

# AWA Complaints, Appeals & Student Support Policy

## Supporting and informing learners

Austraining WA will determine the support needs of each learner and provide access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product as specified in the relevant training package or accredited course.

Austraining WA will not enrol learners where it has been determined that Austraining WA does not have the resources available to support them.

Austraining WA will advise each learner as soon as practicable, when there are any changes to the agreed services, including in relation to any new third party arrangements or a change in ownership or changes to existing third party arrangements.

## Complaints and appeals

Austraining WA will acknowledge and deal fairly, efficiently, and effectively with all complaints and appeals.

Austraining WA will retain records of all complaints and appeals for a period of 24 months.

Austraining WA will manage and respond to all complaints and allegations involving the conduct of:

- Austraining WA, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- a third-party providing services on Austraining WA's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- a learner of Austraining WA.

Austraining WA will fairly and effectively manage requests for appeals such as requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by Austraining WA or a third-party providing services on Austraining WA's behalf.

Austraining WA will ensure that:

- the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process
- the relevant policy, processes, and procedures for making complaints and appeals are publicly available
- complaints and requests for an appeal are acknowledged in writing within 5 business days
- provisions are available for a review to be adjudicated by an appropriate party independent of Austraining WA and the complainant or appellant, at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal, if the processes fail to resolve the complaint or appeal
- complaints and appeals are resolved within 60 calendar days.

Where Austraining WA considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, Austraining WA will inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required.

In cases where more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, Austraining WA will update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

Austraining WA will:

- securely maintain records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes

- identify potential causes of complaints and appeals
- take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of recurrence.

## Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure

At Austraining (WA), we prioritise the effective and confidential management of student complaints and appeals. Students are encouraged to address any concerns directly with the relevant person(s) before lodging a formal complaint. However, if direct communication is not possible or does not resolve the issue, students may proceed with a formal complaint.

### Communication of Complaints and Appeals Process

Upon enrolment, all students receive information about the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure through the Student Handbook. This policy is also accessible on the Austraining (WA) website and the RTO DataCloud LMS system.

### Complaints

To lodge a complaint, students must submit a written complaint to the Austraining (WA) CEO or Training Manager, either by mail or email marked as 'Confidential'. Within five (5) working days, the CEO or Training Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and initiate a formal investigation. The investigation process ensures fairness and includes the opportunity for the complainant to be heard, without involving the subject of the complaint. If an outcome is not reached within sixty (60) days, the student will receive written reasons for the delay and an expected timeframe for a decision.

### Appeals

If a student is unsatisfied with any decision made by Austraining (including assessment decisions), they have the right to appeal within seven (7) working days of receiving notification of the outcome. Appeals must be submitted in writing, outlining the grounds of appeal and providing supporting evidence. The appeal should be addressed to the Austraining (WA) Business owners and CEO, either by mail or email marked as 'Confidential'. Alternatively, students can complete the complaints and appeals form provided on our website.

Within seven (7) working days, the CEO or Business Owner will acknowledge receipt of the written appeal from the student. An appeals committee, composed of at least three individuals, including a Trainer with expertise in the area concerned, a student enrolled in the relevant area, and the Training Manager/CEO/Business owner, will be formed. Additional participants may include advocates for students with disabilities or interpreters as needed. The appeals committee will conduct a thorough investigation, offering the appellant the right to be heard and reviewing all relevant interviews and documents. The subject of the appeal will not be involved in the investigation process before the appeals committee hearing. Austraining (WA) will document all discussions, investigations, and findings related to the appeal, providing the appellant with a written statement of the outcome, including reasons for the decision, within five (5) working days of the decision being made. If an outcome is not reached within sixty (60) days, the student will receive written reasons for the delay and the expected timeframe for a decision, ensuring continuous communication of progress.

### External Mediation

In cases of appeals against assessment decisions, students may have the opportunity to be reassessed, with the decision made by the Austraining (WA) CEO or Training Manager after examining relevant evidence. If internal resolution is not possible, external mediation may be sought, with Austraining (WA) providing students with details of external authorities for mediation if required. If all internal avenues are exhausted and the matter remains unresolved, Austraining (WA), in negotiation

with the student, will seek input from an external independent mediator, with costs covered by either party depending on negotiation terms.

### **Complaints Register**

A confidential register of all lodged Complaints and Appeals is maintained by the Austraining (WA) Training Manager, detailing the relevant parties, the nature of the complaint or decision being appealed, the outcome of the complaint or appeal (including reasons for an appeal), and the names and positions of decision-makers.

### **Outcomes Review**

The outcomes of complaints and appeals will be reviewed by the Austraining (WA) Training Manager as required as part of the continuous improvement process. Where relevant, recommended actions will be recorded and actioned via the continuous improvement register.

## **Complaints to TAC if unresolved**

TAC is only able to progress complaints received about TAC registered training organisations and where the complaint relates to an RTO's compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015. Issues that may be investigated by TAC include, but are not limited to:

- quality of training and assessment;
- assessment processes, including recognition of prior learning (RPL);
- inaccurate or misleading advertisements; and
- a learner not receiving the services detailed in the learner agreement.

TAC is also able to receive complaints relating to organisations in Western Australia who are claiming to be an RTO and/or to provide nationally recognised training when they are not registered to do so.