



Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

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Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is to establish a structured and transparent process for managing complaints and appeals at Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME) and to ensure all staff and VET students are aware of their right to lodge a complaint or appeal regarding any decision, action, or matter that has affected their experience with the RTO.

This Policy and Procedure supports compliance with the *2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations*, Quality Area 2 VET Student Support, Division 5 Feedback, Complaints and Appeals.

Scope

This Policy and Procedure apply to all operations of GME and outlines the process for managing complaints and appeals. It ensures all stakeholders are aware of the steps to take to have their dissatisfaction addressed appropriately.

This policy provides a clear avenue for feedback, complaints, and appeals raised by VET students, employers, staff, third parties and other stakeholders to be investigated and managed promptly, impartially, efficiently, and confidentially, in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

GME will manage and respond to complaints and appeals involving:

- the RTO
- RTO staff
- a third party providing services on behalf of the RTO
- a VET student of the RTO.

Definitions

Complaint is defined as any act or commission that a customer or potential customer of our RTO believes to be unfair or discriminatory and relates to any RTO activity. It can include complaints related to training or non-training matters.

Appeal is defined as a request to review a decision that has been previously made.

Policy Statement

Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME) is committed to ensuring all staff and VET students are provided with a safe, supportive, and respectful environment in which to work and study. While the RTO strives to deliver high-quality services at all times, complaints and appeals may occasionally arise that require formal resolution.

GME manages all expressions of dissatisfaction fairly, efficiently, and in a timely and transparent manner. The complaints and appeals process is provided internally at no cost to the VET student.

GME maintains and implements a structured and accessible complaints and appeals management system that supports the effective management of feedback, complaints, and appeals.

The complaints and appeals management system:

- allows feedback, complaints, and appeals to be lodged regarding the RTO, its services, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the RTO
- ensures all parties involved in a complaint or appeal are afforded procedural fairness and natural justice
- establishes reasonable and clearly defined timeframes for acknowledging, responding to, and resolving complaints and appeals
- provides avenues for escalation or further action where a complaint or appeal is not resolved internally
- ensures information about how to provide feedback and lodge a complaint or appeal is publicly available and easily accessible to VET students
- supports VET students to provide feedback and lodge complaints and appeals without disadvantage
- ensures outcomes of complaints and appeals are appropriately documented and communicated to relevant parties
- uses feedback, complaints, and appeals data to inform monitoring, review, and continuous improvement activities.

Information on how to provide feedback and lodge complaints is made publicly available to VET students and staff through the Student Handbook, and this policy is published on the RTO's website.

VET students are informed of, and understand, their appeal rights through this policy and the relevant assessment tools. This includes information about the timeframes for acknowledging, resolving, and communicating the outcomes of appeals.

Procedure

Confidentiality

GME treats all complaints and appeals with appropriate sensitivity and confidentiality. The details of the person making the complaint (the **Complainant**) or appeal (the **Appellant**), and the nature of the complaint or appeal, will be handled on a need-to-know basis and will only be disclosed where necessary to properly investigate and resolve the matter or where required by law.

All complaints and appeals records and registers are maintained under secure access arrangements. Responsibility for maintaining the Complaints and Appeals Register rests with the Training Manager. Access to complaint and appeal records is restricted to authorised personnel involved in the management, investigation, or review of the matter.

GME will take reasonable steps to protect all parties from victimisation or adverse treatment as a result of lodging or participating in a complaint or appeal.

Support Person

The Complainant and Respondent (where applicable), and the Appellant may be accompanied by a support person at any stage of the complaints and appeals process. The role of the support person is to provide emotional support and assistance to the individual during the process. The support person does not act as an advocate, representative, or decision-maker and is not responsible for presenting the complaint or appeal or proposing solutions.

GME will ensure that the presence of a support person does not delay or compromise the integrity of the complaints and appeals process.

Complaints Management Process

All complaints will be forwarded immediately to the Training Manager or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and provide the Complainant timeframes for resolving and communicating the outcomes of the complaint.

An initial review and investigation will commence within two (2) working days of receipt of the complaint.

Investigation and Response

All complaint decisions will be based on the evidence collected and information supplied. The investigation may include:

- consider all documentation provided
- interview relevant parties
- request further evidence
- invite key persons to present information
- determine whether to uphold or reject the complaint based on the evidence.

A written response will be provided to the Complainant within ten (10) working days of the investigation, where practicable. The response will outline:

- the nature of the complaint
- the investigation undertaken
- the outcome and agreed resolution (if applicable)
- any actions to be implemented.

Resolutions may include, but are not limited to:

- written or verbal apology
- formal warning
- staff training or professional development
- amendments to organisational policies or procedures.

Escalation Pathway

Step 1 Informal Resolution

Feedback and complaints may be initially received in an informal setting, such as a VET student having verbal conversations. Initially the Complainant is encouraged, where appropriate, to first raise the matter directly with the relevant staff member.

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the response, or does not feel comfortable approaching the staff member, the matter should proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 Formal Internal Review

The Complainant may contact the Training Manager on (08) 9195 5333 or submit the complaint in writing and email elaine.rabbitt@gme.com.au.

If the matter remains unresolved, it will proceed to Step 3.

Step 3 CEO Review

The Complainant may contact the CEO, Jodie Bell, on (08) 9194 9999 or submit the complaint in writing and email jodie.bell@gme.com.au.

Where a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved internally, the complainant will be recommended and supported by the RTO to refer the matter to an appropriate external independent body for review or arbitration.

Step 4 External Review

If the VET student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the RTO's internal complaints process, they may seek advice or lodge a complaint with an appropriate external body, as outlined below.

WA Training Ombudsman

Use when the complaint relates to publicly funded training or state-funded VET matters.
Administered by: Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD)

Phone: 08 6551 7500

Freecall (regional WA): 1800 225 093

Email: trainingombudsman@dtwd.wa.gov.au

Website: <https://www.wa.gov.au/service/education-and-training/vocational-education-and-training/training-ombudsman>

Postal Address:

Training Ombudsman
Department of Training and Workforce Development
Locked Bag 16
OSBORNE PARK WA 6916

Training Accreditation Council (TAC) Western Australia

Use when the complaint relates to:

- the RTO not following its complaints process
- the RTO not providing compliant training and assessment
- misleading information about the course

The TAC investigates concerns about RTO compliance but does not usually resolve individual disputes.

Website (Complaints): <https://www.tac.wa.gov.au/complaints>

Email: tac@dtwd.wa.gov.au

Phone: 08 9224 6510

Postal Address:

Training Accreditation Council
Locked Bag 16
OSBORNE PARK WA 6916
Australia

Consumer Protection WA

Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS)

Use when the complaint relates to fee-for-service matters, including:

- fees and refunds
- services not delivered as purchased
- misleading marketing
- general consumer concerns

Phone: 1300 30 40 54

Website: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-energy-mines-industry-regulation-and-safety/consumer-protection>.

Appeals Management Process

A VET student who seeks a review of a decision previously made by the RTO including an enrolment decision, progression decision, fees, conduct matters, or an assessment outcome of Not Yet Competent, is entitled to lodge an appeal.

The VET student may appeal the outcome of an assessment if they believe that:

- an issue has arisen with the Trainer/Assessor
- the assessment judgement has been made incorrectly
- the judgement was not made in accordance with the assessment plan
- the assessment was made outside the training provided.

All appeals are to be forwarded immediately to the Training Manager or Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and provide the Appellant with the expected timeframes for resolving and communicating the outcome.

The Training Manager will ensure transparency in the handling of the appeal, including advising which decisions are subject to appeal and independent review. Where an appeal may be reviewed by an independent party, the Appellant will be informed of the process and any associated costs (if applicable).

An initial review and investigation will commence within two (2) working days of receipt of the appeal.

Investigation and Response

All appeal decisions will be based on the evidence collected and information supplied.

The investigation may include:

- consider all documentation provided
- request further evidence
- request another assessor to review the case
- schedule another assessment
- determine whether to uphold or reject the appeal based on the evidence

A written response will be provided to the Appellant within ten (10) working days of the investigation, where practicable. The response will outline:

- the nature of the appeal
- the investigation undertaken
- the outcome
- any actions to be implemented.

Escalation Pathway

In the first instance, the VET student is encouraged to raise their concerns and discuss the matter directly with the relevant staff member or assessor.

If the decision is not resolved at this stage, GME will appoint an independent reviewer (not the original assessor) to review the assessment evidence and decision to ensure impartiality and procedural fairness.

The independent reviewer may:

- confirm that the original assessment decision is valid and the appeal is not upheld; or
- recommend that the Appellant be reassessed by another qualified assessor; or
- recommend other appropriate corrective action based on the evidence.

Timeframes

GME will aim to resolve and communicate the outcome(s) of complaints and appeals process as soon as practicable and within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

Where GME considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint, GME will:

- inform the Complainant or Appellant in writing, including the reasons for the delay; and
- provide regular written updates on the progress of the complaint.

Record Keeping

GME maintains complete and secure records of all feedback, complaints, and appeals to support transparency, procedural fairness, and continuous improvement.

GME will:

- document all complaints and appeals received, including the nature of the matter, actions taken, and outcomes
- communicate the outcome of complaints and appeals in writing to the Complainant or Appellant and any relevant parties, including reasons for the decision
- maintain a centralised Complaints and Appeals Register to monitor trends and inform continuous improvement activities
- restrict access to complaint and appeal records to authorised personnel only.

Continuous Improvement

GME recognises that feedback, complaints, and appeals provide valuable opportunities to improve the quality of training and assessment services and the overall experience of VET students and stakeholders.

GME will review and analyse complaints and appeals to identify trends, underlying issues, and opportunities for improvement. This includes undertaking a root cause analysis to determine the factors contributing to the matter and assessing the potential impact across other areas of operations.

GME will implement appropriate corrective and preventive actions, which may include amendments to policies and procedures, improvements to training and assessment practices, professional development for staff, enhancements to student support services, or updates to communication or administrative processes.

Outcomes and improvement actions arising from complaints and appeals will be documented in the Continuous Improvement Register and monitored for effectiveness.

Through this process, GME ensures that complaints and appeals are not managed in isolation but are used proactively to strengthen compliance, improve service quality, and support continuous improvement across all operations.