extent that the employee cannot perform regular duties</i> • <i>gross disobedience ie. failing or refusing to follow a reasonable and lawful direction that is consistent with the contract of employment and</i> • <i>damaging the reputation, viability or profitability of the employer's business.</i>
<p>Complaints and Appeals Register</p>	<p><i>A confidential collection of documents that contain accurate descriptions of events. Centacare Employment and Training has one register which is kept in the Management/Registers folder.</i></p>

RESPONSIBILITIES

A concern, complaint or appeal may be lodged with any staff member either in person, by letter, via the website, via email or by telephone.

At Centacare Employment and Training we aim to resolve concerns, complaints and appeals quickly and without unnecessary escalation. However should a concern not be able to be resolved by the student and the trainer/teacher; the Student Complaint and Appeal Procedure and related documentation will be used.

All staff will work to ensure any concern, complaint or appeal is managed in a constructive, fair and timely manner, intended to bring a satisfactory resolution for all parties concerned. Any complaint relating to serious misconduct; or any complaint/appeal that cannot be resolved satisfactorily with the Centacare Employment and Training Complaint and Appeal Procedure Concern Response will become the responsibility of the Operations Manager, who may involve the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, SEE students may take an unresolved complaint/appeal to the Department of Education and Training (DET) SEE Program State Manager; and VET students may take an unresolved complaint/appeal to the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) Secretariat Manager of VET Compliance and/or the Department of Training and Workplace Development (DTWD). Details of how to contact these departments are displayed in learning spaces throughout Centacare Employment and Training.

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Furthermore, Centacare Employment and Training and/or the complainant may elect to employ an external mediation service to resolve matters that cannot be resolved internally.

The Chief Executive Officer, Operations Manager and the SEE Program Manager are responsible for monitoring the activity surrounding matters of complaints. They will ensure that the complainant is not disadvantaged by their action of lodging a complaint or appeal. In addition, they will log complaints into the Centacare Employment and Training Complaint and Appeal Register and monitor the register to gather essential information and improve student services.

The Managers are responsible for meeting the requirements of the relevant funding body, in regard to complaints management and reporting.

GUIDELINES

Centacare Employment and Training commits to ensuring that:

- 1 Students are aware of guidelines and procedures for handling complaints and appeals and that this information is presented in an easy to understand and straightforward manner.
- 2 A simplified Student Complaint and Appeal Procedure will be in all student handbooks and displayed in the teaching and learning spaces at Centacare Employment and Training sites.
- 3 This full policy document will be made available to any student who requests a copy.
- 4 Any complaint or appeal is handled professionally and confidentially and all parties to the complaint or appeal will have a clear understanding of the process involved in resolving the issue.
- 5 When a concern cannot be resolved, the Student Complaint and Appeal Procedure will be utilised. Students will be supported to document their concerns, if necessary. Initially complaints and appeals will go to the relevant Operations Manager, unless the complaint or appeal is directed towards this person, in which case it will go straight to the Chief Executive Officer
- 6 To be compliant with Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Standard 6 any complaint or appeal must be resolved within 60 days. Centacare Employment and Training aims to resolve all complaints/appeals within the shortest time possible.
- 7 Students may elect to have a support person support them to make a complaint or an appeal and this person may be with them during any meetings about the complaint/appeal.

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- 8 All parties associated with a complaint/appeal will be advised of their rights and responsibilities in relation to how the matter will be addressed, actions that can be undertaken and how decisions are made.
- 9 The outcome and decisions resulting from investigation of a complaint/appeal are provided in writing, to all parties involved.
- 10 Students will not be treated unfairly as a result of having made a complaint/appeal.
- 11 If the complaint/appeal remains unresolved after the Centacare Employment and Training process has been completed, the complainant will be advised of relevant external organisations that they may choose to contact.
- 12 A record will be made and maintained of any complaint/appeal. The Centacare Employment and Training Complaints and Appeals Register will be updated and relevant documentation will be filed in the student and/or staff member's individual file and maintained by the relevant department.
- 13 Complaints/appeals will be used to review Centacare Employment and Training's operations and guide improvements in practice and decision-making. Once a quarter the Chief Executive Officer will ensure Centacare Employment and Training management committee review the register.

VERSION INFORMATION

Date	Author	Version Number	Short Description
13/5/2010	CET HR	1.0	NB. No date on version in P drive, last saved May 2010. Policy covers staff and students
8/5/2014	I. Stevenson	2.0	NB. No date on document. Student only policy.
11/10/2014	J. Blair	3.0	Revised in response to TAC audit
01/04/2015	J. Blair	3.1	Revised for Standards for RTOs 2015
23/04/2015	J. Blair	3.2	Revised due to new information from ASQA and change of federal department administering SEE
24/10/16	J. Blair	4.0	Transferred onto updated CET Policy format. Split procedure from policy into separate documents. Revised in regard to low level complaints - redefined as concerns in line with suggestions from TAC audit February 2016

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01/02/2017	J. Blair	4.1	Minor edits and the addition of the SEE Teacher's and VET Trainer's Handbooks as linked documents. Corrected name of policy and procedure in regards to staff and volunteer complaints.
24/11/17	M Knowles	4.2	Update version control
25/1/18	M Knowles	4.3	Updated reference to Executive Director to Chief Executive Officer
29/5/18	M Knowles	4.4	Updated reference to VET Program Manager to Operations Manager

RATIFICATION

This policy has been ratified by Lee-Anne Phillips – CEO



25/01/2018

(SIGNATURE)

(DATE)

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