

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure that students, staff, and clients understand their rights and responsibilities when engaging with ET Australia Training College (the RTO).

ET Australia Training College is committed to promoting a fair, transparent, and efficient process for addressing and resolving complaints and grievances in a timely manner.

This policy aims to ensure that any concerns related to conduct, services, or operations are handled professionally and impartially, while maintaining high standards of customer service and continuous improvement.

The processes outlined in this policy are designed to foster an environment of open communication, allowing for timely resolution of issues that may arise in the course of training or service delivery.

Scope

This policy applies to students, staff and clients and members of the public who may have concerns with:

- the conduct of the RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- a third-party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- a learner of the RTO.

Complaints Process Overview

ET Australia Training College has established processes to manage and respond to any issues raised by individuals, including students, staff, clients, and members of the public.

Complaints can relate to the conduct of ET Australia Training College staff, students, or third-party service providers acting on behalf of ET Australia Training College. The complaint management process promotes constructive resolution through discussion, mediation, and formal investigation when necessary.

Any ET Australia Training College employee can receive a complaint. Employees must determine whether the issue can be resolved informally or requires escalation to the Consumer Protection Officer.

Procedural Guidance for Complaints Management

Informal Complaints

Whenever possible, complaints should be resolved informally through direct communication and cooperation. This approach encourages a swift and amicable resolution without escalating the issue unnecessarily.

For example:

- **Students:** A student may raise their concern directly with their trainer or assessor. If appropriate, they can have a private discussion to clarify the issue and seek resolution.
- **Workplace Concerns:** If a complaint arises in the workplace, the complainant should, if possible, raise the issue directly with the individual involved, outlining that their behaviour or actions are inappropriate.

It is essential that all complaints, whether verbal or written, are handled promptly to encourage a fast and effective resolution. The individual handling the informal complaint should offer support, ensure the privacy of the complainant and the confidentiality of information included in the complaint, and aim to resolve the issue efficiently.

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant is not comfortable with this approach, the matter should be escalated.

Escalation to Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is not possible, the complaint must be referred to the **Consumer Protection Officer** for formal handling. In cases where the complaint involves the Consumer Protection Officer, it will be referred to the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**.

Formal Complaints

Lodging a Complaint

Formal complaints can be submitted using the 'Complaints Form,' which can be accessed via ET Australia Training College's website: <https://etaustralia.com/training-college/forms/>. If this avenue is not suitable, formal complaints can also be made via email to the Consumer Protection Officer or made directly to the Consumer Protection Officer or the Quality and Compliance Coordinator.

Contact details for ET Australia's Consumer Protection Officer: -

Cath Roden

Training College Manager

Email: Cath.Roden@etaustralia.com

Phone: (02) 4323 1233

Contact details for ET Australia's Quality & Compliance Coordinator:-

Jessica Newman

Quality & Compliance Coordinator

Email: Jessica.newman@etaustralia.com

Phone: (02) 4323 1233

Complaint Acknowledgment

The Consumer Protection Officer will formally acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within two (2) business days. The acknowledgment will outline the next steps and approximate timeframes for investigating and resolving the complaint.

Complaint Investigation

The Consumer Protection Officer will conduct a thorough investigation, which may include:

- Interviewing relevant parties (complainant, respondent, witnesses)
- Reviewing relevant documentation or evidence
- Consulting with third parties, if applicable (e.g., a partnering organisation)

The investigation process will ensure impartiality and fairness to all parties involved. During the investigation, confidentiality will be maintained to protect the integrity of the process and the privacy of the individuals involved.

Resolution and Outcome

Upon completion of the investigation, a decision will be made, and the complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome. The notification will include details of the investigation, the findings, and any corrective actions or remedies offered.

Continuous Improvement

All complaints are viewed as opportunities for continuous improvement. Outcomes and lessons learned from complaints will be reviewed periodically to improve ET Australia Training College's processes, training and assessment, and customer service.

Responsibilities

- **Complainants:** To submit complaints in a timely manner and provide sufficient details and evidence to facilitate resolution.
- **Staff Handling Complaints:** To ensure that all complaints are managed promptly, fairly, and in accordance with this policy.
- **Consumer Protection Officer:** To investigate formal complaints impartially, ensure the timely resolution of issues, and communicate decisions transparently.

Formal Complaints Handling Procedure

Upon receipt of a written formal complaint, the **Consumer Protection Officer** will initiate mediation to attempt to resolve the issue as quickly as practicable. The complaint will be addressed in a fair and transparent manner, and every effort will be made to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties. If the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, it will be referred to the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** for further consideration.

Timeframes for Resolution

All complaints will be addressed promptly. During the various stages of the process, the complainant will be provided with indicative timeframes that apply to the specific complaint. These timeframes may vary depending on the complexity of the complaint and the investigations required.

If ET Australia Training College considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise a complaint, the following actions will be taken:

1. The complainant will be informed in writing of the reasons for the extended timeframe.
2. Regular updates on the progress of the complaint will be provided to the complainant throughout the process.

Notification of Outcomes

Upon conclusion of the investigation, all parties involved will receive a written statement of the outcome, including the reasons for the decision. This ensures transparency and clarity regarding the resolution process.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they will be informed of their right to refer the matter to the relevant Government Department.

Smart and Skilled students are covered by additional consumer protection measures, and if they remain dissatisfied after ET Australia Training College's complaint resolution process, they may contact **Training Services NSW** for dispute assistance. Training Services NSW can be contacted as follows:

- Applying online www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/departments-and-agencies/department-of-education/contact-training-services-nsw#toc-submit-an-online-inquiry-or-feedback
- Phone on 1300 772 104
- In person at a Training Services NSW regional office www.education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/contact-us

Escalation to External Mediation

If a complaint remains unresolved after the internal processes have been completed, it may be necessary to engage external assistance. In such cases, ET Australia Training College and the complainant will agree upon an independent person or panel to mediate the complaint. The following steps will be followed:

1. ET Australia Training College will obtain a written quote for the external mediation process from an agreed mediation service provider.
2. The quote will be shared with the complainant, and if both parties agree to proceed, the costs will be shared equally unless another arrangement is made.

The costs will be clearly communicated to the complainant before the process begins.

External Reporting and ASQA Complaints

Complainants may also lodge a complaint with the **Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)** about ET Australia Training College. However, ASQA does not resolve individual disputes between complainants and RTOs. ASQA's involvement will generally focus on broader regulatory matters relating to the RTO's compliance with the **Standards for RTOs 2015**.

ASQA is not able to act as an independent third party for reviewing complaints.

Support for Complainants

- The complainant should retain copies of the formal complaint and all relevant documentation.
- If the complainant is a student, they will remain enrolled and encouraged to continue their studies or activities while the complaint is being processed.
- Complainants have the right to involve a nominated support person at any stage of the complaint process.

Record Keeping and Continuous Improvement

All records related to complaints, including the nature of the complaint, investigation notes, decisions, and outcomes, will be retained for a minimum of three (3) years. These records will be handled in accordance with ET Australia Training College's privacy policy.

All complaints and their resolutions will be recorded in the **Complaints Register** and in the relevant individual's file (if the complainant is a student or staff member). Complaints and grievances are reviewed regularly by ET Australia Training College to monitor trends, prevent recurrence, and improve operations and services.

Policy Approved by: Tony Mylan

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