

Calamvale Community College

Vocational Education and Training

15. Complaints and appeals procedure

The school, as an RTO has a complaints and appeals policy specific to its RTO operations.

A complaint can be made to the school RTO regarding the conduct of:

- The school RTO, its trainers, assessors or other school RTO staff
- Students of the RTO
- Any third parties providing services on behalf of the RTO (if relevant)

Complaints can be made to any member of staff

An appeal can be made to the school RTO to request a review of a decision, including assessment decisions.

Appeals should be made to the trainer/assessor in the first instance, but can also be made to Heads of Program or the RTO Manager.

The School will ensure that the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaints and appeals process.

- Any staff member can receive a complaint or appeal. Where possible, complaints will be resolved immediately.
- All complaints and appeals will be heard and resolved within 60 calendar days of receipt.
 - If the school RTO considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the complainant or appellant (student) will be informed of the reasons for the extended timeframe in writing, and will be regularly updated in the progress of the matter.

- The school RTO will maintain a secure Complaints and Appeals Register, documenting all complaints and appeals received, as well as actions taken and decisions made.
- The school RTO will undertake a continuous improvement process that includes reviewing both the details in the Complaints and Appeals Register, and the complaints and appeals policy and procedures, and will take corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of the same problems occurring again.

Complaints Procedure

1. If a complaint relates to a report about harm or safety, refer to the school's appropriate Student Protection procedures.
2. Make a verbal complaint (tell a staff member what your complaint is about)
 - a. The complaint will be resolved by that staff member (or an appointed staff member) if possible. Details of the complaint/appeal (its cause, actions taken and the decision made) will be recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register
 - b. If the complaint cannot be promptly and simply resolved, an alternative staff member will be advised to process the complaint (however a written record of the complaint will be required).
3. To put a complaint/appeal in writing, students may use the support of a third party. Students can either put the complaint/appeal in writing themselves using the Complaints and Appeals Form <T:\Senior School\VET\VET Register of Documents\Complaints and Appeals\Complaints and Appeals Form.docx> or students can ask a staff member to make a written record for them to sign. The written record must be signed and dated and witnessed.

If the complaint is not related to the RTO Manager, the written complaint will be given/sent to the RTO Manager.

If the complaint is related to the RTO Manager, the written complaint will be given/sent to the Principal (or a staff member nominated by the Principal).

Students will be provided with a prompt written acknowledgement to the complaint from either the RTO Manager, or Deputy Principal (as appropriate)

4. To resolve the complaint, the RTO Manager and Principal will:

- a. discuss the issue/s with the staff member to whom the complaint was made
give the student an opportunity to present their case (they may be accompanied by other people as support or as representation)
 - b. give the relevant staff member, third party or student (as applicable) an opportunity to present their case. They also may be accompanied by other people as support or as representation.
 - c. if necessary, convene an independent panel, the Complaints and Appeals Committee, to hear the complaint/appeal. The committee must not have had previous involvement with the complaint/appeal, and must include: a representative of the Principal one or more representative/s of the teaching staff an independent person.
 - d. deal with the issue/s communicate the outcome/decision to all parties in writing within 60 days of receipt of the complaint/appeal document the complaint/appeal — including the cause, actions taken and decisions made — in the appropriate secure Complaints and Appeals Register.
5. If the complaint is not finalised within 60 calendar days, students will be informed of the reasons in writing and will be regularly updated on the progress of the matter.
 6. If the procedures fail to resolve the issue/s, students may have the outcome reviewed (on request) by an appropriate party independent of the RTO.
 7. If the student is still not satisfied, the Principal will refer them to the QCAA website for further information about making complaints
(<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/vet/rto-registration-audits/appeals-complaints-enforcement>).

Appeals

In the case of a student wishing to appeal an assessment decision, the first step is to speak with the Trainer and Assessor. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome they can submit an appeal.

The School RTO will follow the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness at every stage of the process (these are clearly explained in this fact sheet

https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/3707/FS_PSA_14_Natural_justice_Procedural_fairness.pdf);

Making a verbal appeal

- Speak to your Trainer and Assessor telling them which assessment decision you are appealing and why. Your Trainer and Assessor will document details of your verbal appeal on a Complaints and Appeals Form <T:\Senior School\VET\VET Register of Documents\Complaints and Appeals\Complaints and Appeals Form.docx>, which students will need to sign and date as acknowledgement of the appeal being made.
- Students will be verbally informed that a Head of Program or the RTO Manager will be assigned to dealing with the appeal and that they will be contacted directly by them.
- Details of the verbal appeal will be documented in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

Making a written appeal

1. Students can make an appeal about an Assessment decision, in writing using the Complaints and Appeals Form <T:\Senior School\VET\VET Register of Documents\Complaints and Appeals\Complaints and Appeals Form.docx> or any other written form that includes information about the assessment decision being appealed and the reasons why.
Students can receive support from a third party throughout the process
Students can ask a staff member to make a written record for them to sign. The written record must be signed and dated and witnessed.
2. The written appeal will be provided to the RTO Manager
3. Students will be provided with a prompt written acknowledgement of the receipt of the appeal from either the RTO Manager, or Head of Program (as appropriate)
4. The RTO Manager, the Head of Program and the Trainer and Assessor will meet to discuss the appeal (and any other third parties that are relevant to the decision being made);
 - The Student shall be given an opportunity to present their case to the RTO Manager and Head of Program and may be accompanied by one other person as support or as representation;

- The relevant staff member shall be given an opportunity to present their case to the RTO Manager and Head of Program and may be accompanied by one other person as support or as representation;
 - The RTO Manager will communicate its decision on the appeal to all parties in writing and this will be recorded in the secure Complaints and Appeals Register;
5. When a decision is reached this will be communicated in writing to the appellant within 60 calendar days of the appeal being received as well as being recorded on the secure Complaints and Appeals Register;
- If the decision will take longer than 60 calendar days the appellant will be notified in writing of the reasons why a decision has not been reached and provide regular updates regarding the progress of the matter;
6. If the Student is still not satisfied, the Chief Executive Officer (Principal) will appoint an independent third party (outside the RTO) to mediate with costs being communicated to all parties prior to commencement;
7. If the appellant is still not satisfied, the Chief Executive Officer (Principal) will refer them to the QCAA website for further information about making complaints (<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/vet/appeals-complaints-enforcement>);