

Complaints and Appeals

Standards evidenced/referenced: 6.1– 6.6

Policy Name:	Complaints and Appeals
Policy Number:	MRQTPO005
Version and Date:	v1.1
Purpose:	To manage complaints and appeals in a transparent manner which enables learners to be informed of, and to understand their rights and obligations and the RTO's responsibilities in relation to complaints and appeals under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (the Standards).
Policy Review:	This policy is to be reviewed annually or where relevant legislation and/or standards are amended or changed.

1.0 Introduction

MRQ Registered Training Organisation (RTO) manages academic complaints and appeals in a fair and timely manner, ensuring:

- the information/evidence relied upon is relevant in the circumstances
- complainants/appellants are provided with copies of all relevant documentation
- complainants/appellants are given the opportunity to respond to issues or matters raised
- complainants/appellants can utilise or access a support person during investigation of the complaint or appeal
- confidentiality is maintained throughout the relevant processes unless legislative requirements require otherwise
- the relevant decision makers act fairly and without bias.
- If a complaint requires more than sixty (60) calendar days to process and finalise, the *Principal Training Coordinator* must:
- Inform the Complainant in writing, including reasons why more than sixty (60) days are required, and
- Regular updates should be provided to the Complainant on the progress of the matter.

Appeals

- a) Where the Complainant is dissatisfied with an assessment decision by the RTO, third party or partner organisation providing services on behalf of the MRQ RTO, the Complainant must approach the Assessor who made the original assessment decision to discuss the result and negotiate for re-assessment where applicable/necessary.
- b) When submitting a formal appeal against an academic decision, the Appellant must provide:
 - i. their full name
 - ii. USI number
 - iii. training program attending
 - iv. subject matter under appeal
 - v. date of the incident
 - vi. name of the assessor, if relevant
 - vii. reasons in full for the appeal.
- c) The *Appellant* must negotiate with the *Assessor* for a suitable time and place to conduct a re-assessment where applicable/necessary.
- d) Where the *Assessor* determines that the original assessment decision stands and the *Appellant* remains dissatisfied, the *Appellant* may submit a formal appeal against the academic decision using the Appeals and Complaints Notification Form (MRQTFO006), to the *Principal Training Coordinator* within 28 days of the original decision being made.
- e) The *Principal Training Coordinator* confirms receipt of the application via written correspondence, records details and allocates to the appropriate person for investigation.
- f) The appeal is investigated by appropriate persons to determine a course of action and must be finalised as soon as practicable. A timeframe of thirty (30) calendar days is considered acceptable to resolve the appeal.
- g) Appeals requiring more than sixty (60) calendar days to process and finalise the appeal from initial receipt of application, notice must be provided to:
 - i. inform the appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 days are required, and
 - ii. regular updates should be provided to the complainant on the progress of the matter.

- h) The *Appellant* is informed of the outcome in writing, and all records are returned to the *Principal Training Coordinator*

Note: Where a re-assessment is required, the *Principal Training Coordinator* must request that the *Regional Training Coordinator* find an appropriately qualified assessor to conduct a re-assessment of the Complainant. This may be conducted by the *Regional Training Coordinator* if they are suitably qualified. They must then negotiate and mutually agree suitable arrangement for the re-assessment with the complainant.

3.4 Continuous Improvement

Any corrective action that results from a complaint and/or appeal will be entered into the Continuous Improvement Register so that the necessary improvements can be made to MRQ's information and/or processes relating to a range of activities.

4.0 Record Keeping

The *Principal Training Coordinator* is to retain accurate records of all conversations and correspondence relating to an appeal. The records must be filed, either electronically or in hard copy, in the student profile within the learning management system.

Issues identified in the appeal process that require rectification of RTO documentation will be placed on the Continuous Improvement Register for review.

The RTO securely maintains records of all appeal and their outcomes and identifies potential causes of Complaints and Appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence. This is captured in the Complaints and Appeals Register and where appropriate, the Continuous Improvement Register.

Complaints

This policy is relevant to complaints received about:

- Services and processes provided by MRQ
- MRQ Trainers and assessors
- Other learners at MRQ
- Third parties (including those providing services on MRQ's behalf)
- Other MRQ staff members

This applies to learners and all persons involved in the delivery, assessment and support of all Training Product/s in the MRQ RTO.

3.0 Policy Principles

1. This policy should be read in conjunction with Complaints and Appeals Procedure .
2. Learners are provided information on the complaints and appeals process via the MRQ intranet.
3. All learners will be advised during induction and on-boarding process of the complaint and appeals policies and procedures and learner support services.
4. Learners are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) involved to deal with the issue before it becomes a formal complaint.
5. All learner complaints and appeals will be handled in a serious, sensitive, and timely manner and discussed only with those persons relevant to the case.
6. Learner complaints and appeals processes will be kept as informal as possible, based on principles of mediation and negotiation.
7. Learners who lodge a complaint or appeal in accordance with this policy or appeal in accordance with this policy will not be subject to negative treatment or penalised because of the complaint or appeal.
8. Staff involved in resolving learner complaints or appeals will act fairly at all times and ensure that decisions will be based on a thorough and unbiased consideration of the facts and the views expressed by all parties.
9. Outcomes or decisions made to resolve or respond to a complaint or appeal must be achievable within MRQ's lawful powers and policies, and relevant legislative requirements.
10. Learners' enrolment status will not be affected by the lodging of a complaint or appeal.
11. Any corrective action that results from a complaint and/or appeal will be entered into the Continuous Improvement Register so that the necessary improvements can be made to MRQ's information and/or processes relating to a range of activities.

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