

# Student Complaints and Appeals Policy



The policy relates to the School of Volunteer Management (SVM), The Centre for Volunteering.

**Responsibility:** The Learning and Development Coordinator is responsible for responding to all complaints and appeals and ensuring that all students (also known as learners) are made aware of this policy within the Student handbook.

**Legislation / Contracts:** ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 – Clauses 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5

## Related Policies and Procedures

- Student Handbook
- Consumer Protection Policy

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any student complaints and appeals are handled in a fair and unbiased manner and that students are provided sufficient information regarding the complaint and appeal process.

## Definitions:

**Complaint:** refers to dissatisfaction with a service or treated received

**Appeal:** refers to dissatisfaction with an assessment made by SVM.

**Overview:** The School seeks to prevent appeals by ensuring that students are satisfied with their course and its outcomes. In addition to their functional expertise, staff are expected to be fair, courteous and helpful in all dealings with students. Part of the maintenance of a positive environment is a fair and open complaints and appeals policy made available to all students. For this reason SVM is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential complaints and appeals handling procedure for all students.

All complaints are taken seriously and their findings incorporated into procedures, as appropriate, in accordance with the School's continuous improvement practices.

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES** These principles apply to all stages of this complaints/appeals handling procedure which will be adhered to by SVM, are:

- Every effort will be made to resolve complaints in good faith and in the first instance, informally.
- The complaint and appeal will be dealt with promptly and the length of time involved may vary in accordance with the complexities of the case. Under normal circumstances the Complainant can expect at least a provisional written response within 10 working days of presenting their complaint or appeal. If resolution takes longer, the Complainant will be kept informed in writing on the progress of the case.
- Where SVM considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, we will inform the complainant in writing, including why more than 60 days are required, and maintain regular contact with the complainant on progress.

- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant
- Records of all complaints / appeals will be kept for a period of five years and will be kept strictly confidential. All complaints / appeals must be documented on the Complaint/ Appeal Record and reported to the Quality Assurance Manager.

Before an issue becomes a complaint or appeal, Complainants are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties informally with the person(s) concerned. There are staff available to assist the resolution of issues at this level. Please note that it is not mandatory for complainants to raise a complaint informally.

If a student feels they have a complaint with the School, or believes they have been discriminated against or harassed, or believes they have grounds for an appeal against the assessment of their work they should immediately report the complaint / appeal through the following steps:

1. Approach their tutor and clearly explain the problem and attempt to resolve the issue with the tutor
2. If unsatisfied they should then approach the Coordinator the School, if you have not previously done so. The coordinator will attempt to identify the main issues of the complaint and/or attempt to resolve the matter.
3. In the event of an assessment being deemed Not Yet Competent, students are provided with feedback and guidance as to further work required. Students should, wherever possible, try resolve concerns or difficulties with their Assessor at this time. Every effort will be made to find an alternate assessor within SVM; for appeal cases, however if the student (learner) insists on an independent assessment, it will be at their own cost.