
Complaints and appeals

This procedure has been developed and implemented to ensure that Gascoigne Training and Assessment has an efficient and effective complaints and appeals management process to allow its students/stakeholders to express any concerns they may have that relates to the nationally recognised training programs offered by Gascoigne Training and Assessment.

In addition this procedure outlines the process by which Gascoigne Training and Assessment will continuously improve the quality of services based on information gained from complaints and appeals made by its clients/stakeholders.

Definitions

Complaints Process (As per Australian Quality Training Framework)

A process by which a student/stakeholder of an RTO, or other interested parties, may raise a concern about the RTO's policies, procedures, services or products with a view to having them changed and improved.

Appeals (As per Australian Quality Training Framework)

A process whereby a student/stakeholder of an RTO, or other interested party, may dispute a decision made by the RTO. The decision made by the RTO may be an assessment decision or may be about any other aspect of the RTO's operations.

Process

Complaints Management (informal resolution)

1. All students/stakeholders are encouraged to firstly resolve any complaints they have in an informal manner;
2. Student/stakeholders can do this by approaching the person/s against whom they are making the complaint and try to rectify issues that relate to their complaint;
3. In the event the student/stakeholder is unable to resolve their complaint through the informal process then the student/stakeholder has the option of lodging a formal complaint.

Complaints Management (formal resolution)

4. A student/stakeholder may choose to raise a concern formally in writing. Formal written complaints should be submitted to the Managing Director and should contain the following details
 - a. the reasons for the formal complaint i.e. the why, and
 - b. provide situational background to the complaint i.e. the what, when, who, where and how.
5. The Managing Director, having regard for the relevant circumstances will consider the formal complaint by:
 - a. reviewing the student's/stakeholder's letter;
 - b. verifying that all appropriate RTO procedures have been correctly carried out;
 - c. sourcing additional information from appropriate staff concerning the subject of the complaint;
 - d. discussing the matter directly with the student/stakeholder
 - e. undertaking other investigation or action as appropriate.

6. After consideration of all available evidence, the Managing Director may decide to:
 - a. Dismiss the complaint
 - b. Uphold the complaint and direct that:
 - compensation as appropriate be made to the student/stakeholder, and/or
 - where relevant administrative systems or procedures be reviewed;
 - appropriate preventative action be undertaken;
 - other actions as appropriate.
7. The student/stakeholder will be informed of the outcome within 10 working days of submission of the formal complaint. The written advice of the outcome shall include the reasons for the outcome and advise the student/stakeholder of their right of appeal.

Appeals Management

1. A student/stakeholder has the right of appeal on one or more of the following grounds:
 - a. That the investigation process did not take account of all matters related to the complaint;
 - b. That the student/stakeholder is able to provide new evidence which could not reasonably have been provided at the time of the formal complaint resolution process;
 - c. That a procedural irregularity has occurred in the hearing of a complaint during the formal resolution process.
2. An appeal must be lodged in writing to the Managing Director within 5 working days of notice of the outcome of the formal complaints procedure.
3. Upon receipt of the written appeal the Managing Director will:
 - a. Consider the matter and complete the investigations within 5 working days of notification of appeal;
 - b. Report to the Senior Management Group his/her findings, decision and recommendations, and
 - c. The Senior Management Group will consider all evidence and on reaching a decision, notify the Appellant in writing of the outcomes of the process, the reasons for the decision(s) and any specific action to be taken.
4. The decision of the Senior Management Group is the final step in Gascoigne Training and Assessment's internal Complaints and Appeals Process.

Independent Mediation and Consultation

At any time during the complaint and appeal process the complainant/appellant may seek the advice or mediatory services of an external independent body for example the Skilling Australia Hotline, a free government service, which may be accessed via telephone 13 38 73.

Record Keeping

1. Staff members associated with investigating and resolving a complaint or appeal are required to keep file notes of any related discussions or actions. Such file notes are to be marked 'Strictly Confidential' and be held in a secure restricted place. All official correspondence with the complainant/appellant will be retained in the same place.
2. Notes should be kept to a minimum stating only facts and relevant details as described by the parties. Dates and times of interactions should also be recorded.
3. All complaints and appeals including the nature of the complaint/appeal, the outcomes of the complaint/appeal will be recorded onto our Complaints & Appeals Register; and

4. Actions arising from our Complaints & Appeals Register will be used to continuously improve Gascoigne Training and Assessment's systems and operations.