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Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

POLICY CODE: QA2.7 & 2.8

Related Outcome Standard: 2.7 & 2.8

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Employ-Ease provides a transparent, accessible, and responsive system for managing feedback, complaints, and appeals. This system empowers VET students to raise concerns, voice their experiences, and seek review of decisions that impact their training journey, without fear of reprisal.

Through this policy, Employ-Ease affirms its commitment to:

- Upholding the rights of VET students to express concerns or dissatisfaction about any aspect of their experience, whether it relates to training delivery, assessment outcomes, support services, interactions with staff, third-party providers, or administrative processes.
- Ensuring that feedback and complaints are managed fairly, impartially, and promptly, affording procedural fairness to all parties involved.
- Providing VET students with clear avenues to appeal decisions made by the organisation or third parties that adversely affect them, including assessment decisions, ensuring that appeal processes are transparent, independent, and supportive of natural justice.
- Using insights gathered from feedback, complaints, and appeals to drive continuous improvement across all areas of the organisation, ensuring the quality, relevance, and responsiveness of services provided.

This policy fosters a learning environment where VET students feel heard, respected, and supported, reinforcing Employ-Ease's broader commitment to student wellbeing, equity, and quality assurance.

Legislative Background

Outcome 2 – VET Student Support, Division 5 – Feedback, Complaints and appeals, Standard 2.7 and 2.8, National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025 (Cth).

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All VET students enrolled or intending to enrol or formally enrolled at Employ-Ease.
- All employees, contractors, third-party service providers, and stakeholders.
- All decisions made by Employ-Ease or its authorised representatives that may affect a student.

It is important to note that this policy has a broad application. A complaint may be made by a VET student, an employee or any other stakeholder.

Policy Statement

Employ-Ease is committed to fostering a culture of openness, fairness, and continuous improvement where students and other stakeholders feel safe to provide feedback, raise concerns, or appeal decisions without fear of disadvantage or reprisal. The organisation recognises that both **informal and formal complaints**

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play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of services, ensuring student satisfaction, and maintaining accountability.

This policy outlines processes for:

- **Informal complaints and feedback**
  - Encourages open communication between students and staff to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity, informally and at the local level.
  - Supports VET students to raise concerns directly with Trainers and Assessors, assessors, support staff, or the RTO Manager (with appointment), allowing for timely and flexible resolution.
  - Promotes a culture where feedback (both positive and constructive) is welcomed as part of day-to-day interactions and regular feedback surveys.
- **Formal complaints and feedback**
  - Provides a structured and documented process for VET students or other stakeholders who wish to escalate concerns that were not resolved informally or that require a formal review.
  - Ensures that formal complaints are handled impartially, fairly, and within reasonable timeframes by designated personnel who are independent of the issue.
  - Guarantees that procedural fairness is maintained, outcomes are documented, and students are informed of resolution avenues, including external escalation options.

Furthermore, Employ-Ease ensures that:

- VET Students are fully informed of their rights to provide feedback, lodge complaints, and appeal decisions through multiple accessible channels.
- All complaints and appeals, whether informal or formal, are treated confidentially and are used as valuable inputs for continuous improvement.
- Feedback, complaints, and appeals can relate to any aspect of the student experience, including services provided by third parties delivering training or assessment on behalf of Employ-Ease.

This policy strengthens Employ-Ease's commitment to a fair, respectful, and supportive learning environment where student voices are heard and acted upon.

Procedures

Access and Support

Complaints procedures and the student's rights to access both internal and external complaints and appeals process are explained:

- At time of Course Inquiry
- During orientation
- In the Student Handbook and on the website
- On request from staff

Complainant may seek help from Student Support and Welfare Officers or bring a support person.

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Support Services for First Nations Students

- First Nations students are offered culturally appropriate support through internal services or external referrals.
- Where available, a First Nations Liaison or identified contact person is assigned.

Feedback and Complaints Management System (Standard 2.7)

- **Receiving Feedback and Complaints**
  - Feedback and complaints may be submitted:
    - Verbally to a staff member (Informal compliant/ feedback)
    - In writing through the Complaints and Feedback Form
    - Anonymously via suggestion boxes
  - Complaints can relate to:
    - Services provided by the RTO
    - Behaviour of staff or other students
    - Conduct of third parties or RTO contractors
  - Complaints about a particular incident should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurs.
  - When making a complaint, complainant must provide as much information as possible to enable Employ-Ease to investigate and determine an appropriate solution. This should include:
    - The issue relating to the complaint, describing the incident and how it affected the complainant.
    - Any evidence to support the complaint.
- **Complaint Handling Process**
  - All complaints are acknowledged in writing within 5 business days by the Student Support and Placement Manager and forwarded to the RTO Manager in accordance with Performance Indicator 2.7(b).
  - Investigation is completed within 15 business days of the receipt of the Complaints and Appeals form, depending on complexity of the complaint.
  - Procedural fairness is upheld at all stages:
    - Both parties can present evidence
    - Conflict of interest is avoided
  - The complainant (and support person if required) will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss at no cost to them. This meeting is to be conducted by the RTO Manager or the delegated staff for non-academic complaints and the Student Support and Placement Manager for academic complaints.
  - The Employ-Ease must provide a written outcome of the complaint/investigation to the complainant and the RTO Manager or Student Support and Placement Manager within 15 business days of receipt of the formal complaint or earlier if practicable.

Appeals Management System

- **Appeal Rights and Scope**
  - If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution process, they may appeal. Appeals may also be made for decisions relating to:

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  - Assessment outcomes
  - Disciplinary actions
  - Fee or refund disputes
  - Any other decision adversely affecting them
- Appeals must be lodged via the Complaints and Appeals Form within 10 business days of the outcome/ decision.
- If a complaint or appeal is not resolved internally, students may access an external body

- **Appeal Handling Process**
  - Appeals will ordinarily be investigated by the Student Support and Placement Manager and must be acknowledged within 5 business days of receipt of the email or by Compliant and Appeals Form.
  - The Student Support and Placement Manager can request further information and evidence as required conducting the appeal.
  - The appeals process is completed, and resolution is reached within 15 business days unless extended for valid reasons.
  - Procedural fairness is observed.
  - The outcome of the appeal is provided in writing to the appellant within the advised timeframe**.**
  - If the appeal is not resolved internally, the student may:
    - Access an external resolution body (e.g. Ombudsman).
  - Where a student has lodged an appeal against a decision to report them for course progress or attendance or non-compliance with student written agreement, Employ-Ease will not report the student until the appeal process, including external appeals, is completed.

Documenting and Communicating Outcomes

- All complaints and outcomes are recorded in the Complaints & Appeals Register.
- If the internal complaint or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, Employ-Ease will implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required.
- Written outcome is provided to all involved parties, with reasoning and resolution steps within the given timeframe.

Continuous Improvement

- Complaints and Appeals are reviewed quarterly by the RTO Manager and the Student Support and Placement Manager to identify systemic issues.
- Improvement actions are recorded in the Continuous Improvement Register.

Responsibilities

- **RTO Manager**: Makes final internal decisions on complex complaints and appeals.
- **RTO Manager**: Oversees complaints/appeals systems, ensures procedural fairness as well as timeliness.
- **Student Support and Placement Manager**: Assist RTO Manager is handling academic complaints and appeals. Provide evidence for assessment-related appeals if required.
- **Student Support and Placement Manager**: Assist students in submitting feedback, complaints or appeals.

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- **RTO Manager**: Ensures alignment and compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, and reviews complaints and appeals to guide continuous improvement.
- **All Staff**: Act reasonably and maintain confidentiality in finding resolution for any informal complaints and feedback received and participate fairly in investigations.

Supporting Documents

- Orientation Presentation
- Student Handbook
- Complaints and Appeals Form
- Complaints and Appeals Register
- Feedback Surveys
- Continuous Improvement Register

Related Policies

- QA 2.1 Students Information Policy and Procedures
- QA 2.6 Student Wellbeing Support Policy and Procedures
- QA 4.4 Continuous improvement Policy and Procedures

Operational Procedure Table: Feedback, Complaints and Appeals

Action	Responsible Staff	Supporting Document	Timing/Frequency	Compliance Mapping (Standard 2.7 / 2.8)
Provide complaints and appeals information	Course Advisor, Trainer and Assessor	Student Handbook, Website	At enrolment, ongoing	2.7(d), 2.8(a) – Students informed of their rights and access to process
Acknowledge and manage complaints and appeals	Student Support and Placement Manager	Complaints and Appeals Form or via email and Register	Within 5 business days	2.7(b), 2.8(b) – Timely and transparent management of issues
Investigate and resolve complaints and appeals	RTO Manager and Student Support and Placement Manager	Complaints and Appeals Form and Register	Within 15 business days	2.7(c), 2.8(b), 2.8(c) – Fair resolution, documentation, and outcome implementation
Conduct continuous improvement reviews	Student Support and Placement Manager and RTO Manager	Complaints and Appeals Registers	Quarterly	2.7(e) – Feedback used to identify issues

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		Continuous Improvement Register		and support improvement

Document Control

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