

PP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy

Version Control

Title:	PP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy.docx
Author:	Connect People Training Pty Ltd
Version Number:	1.1
Date of Approval:	13/03/2018
Next Review Date:	03/2020
Coverage:	RTO Operations - Connect People Training Pty Ltd

Summary of Changes

Date	Change
26/09/2017	New document created to align with Condition 6 and guideline 2.7 and 2.8
13/3/2018	Updated to include informal process and independent external mediator details

Document Name	PP03 Complaints and Appeals PolicyPP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy		<i>Document Control Management – Uncontrolled when printed</i>		
Issue Date	29/08/2017	Review Date	01/09/2018	Version No.	2.0

1. Policy

Connect People Training is committed to providing a fair complaints and appeals process.

2. What is a complaint?

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by Connect People Training in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on.

3. What is an appeal?

An appeal is an application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during training and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 28 days of the decision or finding is informed to the student.

4. Early resolution or complaints and appeals

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved.

5. Relationship to Continuous Improvement

Frequently, the complaints and appeals handling process will expose weaknesses in the training and assessment system that can flow into the continuous improvement system as opportunities for improvement. This outcome of complaints and appeals handling is very positive and should be actively applied by all persons involved.

6. Complaint and appeals handling

Connect People Training undertakes to apply the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- A written record of all complaints and appeals is to be kept by Connect People Training including all details of lodgement, response and resolution.
- A complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each complainant or person lodging an appeal may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The handling of a complaint or appeal is to commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to have the opportunity for a person or a body that is independent of Connect People Training to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal Connect People Training complaint or appeals process. It is noted that a review of findings by an independent person or body will generally only relate to the appeals process and is less likely to be required in complaints handling.
- Connect People Training shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant or person lodging an appeal during the complaint or appeals process.

Document Name	PP03 Complaints and Appeals PolicyPP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy		<i>Document Control Management – Uncontrolled when printed</i>		
Issue Date	29/08/2017	Review Date	01/09/2018	Version No.	2.0

- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeals process that find in the favour of the student shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints and appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Connect People Training representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of the Managing Director. A decision to release information to third parties can only to be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur..
- Complaints and appeals are to be considered on the basis of procedural fairness and lead to opportunities for improvement as a Continuous Improvement Report.
- Students who are not satisfied with the complete complaint handling by Connect People Training may refer their complaint to the registering body for consideration. Students are to be advised that registering bodies will require the student to have exhausted all avenues through Connect People Training before taking this option.
- Appeals of assessment decisions are not able to be referred to the registering body and are to be determined by an approved independent body.

Connect People Training considers that it would be extremely unlikely that complaints and appeals are not able to be resolved quickly within our internal structures.

7. Complaints Handling Procedure

Where possible, non-formal attempts shall be made to resolve the students' complaint. Connect People Training encourages open communication in an environment of trust. Therefore, any student with a complaint or appeal is encouraged to raise the matter directly with the party concerned in an attempt to resolve the issue mutually.

To ensure a record of the informal complaint is maintained, all details of the informal complaints must be emailed to the Training Manager, who will update the Continuous Improvement and Corrective Action Register accordingly.

The Training Manager will identify the potential causes of the complaint and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

Matters that cannot be resolved informally should be referred to the Managing Director for review. The following procedure is to be followed when a complaint form is received:

- A Complaints and Appeals Form is received by Connect People Training and is to be immediately recorded into the Connect People Training Complaints and Appeals Register.
- Complaints which are received in other forms such as phone or email, are to be detailed on a Complaints and Appeals Form by the person receiving the complaint and then recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register.
- The Complaints and Appeals Form is to be forwarded to the Managing Director who is to review the matter and make recommendation as to how to respond to the matter. The Managing Director may choose to consult with others within Connect People Training or relevant agencies external to Connect People Training in determining their recommendation.
- The Managing Director may choose to make inquiries about the matter or may task another person to research the matter against relevant policy.
- The Managing Director is to finalise his or her response to the complainant and provide the complainant a response as soon as possible but no later than 10 working days from when the complaint is received.

Document Name	PP03 Complaints and Appeals PolicyPP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy		<i>Document Control Management – Uncontrolled when printed</i>		
Issue Date	29/08/2017	Review Date	01/09/2018	Version No.	2.0

- The Managing Director is to communicate the response to the complainant personally either during a meeting or via the telephone. Complaint responses are not to be provided to the complainant via any third-party or via electronic communication such as e-mail. The Managing Director is to seek feedback from the complainant about their level of satisfaction with the complaint outcome and advise the complainant of their options if they are not completely satisfied with the outcome.
- If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint handling, the Managing Director may arrange for the complaint to be considered by an appropriate independent third-party or the student may refer the complaint to the registering body.
- The response to the complainant must include information that demonstrates that the matter was thoroughly reviewed and what actions and outcomes have been identified as a result of the complaint.
- Opportunities for improvement that were identified as a result of the complaint are to be recorded in a Continuous Improvement Report and submitted for the next Continuous Improvement Meeting. The Managing Director may, at his or her discretion, follow-up with the complainant after consideration by the Continuous Improvement Meeting to inform the complainant of the improvement actions identified.
- The Complaints and Appeals Register is to be kept up to date at all times to accurately reflect how the matter was responded to and the duration from the date the complaint was received to the date the complaint was resolved.

8. Appeals Handling Procedure

If the Student disagrees with the result of the assessment, they should speak to the assessor in the first instance to either challenge the assessment result or apply for re-assessment within two weeks of the assessment outcome.

Formal Appeal

Applications by students for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding are to be treated with the highest importance. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 28 days of when the decision or finding is communicated to the student. The following procedure is to be followed when an application for appeal is received:

- A student appealing and assessment decisions is to be referred immediately to the Managing Director. The Managing Director is to arrange for a re-assessment of the student as soon as possible. The student is also to be offered the opportunity to undertake additional training before this re-assessment. The reassessment is to be conducted by a different than conducted the initial assessment. The student may be offered up to 3 re-assessments.
- If after the reassessment, the student remains not-yet-competent and is unsatisfied with the assessment outcome, the student is to meet with the Managing Director to discuss the assessment process and the assessment outcome.
- If after consultation with the Managing Director, the student remains unsatisfied with the assessment process, the student is to be provided the Complaints and Appeals Form and the matter is to be dealt with in accordance with the complaint handling procedure.
- If the student is seeking a refund of their tuition fees based on an unfavourable outcome, this may be considered by the Managing Director on its merits. If the Managing Director does not approve a refund and considers that Connect People Training has dealt with the matter appropriately and has provided the student all reasonable opportunity to demonstrate their competence, the student is to be advised of the

Document Name	PP03 Complaints and Appeals PolicyPP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy		<i>Document Control Management – Uncontrolled when printed</i>		
Issue Date	29/08/2017	Review Date	01/09/2018	Version No.	2.0

opportunity to refer the matter to the Office of Fair Trading in relation to their dispute over the requested refund.

- Continuous Improvement Meeting to inform the applicant of the improvement actions identified.
- The Complaints and Appeals Register is to be kept up to date at all times to accurately reflect how the matter was responded to and the duration from the date the appeal was received to the date the appeal was resolved.

9. External complaint avenues

Complaints can also be made via the following avenues:

National Complaints Hotline:

The National Training Complaints Hotline is a national service for consumers to register complaints concerning vocational education and training. The service refers consumers to the appropriate agency/authority/jurisdiction to assist with their complaint. Consumers can register a complaint with the National Training Complaints Hotline by:

Phone: 13 38 73, Monday–Friday, 8am to 6pm nationally.

Email: skilling@education.gov.au

For more information about the National Complaints Hotline, refer to the following webpage: <http://www.industry.gov.au/skills/nationaltrainingcomplaintshotline/Pages/FrequentlyAskedQuestions.aspx#>

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

Complainants may also complain to Connect People Training's registering body VRQA. For more information, refer to the following webpage:

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/complaints/Pages/default.aspx>

Document Name	PP03 Complaints and Appeals PolicyPP03 Complaints and Appeals Policy		<i>Document Control Management – Uncontrolled when printed</i>		
Issue Date	29/08/2017	Review Date	01/09/2018	Version No.	2.0