

Complaints and Appeals

(Extract from Student Handbook 2018)

Complaints and Appeals

This procedure applies to all clients complaints. It is the responsibility of CERT representatives to ensure compliance with this procedure and all associated policies and work instructions, as well as provide access to this information and relevant processes as required.

Initial Process

All clients are encouraged to first discuss the nature of their grievance with a CERT representative verbally to establish if there is an informal means to resolve the matter. All complaints are taken seriously and are treated with equal importance. It is the responsibility of the CERT representative to either attempt to resolve the complaint according to policy and procedure or to seek additional assistance from their Operations Manager.

If an immediate resolution cannot be agreed to by both parties, the client can lodge a formal grievance.

Lodgement of Grievances

The following processes are to be applied where an immediate resolution cannot be reached in the first instance.

Clients may nominate to lodge a complaint verbally in person or over the phone. This may be with a CERT representative they feel comfortable with or directly to the appropriate Operations Manager.

When a complaint is made to a CERT representative, it is a requirement that the representative collects all relevant information which must be formally recorded using an official **Grievance Form**.

The form will be presented to the person making the complaint for their agreement and signature.

The minimum details which must be included are:

- Nature of complaint or grievance
- Persons involved
- Dates, times and places relevant to the issues

It is also beneficial to include the following where possible

- Indication of any expectations
- Information on how the issue may have been avoided

The following steps are followed for submission of a formal grievance:

1. Clients may elect to submit an official grievance through the completion of a CERT Grievance Form (CERT-FORM-009) or a formal written submission can be attached to the form.
2. The responsible manager will investigate the matter, conduct interviews and checks as necessary to determine the cause and other factors as well as prepare an official response.

The investigation will consider the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. This process will include the following:

1. Discussion of the matter with all parties
2. Collection of appropriate evidence to substantiate the matter
3. Consultation with subject matter experts both internally and externally where required

All decisions made by the responsible manager will be made based solely on evidence substantiated through investigation.

Upon the approval of the recommended outcome, the responsible manager will notify all parties involved with the complaint formally in writing.

Whilst every matter for investigation and response will be different, CERT requires that such issues are dealt with and resolved promptly. A maximum timeframe of 21 days is allocated for the completion of any matter of grievance.

Where a client is still unsatisfied with the outcome of the grievance, they will be advised to appeal the outcome with CERT's National Quality Manager in writing.

A decision will be made to either escalate the complaint further or to uphold the decision. The National Quality Manager will respond in writing advising of the decision and the reasoning for it. This will be completed within 14 days.

If the decision is upheld or still not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the client will be provided with the appropriate contact details of either Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or another nominated third party.

Academic Appeals

All students are entitled to appeal any academic decision made by a CERT representative. As for any other type of grievance, the appellant will be encouraged to first discuss their appeal directly with the relevant trainer/assessor verbally.

A "**Not Satisfactory**" result from an assessment must be discussed with the client at the time it was determined. The assessor will have recorded the reasons for the result on the official assessment document and will discuss this with the client signing and dating the document.

All appeals are taken seriously with notes made about any discussions with the student. It is important that the assessor clearly provides the reasoning behind the judgement and ensure it is reflective of the evidence collected.

Where student-assessor agreement cannot be reached in terms of the decision, the trainer/assessor must refer the student to the appropriate Operations Manager for the lodgement of a formal appeal. If the appeal relates to a decision made by an Operations Manager, the National Quality Manager will refer the matter to a suitably qualified senior member of staff for judgement.

Formal Appeal

If a resolution cannot be reached in the first instance, clients will be invited to lodge a formal grievance in line with CERT's standard process.

Desired Outcome

<i>Client Details</i>			
Name			
Signature		Date	

CERT Office Use Only

<i>Officer Receiving Grievance</i>			
Name			
Signature		Date	

<i>Action Completed</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
OneDrive folder established	
Responsible Manager assigned	
National Quality Manager advised	
Grievance Register Updated	
Investigation/Interviews scheduled	
Target date for finalisation	

<i>Responsible Manager</i>			
Name			
Signature		Date	

Recommendations Summary

Agreed action completed and effective			
National Quality Manager Signature		Date	

<i>Action Completed</i>	<i>Date</i>
Notifications Issued	
Grievance Register Updated	
File Closed	

This form must be retained on hard copy and electronic files.