

# GRIEVANCES, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCESS

## DEFINITIONS

- Grievance – an expression of dissatisfaction
- Complaint – a dissatisfaction with any service provided by New Futures Training coupled together with a request for action

A complaint or grievance may be about an Academic or Non-Academic matter:

- Academic matters – matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards, etc
- Non-academic matters – all other matters which do not to academic matters such as fees, concerns about privacy, matters relating to other students, harassment etc.

## POLICY

New Futures Training is committed to providing students with the best possible study environment. However, we understand that on occasion, there may be instances of dissatisfaction and we acknowledge that the cause(s) must be addressed and rectified promptly. We provide students with a documented process that is publicly available for making complaints or grievances and they will have access to a fair and equitable appeal process.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all complaints are dealt with fairly and equitably, that students are reassured that their complaint will be taken seriously, handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a speedy resolution.

## PRACTICE

Where possible all non-formal attempts shall be made to resolve the complaint. New Futures Training encourages open communication and an environment of trust. Therefore, any student with a complaint is encouraged to raise the matter directly with the other party concerned to attempt to resolve the issue mutually. Any staff member can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but if the student wishes to place a formal complaint, then the following process must be followed

## FORMAL PROCESS

1. Any learner, potential student or 3rd party may submit a formal complaint to New Futures Training with the reasonable expectation that all complaints will be treated with integrity and privacy. There is no cost for the complaints process.
2. A student who wishes to submit a formal complaint can do so by completing the Complaints and Appeals Form available at the reception.

3. All formal complaints must be submitted to the RTO General Manager and contain as many details as possible:
  - a. Date complaint was submitted
  - b. Name of complainant (if given)
  - c. Nature of complaint
  - d. Date of the event which led to the complaint
  - e. Attachments (if applicable)
4. Once a complaint has been received, the information will be inserted into the Complaints and Appeals Register spread sheet which is monitored daily by the General Manager of Training in collaboration with the Student Welfare Coordinator. The information to be inserted and retained on the register which is password protected and includes:
  - a. Date the complaint was submitted
  - b. Name of complainant
  - c. Description of complaint
  - d. Determined resolution
  - e. Date of resolution
5. The student has the right to be accompanied by any person of their choice during the complaints or appeals process
6. Once a complaint has been logged in the Complaints and Appeals Register by the RTO General Manager, the Executive Director will be notified of the complaint and will be provided with all relevant documentation related to the matter
7. The RTO General Manager and Executive Director shall then refer the matter to the appropriate staff member/s to resolve or make a decision regarding the complaint within 10 working days
8. Once a decision has been reached, the RTO General Manager is required to notify all of the relevant parties involved of the decision and outcome which is to be concluded in writing within 14 working days from the date the complaint was first received. Within the notification of the outcome, the student will be advised that they have the right to appeal the decision made by New Futures Training. Students will be referred to the appeals procedure as outlined below
9. The RTO General Manager will ensure that new Futures Training will act immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, New Futures Training must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required and advise the student of the outcome
10. Copies of all documentation, outcomes and further action required will be placed on the Complaints and Appeals Register by the RTO General Manager and on the students file

## APPEALS PROCESS

1. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome from the formal complaint, then they have the right to appeal the decision made by New Futures Training where reasonable grounds can be established
2. The areas in which a student may appeal a decision made by New Futures Training may include:
  - Assessment conducted

- Deferral, suspension or cancellation decisions made in relation to a student's enrolment
  - Or any other conclusion/decision that is made after a complaint has been dealt with by New Futures Training in the first instance
3. To activate the appeals process, the student must submit an appeal application by completing the Complaints and Appeals Form located in the Student Handbook or they can obtain a copy from New Futures Training by calling 9383 2533
  4. The student needs to provide a summary of the grounds that the appeal is based on and the reason why they feel that initial decision made is unfair within 20 working days from the time they received the outcome for their initial complaint. Help and support with this process can be gained from the Front of House Team Leader
  5. Once the appeal has been received, the RTO General Manager and Executive Director will then determine the validity of the appeal and where necessary organise a meeting with all parties involved in the matter and attempt to seek resolution where appropriate.
  6. The process for all formally lodged appeals will begin within 10 working days from the date that the appeal was lodged
  7. The RTO General Manager will ensure that New Futures Training acts on any substantiated appeal
  8. Where an appeal has been lodged it will be defined into one of the following categories and processed accordingly

## GENERAL APPEALS

1. Where a student has appealed a decision or outcome of a formal complaint they are required to notify New Futures Training of their appeal within 20 working days from the time they received their initial outcome of their complaint
2. The appeal should be lodged through the RTO General Manager which who will ensure that the details of the appeal are documented on the Complaints and Appeals Register
3. The Executive Director and RTO General Manager will review the initial documentation of the complaint and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal
4. The student shall be notified in writing within 20 working days from the initial lodgement of the appeal of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the Complaints and Appeals Register updated. The student will also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome

## ASSESSMENT APPEALS

1. If a student wishes to appeal an assessment they are required to notify their assessor in the first instance. Where appropriate the assessor may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable decision is made. The

- assessor will be required to complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why assessment was or was not granted
2. If this is still not to the students satisfaction the individual can formally lodge an appeal by completing and submitting the Complaints and Appeals Form to the RTO General Manager who will document the information in the Complaints and Appeals Register
  3. The RTO General Manager shall seek details from the assessor involved and any other parties. A decision shall be made regarding the appeal either indicating that the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a 'third party'. The third party will be another assessor appointed by New Futures Training
  4. The student will be notified by writing within 20 working days from the initial lodgement of their appeal regarding the outcome with reasons for the decisions, and the Complaints and Appeals Register updated. The student will also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

#### EXTERNAL APPEALS - INDEPENDENT PARTIES

11. If the student is still dissatisfied regarding the outcome of the appeal that New Futures Training has provided, they may wish to refer the matter to an external/independent/third party mediator.
12. New Futures Training acknowledges the need for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant or appelland and the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter.
13. New Futures Training may also appoint an independent party to be involved in the resolution of a complaint or appeal where it is deemed necessary.
14. New Futures Training will provide complete cooperation with the external mediator investigating the complaint/appeal and will be bound by the recommendations arising out of this process.

Please refer to below contact details:

<b><i>Independent External Mediator</i></b>
Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria
<a href="https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au">https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au</a>
Tel: 1300 372 888

1. If the student is not satisfied with the quality of the vocational course and related processes provided they can contact the relevant state training authority:

***Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)***

<b>Address:</b>	<i>Level 6, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne VIC 3000</i>
<b>Complaints Unit Phone:</b>	<i>9651 3291</i>
<b>Email:</b>	<i>vrqa.complaints@edumail.vic.gov.au</i>
<b>Website:</b>	<i>www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/complaints/default.htm</i>

2. Students can also report and register a complaint with the National Training Complaints Hotline:

<b>National Training Complaints Hotline</b>	
<b>Phone:</b>	<i>13 38 73 (please select option 4); 8am to 6pm local time (6am to 5pm WA local time). Monday to Friday - except public holidays.</i>
<b>Email:</b>	<i>NTCH@education.gov.au</i>

Please note that your call will be directed to Skilling Australia which covers many vocational education and training matters.

If you are paying for your course via a VET Student Loan and don't agree with the outcome of the external appeal you can contact the Commonwealth VET Student Loans Ombudsman, for more information go to

<http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/vet-student-loans-ombudsman/information-for-students>

## HOW TO ACCESS SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs are designed to raise awareness and reduce risk factors related to child sexual abuse.

<a href="http://csapp.org.au">Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Program - Home (csapp.org.au)</a>	<p><b>Contact:</b>          Dr Reina Michaelson          Executive Director          Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Program Inc.          P. O. Box 80          Briar Hill 3088          Victoria</p> <p>Mobile Phone: (+61) 0409 188 572 (Business hours only please)</p>
<b>Triple Zero</b> (000)	If you or a child is in immediate danger, call
<b>Lifeline</b> – 13 11 14 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)	If you want to talk to someone about child sexual abuse or need support, help is available

<b>13YARN</b> – 13 92 76 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)	a culturally safe crisis support line for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
<b>1800RESPECT</b> – 1800 737 732 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)	for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic and family violence and abuse
<b>Blue Knot Helpline</b> and Redress Support Service	1300 657 380 (9am-5pm, 7 days a week) – for adults impacted by childhood trauma including child sexual abuse
<b>Kids Helpline</b>	1800 55 1800 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

**RELEVANT STANDARDS, ACTS AND LEGISLATIONS:**

- ✓ AQTF Standard 2 (2.7)
- ✓ VET Skills First Contract
- ✓ VET Student Loans Rules 2016

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

- ✓ Student Handbook
- ✓ Complaints and Appeals Form - available at the reception
- ✓ Complaints and Appeals Register