Complaints and Appeals

The Centre is a client-focused organisation committed to providing excellence across its operations. We do however, acknowledge that problems can arise that may cause you to feel aggrieved. The Centre has in place a Client Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure to allow you to have such problems addressed in a timely and confidential manner.

What is a grievance?
A grievance can be about discrimination, harassment, or any decision or behaviour, which you feel affects you unfairly or unjustly. The information provided in this document gives you advice about what to do if you have a grievance and what will happen if you make a formal complaint.

How will a complaint be handled?
If you come forward with a complaint it will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is important also that you maintain confidentiality to avoid idle gossip and the possibility of defamation proceedings. You will not be treated unfairly or victimised as a result of coming forward with a complaint. If you decide to go ahead with a formal complaint, it will be taken seriously and investigated in an impartial manner. This may mean that yourself, the person you complained about, and any witnesses will be interviewed. No decision will be made until the investigation is complete.

If a complaint is made against you, be assured that you will not be prejudged. You will have an opportunity to tell your side of the story. You may bring someone with you at the time to give you some support.

Each complaint will be dealt with in as short a time as is possible in the circumstances.

What are your options if you do have a grievance?

1. Speak to the person causing the problem. While this may not be appropriate in many cases, it may be the easiest way to resolve the issue if you do feel comfortable speaking with the person. The person may have been unaware of the effect of their behaviour or decision on you. By telling them you will give them a chance to redress the situation.

2. Make a formal complaint. If you do decide to make a formal complaint, this can be done either in writing, in person or by telephone. The complaint should include a description of the incident, decision, behaviour in question; the time and date of the incident etc; the names of any witnesses; and date of the complaint.

The investigation

Once a formal complaint is made, the matter will be referred to the appropriate person. This person will contact you within 3 working days of the complaint being received and you will be given the opportunity to formally present your case. They will also contact any witnesses and the person against whom the complaint is made.
The outcome

As a result of the investigation, a plan of action will be developed and implemented to resolve the problem. The complaint and its outcome will be recorded, and you will be informed in writing of the outcome and reasons for any decisions.

The Centre will attempt to resolve all complaints initially through discussion and conciliation. If the problem is unable to be resolved, an appropriate external and independent agent will be contacted to act as mediator.

For complaints associated with assessment results, the staff member, in consultation with the assessor/trainer, will review the initial assessment and/or identify alternative assessment methods, and will notify you accordingly.

Appeals

Upon resolution of a complaint, you may wish to dispute the outcome of the resolution or assessment and appeal the decision. All appeals must be submitted in writing, and The Centre will record them.

If the appeal is in respect to an assessment, an independent third party assessor will conduct a reassessment within a reasonable timeframe. You will be given the opportunity to formally present your case. This is designed to ensure fairness and consistency and underpins the continuous improvement process.

If the appeal is to dispute the outcome of a complaint other than relating to assessment, the appeal will be scheduled to be heard by an independent person or panel, inviting the appellant to formally present his/her case.

Upon a decision being made, the appellant is provided with a written statement of the appeal outcomes, including reasons for the decision. All decisions are documented.

If you are unhappy with the outcome

If you are unhappy about The Centre’s response to your complaint, or you feel The Centre did not handle your complaint correctly, you are welcome to record your complaint with The Centre’s registering body. In the case of The Centre, please forward any complaint you feel The Centre has not dealt with appropriately to the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). Information in this process can be found at http://www.vrqavictoria.gov.au/complaints/Page/default.aspx