

Complaints – Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline Training Ahead Australia's approach to managing dissatisfaction, formal complaints of students, clients, staff and other members of the community. It provides a transparent approach for all complaints to be addressed in a fair, efficient and confidential manner.

This Policy and Procedure refers to Standard 6 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015

"RTOs must implement a transparent complaints and appeals policy that enables learners and clients to be informed of and to understand their rights and the RTO's responsibilities under the Standards.

Enterprise RTOs and volunteer associations that do not charge fees for the training and/or assessment and only provide training to employees or members are not required to maintain a separate complaints and appeals policy in relation to their training and assessment. These organisations must ensure, however, that their organisation's complaints policy is sufficiently broad to cover the activities as an RTO."

Policy Statement

Training Ahead Australia acknowledges individual's rights to lodge a complaint when they are dissatisfied with the training and/or assessment, a service and/or experiences that have been provided.

Training Ahead Australia will ensure that all individuals have access to a fair and equitable process for lodging a complaint.

Training Ahead Australia is committed to maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints handling system, which is easily accessible. We do this by:

- Having a culture that views complaints as an opportunity to improve our organisation and how it works
- Having a complaints handling system that is client/student focused
- Ensuring that complaints are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality
- Ensuring that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a complaint is not discriminated against nor victimised
- Ensuring there is a consistent response to complaints

A complaint can be about any aspect of the business. This includes academic and non-academic matters.

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Definitions

- **Appeal** means a request for a decision made by Training Ahead Australia to be reviewed
- **Appellant** refers to the person making the appeal
- **Complaint** means a person's formal expression of dissatisfaction with any product or service provided by Training Ahead Australia
- **Complainant** means the 'individual' who has lodged the complaint
- **Individual** – For the purpose of this document, the term *individuals* refers to the scope including all students, clients, staff and other members of the community.
- **Services** means training, assessment, related educational and support services and/or activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners. It does not include services such as student counselling, mediation or ICT support
- **SRTOs** means the Standards for RTOs 2015 – refer definition of 'Standards'
- **Standards** means the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 of the VET Quality Framework which can be accessed from www.asqa.gov.au
- **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
- **Training Ahead Australia** – Throughout this document, the following abbreviations may be used: TAA, Training Ahead
- **Training Ahead Support Team** refers to a range of staff members at Training Ahead Australia including: Office Manager, Compliance Officer, Accounts Officer, RIWC Support Officer, Administration Officers, Training Coordinators, Management and Trainer and Assessors

Scope

The scope of this policy and procedure applies to:

- Prospective students
- All students (learner of RTO)
- Clients, including companies
- Suppliers
- Staff including Support Staff, Trainer and Assessors and all other staff members
- Other members of the community
- Workplace mentoring and supervisors

Procedure

What is this procedure used for?

This procedure details how to lodge a complaint and the complaint handling process.

Why is this procedure required?

As an RTO Training Ahead Australia needs to ensure that:

- Students have the opportunity to make a complaint
- That all complaints are taken seriously and the individual lodging the complaint is provided with a fair and equitable process without discrimination

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Responsibilities

Below lists the following responsibilities by Training Ahead Australia

Chief Executive Office (CEO)

The CEO has the following responsibilities:

- Development and implementation of the Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Complete reviews on Policy and Procedure
- Provide consultation with employees

Training Ahead Australia Staff:

Training Ahead Australia staff members have the following responsibilities:

- Follow the procedure
- Treat all complaints with fairness and without discrimination
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained throughout the process

When is the Procedure Reviewed?

This procedure is reviewed every 2 years

Location of Complaints Policy and Procedure

The complaints policy and procedure are publicly available:

- On the website
- At the Training Ahead Australia office
- In the Student Handbook
- Link provided on booking confirmation

Nature of Complaints

The RTO has a Complaints Policy and Procedure to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of:

- The RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- A third party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- A learner of the RTO.

Complaints may be made in relation to any of Training Ahead Australia's Services and Activities such as:

- A third party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- The application and enrolment process
- The quality of training and assessment provided
- Training and assessment matters, including student support, reasonable adjustment and assessment requirements
- The actions of another student
- Marketing information
- The RTO, its Trainer and Assessors and other staff and the way someone has been treated

How is a Complaint different to a Concern?

Training Ahead Australia's complaint process is a formal process in which Training Ahead Australia must respond to the complainant. The complaint process also leads to Training Ahead Australia's appeals process.

A concern is something that is of interest, importance or connected to one or more of the above people, that they feel could be improved, as it is affecting their or others satisfaction with their involvement with Aakira. A

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concern is when a person is dissatisfied, but not to the extent of discontent or dissatisfaction that they want to raise a complaint. When this person or persons raise a concern, they want to raise the concern in an informal way, not through the complaints process or continuous improvement process.

In summary, a 'concern' is an issue of interest (because of its importance and effect), which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation.

Principles of Resolutions

- Training Ahead Australia is committed to developing a Policy and Procedure that ensures the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint process. Throughout this Policy and Procedure, Training Ahead Australia ensures that complaints:
 - Are responded to in a consistent and transparent manner
 - Are at no cost to the individual
 - Are responded to promptly, objectively, with sensitivity and confidentiality
 - Are used as an opportunity to identify potential causes of the complaint and take actions to prevent the issues from reoccurring in addition to identifying areas for improvement
- Complaints will be resolved on an individual case by case basis
- Nothing in this Policy and Procedure limits the rights of an individual to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws and it does not circumscribe an individual's right to pursue other legal remedies
- Any complaints will not affect or bias the progress of the individual in any current or future training or services
- Training Ahead Australia will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaint handling process is ongoing

Complaint Process

All complaints shall follow the following process:

- Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurring
- A complaint can be received by Training Ahead Australia in the following methods

Note: Individuals are not required to put a complaint in writing, as this would be a barrier to the student. Training Ahead Australia allows for a range of methods for individuals to submit their complaint.

- **In person.** If an individual has a complaint, they are encouraged to speak immediately with their Trainer and Assessor or the Training Ahead Support Team to resolve the issue. Most complaints can be resolved immediately when they are addressed straight away. If you are coming in to discuss your complaint, it is advised to contact us before hand to ensure the appropriate staff member is available to discuss the complaint with you
- **Email.** Email the Training Ahead Support Team at bookings@trainingahead.com.au and you will receive a response via email or phone within 2 business days of your complaint being raised
- **Phone.** Phone 1300 355 900 and speak to the Training Ahead Support Team. After initial contact, you may be directed to another Team Member who is able to provide further assistance, who will return your call within 2 business days
- **A Complaints Form** – If the individual would prefer to complete a Complaints Form, they are welcome to. This is not a mandatory requirement though

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- When making a complaint, provide as much information as possible to enable Training Ahead Australia to investigate and determine an appropriate solution. This should include where possible:
 - The issue; who, what, when, where and why
 - Any evidence to support your complaint
 - Details of any steps you've already taken to resolve the issues
 - Any suggestions about how the matter might be resolved
- On receipt of the complaint, Training Ahead Australia securely maintains records of all complaints and their outcomes in the following location:
 - Complaints Register
 - Student Management System (for complaints submitted via students)

Note: Only management and approved staff have access to the Student Management System and Complaints Register
- The Training Ahead Support Team will discuss the complaint with the complainant to resolve the complaint as soon as practicable
- The complaint will be acknowledged in writing and the outcome will be acknowledged in writing
- If the complaint is unable to be resolved immediately, the Training Ahead Australia Support Team will investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint as soon as possible
- If a complaint is unable to be resolved immediately or the complainant is dissatisfied with the result, the CEO is to be notified by Training Ahead Support Team, in either person, phone or email.
- If the complaints process fails to resolve the complaint or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the matter will be referred to an independent third-party for review, at the request of the individual

Timeframes for Resolution

Complaints will be finalised as soon as practicable unless there is a significant reason for the matter to take longer. Complaints, where possible, are to be resolved within 30 days of the initial application.

Where the complaint will take longer than 60 calendar days to finalise, Training Ahead Australia will inform the complainant in writing why more than 60 days are required. The complainant will also be provided with regular updates on the progress of the complaint.

Monitoring and Improvement

The complaints register will be reviewed at the Management Meetings with areas for improvement identified and acted upon (Refer to Continuous Improvement Policy).

By reviewing the Complaints Register, Training Ahead Australia Identifies potential causes of complaints and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

Independent Third-Party Review

- Training Ahead Australia acknowledges the need for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter
- Complainants can find an appropriate independent party by calling the Resolution Institute on 02 9251 3366 or by searching the following directory, according to their locality and area of concern:
<https://www.resolution.institute/disputeresolverdirectory>
- Training Ahead Australia may also appoint the independent party to be involved in the resolution of a complaint where it is deemed necessary or the complaint was unable to be resolved

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- Training Ahead Australia will provide complete cooperation with the external mediator investigating the complaint and will be bound by the recommendations arising out of this process
- The CEO will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within twenty (20) days of being notified of the recommendations. The complainant will also be formally notified in writing of the outcome of the mediation
- The complainant may request a different Independent third-party, at the appellants own cost, unless a prior arrangement is made with Training Ahead Australia

Appeals Policy and Procedure

Refer to the Appeals Policy and Procedure in regards to the management of all Appeals.

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