

Complaints and Appeals Policy

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Part 1: Overview

1.1 Policy Purpose

This policy establishes a framework for managing feedback, complaints, and appeals effectively and fairly, ensuring continuous improvement of our RTO operations in accordance with Standards 2.7 and 2.8 of the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025.

1.2 Policy Scope

For all team members, adults' learners, third parties and separate business enterprise who engage with Advance You.

1.3 Policy Statement

Advance You is committed to:

- Providing clear, accurate, and current information
- Supporting students throughout their learning journey
- Fostering an inclusive and culturally safe learning environment
- Protecting student wellbeing
- Managing feedback, complaints, and appeals effectively

1.4 Governance: Legislation, Frameworks and Standards

Legislation

- [“National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and Fit and Proper Person Requirements\) Instrument 2025](#)
- [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations\) Instrument 2025](#)
- [Student Identifiers Act 2014](#)

Framework

- VET Quality Framework
- Australian Qualifications Framework

Terminology

- AQF: Australian Qualification Framework
- ASQA: Australian Skills Qualification Authority
- CEO: Chief Executive Officer
- COO: Chief Operating Officer (RTO Operation and Compliance Manager)
- NVR: National VET Regulator
- NRT: Nationally Recognised Training
- VET: Vocational Education and Training
- RTO: Registered Training Organisation
- SMS: Student Management System
- LMS: Learning Management System

- TAS: Training and Assessment Strategy
- RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning
- CT: Credit Transfer

Related Policy

- Student Handbook
- Training and Assessment Strategy
- Student Enrolment Policy and Procedure

Part 2: Complaints and Appeals

Standard 2.7: Feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement of the NVR registered training organisation.

Standard 2.8: Effective appeal processes are available to VET students where decisions of the NVR registered training organisation or a third party adversely affect the student.

2.1 Definitions

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the RTO's services, procedures, staff, or third-party providers. Anyone who makes a complaint is referred to as the “complaintive” in this policy.

Appeal

A request to review a decision made by the RTO or its third-party providers that has adversely affected a student.

Feedback

General comments or suggestions about the RTO's services and operations.

2.2 Accessibility

- Information about complaints and appeals processes is publicly available
- Processes are simple to understand and use
- Support is provided to all parties if needed
- No cost for internal complaint or appeal processes

2.3 Initial grievance

If a person has a complaint regarding any processes or activity relating to Advance You’s training products, we recommend the complaintive talk to the person they have an issue with first to clarify any misunderstandings and come to a resolution. If the issue/s are too complicated, or the person feels unable to have this conversation, an official complaint can be lodged with Advance You.

2.4 Lodging a Complaint (Student)

- Online submission form through student portal on the LMS
- Complaints are automatically sent to the RTO manager
- An automated email is sent as “receipt of complaint submission” outlining the expected timeframe and response process

2.5 Lodging a Complaint (Non-student)

Please email the nature of your complaint to the RTO manager. Your email must include the names of the people/person involved, the dates the issue occurred if relevant, and a summary of the events that took place that led to the issue.

2.6 Expected Response Timeframe

Advance You will:

- Send a receipt email that a complaint has been lodge automatically outlining our process
- Organise an investigation interview within 10 working days with all parties concerned
- If the anticipated time to investigate is going to be longer than 60 days, an explanation as to why there will be a delay must be provided to all parties in writing and continued communication to keep the complainive informed of progress must occur

2.7 Investigation Process

Advance You will:

- A date will be set for an interview to occur with the RTO manager (or RTO director if the RTO manager is involved in the complaint) to discuss the matter in more detail.
- The complainive will receive an invitation to an interview and is welcome to bring a support person (this is outlined in the email sent on receipt of a complaint)
- The RTO manager or RTO director will interview all parties involved following the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- During this phase, anyone who has allegations made against them will have the opportunity to tell their side of the story before a decision is made
- Minutes must be taken during these interviews and will be attached to the **Root Cause Analysis Report**. These two items form the evidence that is stored for auditing and continual improvement
- Advance You will not tolerate a decision-maker also be the person an allegation was made against

2.8 Determining an Outcome

The **Root Cause Analysis Report** will be used as a guide when determining root cause of a complaint or adverse event. Where a root cause analysis identifies an opportunity for quality improvement, the **Continuous Improvement Policy** should be followed. All quality improvement activities must be recorded and stored in the SMS under Continuous Improvement Register.

2.9 Resolution Process (Acceptance)

After the investigation, the decision-maker will provide a written statement including the nature of the complaint, the results of the investigation, and justifications for actions proposed to resolve the issue. Should the complainive accept the resolution offer, we will follow our word. The complainive must accept the resolution in writing.

2.10 Declining the Resolution Offer

Should the complainive decline the resolution offer, they are welcome to engage a third party to investigate the complaint, investigation, and proposed resolution. Advance You will reserve the right to agree to payment of a third-party investigation once a quote for services

is provided. An example of a third party is Consumer Affairs. ASQA is unable to act as an independent third party.

2.11 Maintaining Confidentiality

Complaints will be dealt with in strict confidence. The decision to share information with a third party will only be done with the written consent of the complainant, or in the event legislation requires reporting e.g., in the event of a crime.

2.12 Recording Complaints

All complaints must be recorded and stored on Advance You's SMS under Complaints Register. Records include the [Root Cause Analysis Report](#) and [Minutes from Meetings](#).

2.13 Making a complaint to ASQA

A complainant must follow Advance You's Complaints and Appeals Policy before contacting the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to lodge a complaint. This is stipulated on the ASQA website.

Part 3: Appeals

3.1 Appeal Rights

A student may make an appeal on any assessment decision that is made. In this situation, the trainer and assessor that made the initial assessment decision must not be involved in the review of an appeal.

3.1 Grounds to Make an Appeal

Any student may lodge an appeal if they feel:

- The assessment process did not provide a fair, flexible and reasonable opportunity to demonstrate their competence
- They were not informed in advance of the conditions and method of assessment
- The process used was discriminatory in some way and evidence can be provided
- They were ill or suffered misadventure at the time of the assessment (a medical certificate must be provided with the appeal request)
- Any other reason where performance was impaired, or assessment judgement did not follow the principles of assessment (evidence must be provided)

3.2 Lodging an Appeal (Students)

- Students should log into their student portal and make an appeal request via the appeal tab.
- An email confirming that the appeal request has been received should occur automatically. This email will describe the appeal process.

3.3 Expected Response from Timeframe

The Advance You manager will respond in writing to the student within 10 working days, acknowledging the appeal, and providing a statement for the anticipated time for investigation. If the anticipated time to investigate is going to be longer than 60 days, an explanation as to why there will be a delay must be provided to all parties in writing and continued communication to keep the complainant informed of progress must occur

3.4 Appeal Process

The assessment evidence will be sent to second Trainer and Assessor or a senior pest manager who will be requested to assess the assessment piece against the benchmark answers. The second Trainer and Assessor will not be informed of the initial determination to avoid confirmation bias. The final grading will be handed to the RTO manager who will review the appeal.

3.5 Resolution Process

After the investigation, the decision-maker will provide a written statement including the reason for the appeal, the results of the appeal investigation, and justifications for actions proposed to re-grade the evidence. If the evidence brings the Rules of Evidence into question (validity, sufficiency, authenticity and currency) then the evidence will need to be re-submitted to meet these requirements.

3.6 Maintaining Confidentiality

Appeals will be dealt with in strict confidence. The decision to share information with a third party will only be done with the written consent of the student.

3.7 Recording Appeals

All appeals and must be recorded and stored on Advance You's SMS under Appeals Register.

Part 4: Review and Approval

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Policy Owner

Advance You

Contact

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Approval

Beau Rheinberger, Advance You Director

Policy status

Active

Date of Implementation

Version 1.0 23/11/23

Review

Version 1.1 13/6/24: Change of logo and name of RTO. Complaints and appeals delineated

Version 1.2 15/4/25: Review of policy to align with legislation updates as per policy purpose.