Policy

To ensure that Ash Pty Ltd (trading as Ashley Institute of Training (ASH)) operates a complaints management system that manages complaints and appeals that is easily accessible by VET students and publicly accessible.

Intent

This policy outlines the requirements of the NVR SRTO 2025 Division 5 Standards 2.7 and 2.8. to demonstrate that the RTO operates a complaints management system that allows feedback and complaints about the organisation, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the RTO. The RTO will ensure all parties are afforded procedural fairness, identifies reasonable timeframes for responding to and resolving complaints; and provides avenues for further action where complaints are not resolved (Appeals process).

Additionally, the RTO will ensure that the process for lodging a complaint or appeal is easy to understand including the procedure of how the RTO will address and deal with each complaint and appeal submitted.

Staff Responsible:

- Administration
- Compliance
- Management
- Trainers and Assessors

Compliance Standards:

This policy conforms to the Standards for the revised NVR SRTOs 2025 Division 5 – Standard 2.7, 2.8

Related Policies/Templates/Documents:

- D-001.2 Student Information Guide
- F-102.2 Appeals Form
- F-116.2 Complaints Form
- P-039.2 Privacy and Personal Information Policy
- P-057.2 Training and Assessment Policy and Procedure
- R-907 Complaints and Appeals Register
- R-910 Continuous Improvement and Risk Management Register

Definitions

A **complaint** is a written or verbal statement expressing dissatisfaction based on an unsatisfactory or unacceptable experience and would generally be directed at the general performance of the RTO or its staff in the delivery of services.

An **appeal** in the context of Vocational Education and Training is a right given to the student to challenge an assessment outcome should they be dissatisfied believing that the decision made was incorrect.

Appellant is a person being the student who appeals the assessment decision outcome as being wrongly decided usually in cases where an assessment submission has been deemed Not Yet Competent and a resubmission has been requested.

Complainant is a person being a student, guardian, employee, or other person who makes a complaint against the RTO and/or RTO stakeholders.

Procedure

1. Complaints and Appeals		
Action / Task	**Responsible**	**Timeline**
1.1 In the first instance, the individual is encouraged wherever possible, to resolve the situation(s) directly with the individual or department the complaint or appeal is directed at, to try and rectify the situation before being escalated to a formal complaint or appeal. **1.2** Where possible complaints and appeals are managed and resolved informally, however if the situation cannot be managed informally the individual can submit a formal complaint or appeal in writing.	CEO/Operations Manager	At the time of the complaint or appeal
2. Lodging a Complaint		
2.1 A complaint must be made in writing specifying the details of the situation in dispute using the **F-116 Complaint Form** within **TWENTY (20**) days of the event. **2.2** The **F-116 Complaint Form** should be sent to the complaints email address as specified in the form: complaints@ash.edu.au	Operations Manager	At the time of the complaint or appeal
3. Lodging an Appeal		
3.1 An appeal must be lodged in writing specifying the particulars of the decision, or finding in dispute, using the **F-102 Appeals Form** within 14 days of the assessment outcome. **3.2** The **F-102 Appeals Form** should be sent to the Compliance email address as specified in the form: complaints@ash.edu.au	Operations Manager	At the time of the complaint or appeal
4. Acknowledgement of a Complaint or Appeal		
The following procedure is to be followed when a complaint or an appeal is received. **4.1** The Compliance Team are to acknowledge the receipt of the complaint or appeal in writing to the complainant/appellant within **THREE (3)** working days. **4.2** Details must be recorded against in the **R-907 Complaints and Appeals Register** as well as in the Student Management System (aXcelerate) against the person's contact record.	Compliance Team	Within 3 working days of receipt Upon receipt

5. Complaint Investigations

Action / Task	Responsible	Timeline
5.1 The Compliance Team may elect to investigate a complaint or task another person within the RTO to research the matter ensuring the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted.	Compliance Team	At the time of the complaint
5.2 All investigations will include examination of the RTO's internal systems, policies and procedures and associated documentation/information.		
5.3 The investigation will include all persons involved in the issue (both internal and external parties) that has been identified and all persons will be given the opportunity to have input into the investigation and any allegations.		Within 20 calendar days of receipt
5.4 Compliance must finalise the investigation and provide a response within **TWENTY (20)** calendar days from the receipt of the complaint. Should the consultation process extend over **TWENTY (20)** calendar days the complainant must be notified in writing explaining the delay in providing an outcome.	Compliance Team	
5.5 Once an outcome has been achieved, the complainant will be notified in writing. The response must include details about how the issue was thoroughly investigated and any actions or outcomes that have been identified as a result of this process.		When the outcome is satisfactory
5.6 If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, the complaint is closed, and the status is updated on the **R-907 Complaints and Appeals Register** as well as recording the outcome in aXcelerate against the person's contact record.	Complainant	
5.7 Any opportunities for improvement that have been identified as a result of the investigation are recorded on the **R-910 Continuous Improvement and Risk Management Register.**		
5.8 If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they will be offered the opportunity to appeal as stipulated in SRTO 2025 - Standard 2.8.	Complainant	

6. Appeal Investigations

Action / Task		Responsible	Timeline
6.1	The Compliance Team will investigate each appeal ensuring the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted.	Compliance Team	Upon receipt of appeal
6.2	All investigations will include examination of the RTO's internal systems, policies and procedures and associated documentation/information.		
6.3	The investigation will research each appeal against relevant policies and an examination of the assessment process/system. Additionally, the investigation may include re-assessment of the appellant and/or using another assessor to confirm or reject the initial assessment decision.		
6.4	Compliance must finalise the investigation and provide a response within **TWENTY (20)** calendar days from the receipt of the appeal. Should the consultation process extend over **TWENTY (20)** calendar days the complainant must be notified in writing explaining the delay in providing an outcome.	Compliance Team	Within 20 calendar days of receipt of appeal
6.5	Once an outcome has been achieved, the appellant will be notified in writing. The response must include details about how the appeal was thoroughly reviewed and any actions or outcomes that have been identified as a result of this process.		
6.6	If the appellant is satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, the appeal is closed, and the status is updated on the **R-907 Complaints and Appeals Register** as well as recording the outcome in aXcelerate against the person's contact record.	Appellant	When the outcome is satisfactory
6.7	Any opportunities for improvement that have been identified as a result of the investigation are recorded on the **R-910 Continuous Improvement and Risk Management Register.**		
6.8	If the appellant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they will be offered the opportunity to appeal as per Standard 2.8	Appellant	

7. Resolution Timeframes for a Complaint or an Appeal

Action / Task	Responsible	Timeline
7.1 All formal complaints and/or appeals will be acknowledged within **THREE (3)** working days. **7.2** All formal complaints and/or appeals will be resolved within **TWENTY (20)** calendar days. **7.3** In cases where the review of your appeal takes longer than **SIXTY (60)** calendar days, you will be informed in writing explaining the delay in providing an outcome.	Compliance Team Compliance Team Compliance Team	Within 3 working days of receipt Within 20 calendar days of receipt >60 days

8. Record Keeping

8.1 A written record trail of all complaints and/or appeals and responding correspondence shall be maintained by the RTO for a period of 5 years to allow all parties to appeal appropriate access to these records. **8.2** All records relating to the grievance MUST be treated as confidential. Refer to **P-039 Privacy & Personal Information Policy & Procedure.** **8.3** The **R-907 Complaints and Appeals Register** is to be kept up to date at all times to accurately reflect how the matter was responded to and the duration from the date the complaint was received to the date the complaint was resolved.	All relevant staff Compliance Team	5 years from when complaint/appeal was received Ongoing

Document Revision History

Version Number	Date Published	Description
2.0	03/08/2017 Aleena Velich	Revised Policy and Procedure • Expanded on Overview and Objective • Included relevant definitions. • Expanded on actual policy • Amalgamated P-006 and P-007 into once policy and relevant procedures.
	03/08/2017 Patricia Fulcher	Revised and approved with changes
	03/08/2017 Natalie Robinson	Formatted and published. Retired P-007 (old appeals policy)
3.0	27/06/2019	Major re-write
3.1	15/07/2019	Controlled document review
4.0	27/02/2020 Rebekah Faleafaga	Updated as per current requirements. Inserted mediation and ASQA contact details per state. Revised associated forms – Appeals and Complaints
4.1	10/12/2021 Fiona Dunkerton	Minor updates to formatting and layout of procedure.
4.2	25/08/2022 Fiona Dunkerton	Minor updates to formatting and layout of procedure.
4.3	11/10/2023 Fiona Dunkerton	Scheduled review; minor updates to formatting.
4.4	05/04/2024 Fiona Dunkerton	Scheduled review; revision update
5.0	27/05/2025 Paul Cavicchia	Review and update policy to reflect Revised Standards 2025
5.1	27/05/2025 Paul Cavicchia	Adjust Date
5.2	Rebekah Faleafaga	Transition to SRTO 2025 Division 5 Standards 2.7 and 2.8