



## Complaints and Appeals Policy

Online Education Pty Ltd is committed to resolving all complaints and appeals in a fair, transparent, efficient, and timely manner, with minimal disruption to our operations and no detriment to the learner or complainant. We will not exclude any person from training they have paid for while a complaint or appeal is being investigated. We will also ensure that no complainant or appellant is subjected to harassment, coercion, or any adverse action during the investigation and resolution process. We shall not charge a fee for the investigation and response to any complaint or appeal.

### INFORMAL COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Due to the nature and possible outcomes of informal complaints and appeals, the authority to deal with informal complaints and appeals is any person be it a trainer, assessor or another staff member.

It is generally expected and accepted that informal complaints and their outcomes will not be recorded. The tutor, assessor or other staff member receiving an informal complaint will make all efforts to address the concerns of the learner or complainant through an informal exchange of information, to clarify and understand the nature of the complaint and attempting to resolve the issues presented.

Once the nature of the complaint is found the trainer, assessor or other staff member is required to work with the learner or complainant to close the complaint with an agreed outcome.

If the outcome will incur a cost to our business, the CEO is to be notified for the expenditure to be approved and actioned.

As we believe in solving the issue at hand immediately The Support Team will deal with any issue directly or within 24 hours (as per our 24-hour reply policy).

#### Process:

- 1.** If The Student wishes to make a formal complaint, at times they ask to be referred to the "Complaints Department". The Support Team will investigate and resolve and reply to a standard complaint within 24 hours.
- 2.** If a complicated complaint that requires further investigation and communication, issue will be escalated by The Support Team or Tutor to The Brand Manager for further review and resolution (See 'Formal Complaints' below). This will be added to an internal Complaints Register for all support team

members to log and update accordingly.

3. Support Team/Brand Manager to send The Student the corresponding library item. The Student will be notified within 5 business days with a resolution to the issue or complaint. All parties involved will be notified.
4. If complaint is serious then the Brand Manager is to forward to Operations Manager or CEO, who will intervene, mediate, and resolve in due time.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

Due to the nature and possible outcomes on our business, the authority to deal with formal complaints and appeals lies with the CEO, unless designated to another team member.

If complaint is serious then the Brand Manager is to forward to CEO – who will intervene, mediate, and resolve in due time. Online Education will advise the complainant within 10 working days, receipt of the complaint and investigation has begun.

At all stages of the process, discussions relating to the complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing, Reasons and a full explanation in writing for the decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or Respondent.

Formal complaints and appeals will be submitted in writing to the CEO on the approved form and stored electronically.

The responsible officer, being the CEO, will then assess the complaint or appeal, investigate, determine the outcome and advise the learner or complainant in writing of their decision within 21 working days, including their right to access Stage Two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

A copy of the final determination and original written complaint or appeal is to be placed in the learner's file with recommendations for corrective action or improvement in service forwarded to the CEO for action.

**Whereby the complaint is made against the CEO (whether as the trainer/assessor or in her role of the CEO), the compliance officer will be the person to receive and investigate the complaint.**

### **STAGE TWO**

If the Complainant is not satisfied with Stage One outcomes, they may lodge an application for review in writing to the Compliance Officer.

The complaint or appeal will then be determined by the Compliance Officer (the Reviewer). The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the complainant, respondent and any other relevant persons and decide.

The complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their review, including the reasons for the decision, within 15 working days and advised of their right to access Stage Three of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two.

All documentation including notes of the investigation and review process are to be stored electronically for 5 years.

A copy of the final determination and original written complaint or appeal is to be placed in the Learners file with recommendations for corrective action or improvement actioned by the CEO.

**Whereby the compliance officer was the recipient of the initial complaint involving the CEO, Compliance Officer will assign an independent compliance specialist to undertake the reviewer role.**

### **STAGE THREE**

If the learner or complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they must advise in writing that they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two and that they are escalating the matter to, independent mediation through a mediation service.

### **TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

All written complaints and appeals including reviews are to be commenced within 10 working days of the formal complaint being lodged and finalised within 60 calendar days of the date of complaint or appeal received.

In circumstances where we consider more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, we will:

- ☒ Inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and
- ☒ Regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

### **RECORDS OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

Records of all complaints and appeals will be kept for 5 years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored in secure storage.

**Please note:** This complaint and appeals process, does not remove the right of a student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

### **INDEPENDENT MEDIATION SERVICES**

Should you decide to escalate a complaint or appeal to Stage three, you are free to engage a mediation service. To assist you in this we have found the following mediation services:

- ☒ Dispute Resolution and Mediation Services NSW (02) 9948 4423
- ☒ Community Justice Centres 1800 990 777

**Note:** We have no affiliation or connection with these services.

