

Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure

1. Policy

This policy/procedure supports AQTF 2007 Standards in providing a process for complaints and appeals to be heard and actioned. All complaints and appeals received by Premium Health will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.

Despite all efforts of Premium Health to provide satisfactory services to its students, complaints may occasionally arise that require formal resolution. The following procedures provide students the opportunity to have any issues relating to a substantiated complaint or appeal resolved and resolutions reached that attempt to satisfy all parties involved. This complaints and appeals process will be at no cost to the student.

2. Procedure

Informal process

Where possible all non-formal attempts shall be made to resolve the complaint. This may include advice, discussions, and general mediation in relation to the issue. Any staff can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but once a student has placed a formal complaint / appeal the following procedures must be followed.

2.1 General Complaints

- Any student, potential student, or third party may submit a formal complaint to Premium Health with the reasonable expectation that all complaints will be treated with integrity and privacy. There is no cost for the complaints process unless it is referred to a third party.
- A student wishing to submit a formal complaint or appeal can do so in writing and state their case providing as many details as possible.
- All formally submitted complaints or appeals are submitted to the Training Manager. It is their responsibility to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints are to include the following information:
 - Submission date of complaint
 - Name of complainant;
 - Nature of complaint ;
 - Date of the event which lead to the complaint
 - Attachments (if applicable);
- Once a formal complaint is received it is to be entered into the 'Complaints and Appeals Register' which is monitored by the Training Manager regularly. The information to be contained and updated within the register is as follows:
 - Submission date of complaint
 - Name of complainant;
 - Description of complaint / appeal
 - Determined Resolution; and
 - Date of Resolution.

- Once a complaint has been filed and logged in the 'Complaints and Appeals Register' the Training Manager shall then refer the matter to the appropriate staff to resolve, or make a decision on the complaint within 10 working days and keep the complainant informed of any decisions or outcomes concluded, or processes in place to deal with the complaint.
- Once a decision has been reached the Training Manager shall be required to inform all parties involved of any decisions or outcomes that are concluded in writing. Within the notification of the outcome of the formal complaint the students shall also be notified that they have the right of appeal. To appeal a decision the RTO must receive, in writing, grounds of the appeal. Students are referred to the appeals procedure.
- The Training Manager shall ensure that the RTO will act immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, the registered provider must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required, and advise the student of the outcome.
- Copies of all documentation, outcomes and further action required will be placed into the 'complaints and appeals register'
- Premium Health will ensure that it follows the principles of fairness and natural justice in dealing with all complaints

2.2 Appealing a Decision

All students have the right to appeal decisions made by Premium Health where reasonable grounds can be established. The areas in which a student may appeal a decision made by Premium Health may include:

- Assessments conducted
 - Deferral, suspension, or cancellation decisions made in relation to the student's enrolment
 - Or any other conclusion / decision that is made after a complaint has been dealt with by Premium Health in the first instance.
- To activate the appeals process the student is to submit a written summary of the grounds the appeal is based upon and the reason the student feels the decision is unfair is to be clearly explained
 - The Training Manager shall then determine the validity of the appeal and organise a meeting with all parties involved in the matter and attempt to seek resolution where appropriate.
 - The process for all formally lodged appeals will begin within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged.
 - The Training Manager shall ensure that Premium Health acts on any substantiated appeal.
 - Where an appeal has been lodged it will be defined into one of the following categories and the appropriate procedures followed:

General appeals

- Where a student has appealed a decision or outcome of a formal complaint they are required to notify Premium Health in writing within 20 working days of the grounds of their appeal. Any supporting documentation should also be attached to the appeal.
- The appeal shall be received by the Training Manager who will ensure the details of the appeal are added to the 'Complaints and Appeals Register'.
- The Training Manager will make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal.
- The student shall be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decisions, and the 'complaints and appeals register' updated. The student shall also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify Premium Health if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

Assessment appeals

- Where a student wishes to appeal an assessment they are required to notify their assessor in the first instance prior to exiting the training day. Where appropriate the assessor may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable decision is gained. The assessor shall complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why assessment was or was not granted.
- If this is still not to the student's satisfaction the student shall formally lodge an appeal by submitting a written letter outlining their reasons for the appeal. They shall lodge this with the Training Manager and the appeal will be entered into the 'Complaints and Appeals Register'.
- The Training Manager shall be notified and shall seek details from the assessor involved and any other relevant parties. A decision shall be made regarding the appeal either indicating the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a 'third party'. The third party shall be another assessor appointed by Premium Health.
- The student shall be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the 'complaints and appeals register' updated. The student shall also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify Premium Health if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process

2.3 External Appeals

If a student is still dissatisfied with the decision of Premium Health, a student may wish to refer the matter to an external independent / third party mediator.

Appeals can relate to assessment decisions but they can also relate to other decisions, such as a decision to exclude a learner from a program. Clients should be encouraged to resolve complaints and appeals through your complaint mechanisms. If they are not satisfied with the outcomes of these processes they should be referred to the state or territory registering body or the National Training Complaints Hotline, telephone: 1800 000 674.

Further information may be obtained by contacting the National Audit and Registration Agency <http://www.nara.tvetaustralia.com.au/complaints>

Where a decision or outcome is in favour of the student the RTO shall follow the required action and recommendation from the third party mediator to satisfy the student's appeal as soon as practicable.