

Student Complaints and Appeal

1. Complaints Policy

This policy provides a complaints and appeals system for students enrolled at **The Centre for U**.

2. Purpose

To ensure a complaints mechanism exists that is efficient and effective, allowing for student concerns and objections to be handled transparently, fairly and consistently.

To encourage and foster open communication and a fair appeals management process for students.

3. Policy

The guiding principles when dealing with complaints at **The Centre for U** are; sensitivity, confidentiality and accountability.

The Centre for U commits to procedural fairness, whereby all complaints are treated fairly and without bias.

Individuals must provide their complaint in writing using the complaints form on the website.

Where a complaint lodged is anonymous, it will be assessed if there is sufficient information.

Where a complaint is lodged via a representative (individual or organisation), **The Centre for U** will correspond with the representative but may require meeting the complainant.

Complaints will be dealt with promptly and professionally. Acknowledgement of complaints will occur within 2 business days and a response within 21 business days.

In the event of delays to a response or resolution, **The Centre for U** will inform the complainant of the delay.

In the event of an investigation, the complainant and respondent are encouraged to bring a representative or support person to attend face-to-face meetings.

Where a complaint investigation takes place, the student is to continue coming to class unless otherwise directed.

Students will have the opportunity to present their case in writing and/or in a meeting.

If a complaint poses an immediate risk to an individual or **The Centre for U**, it will be dealt with immediately, as much as practically possible.

Throughout the complaints process, all correspondence is stored on the shared drive, including, but not limited to, notes concerning phone calls, emails and meetings.

In the case where an individual is not satisfied with their complaint resolution, they can appeal the decision. This involves an external individual to review the complaint and make an independent evaluation and recommendation. If the individual is unsatisfied with the independent decision, the individual can lodge the complaint with the Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

False, malicious and vexatious complaints will not be tolerated at **The Centre for U**. Where a complaint is found to be inappropriate, disciplinary action will be taken.

At any stage, students may withdraw their complaint.

4. Procedure

COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION PROCESS

The following steps must be taken when handling student complaints:

Prior to making a formal complaint, **The Centre for U** encourage students to try and resolve the issue by approaching the person and/or the Centre staff to discuss the situation first, however if the student is not comfortable doing this, they will be supported in lodging a formal complaint.

1. A formal complaint is submitted and received by the Training Administrator using the Complaints Form.
2. Within two (2) business days, the Training Administrator to:
 - Email the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be reviewed and assessed, with a response within 21 business days of lodging the complaint.
 - Log the complaint in the Complaint Register
 - Forwards the complaint form to the CEO
3. The CEO to assess the complaint and investigate and may correspond with the complainant or other party (if relevant) to establish the issues.
4. The CEO to respond in writing to the complainant (and other party/s if relevant) with the outcome/resolution to the matter.

APPEALS PROCESS

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome, they can:

1. Appeal in writing to the CEO within 7 days and provide name, complaint outcome and a rationale as to why they are appealing.

The CEO may arrange an independent person/organisation to review and analyse the case. Where applicable at **The Centre for U**'s expense or at the student expense.

2. The independent person/organisation to inform the complainant in writing of their resolution.
3. The independent person/organisation decision will be final. Any further action taken by the student is at the student's expense.
4. If the individual is unsatisfied with the independent decision, the individual can lodge the complaint with the Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

CLOSING COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

The Training Administrator completes the Complaints Register and closes the issue.

Where students want to appeal an assessment outcome, refer to the Assessment Appeals policy.