

# Complaints and Appeals Policy

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## Purpose

To provide a fair and inexpensive complaints and appeals process

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff, clients and students of The Moreland Group

## References

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- Australian Skills Quality Authority VET Quality Framework (VQF)

## Related Documents

- The Moreland Group Access and Equity Policy
- The Moreland Group Complaints and Appeals procedure
- The Moreland Group Student Handbook

## Responsibilities

The RTO Manager is responsible for ensuring updates and distribution of policy

The RTO Manager is responsible for ensuring the policy is understood and followed by all RTO staff.

## Definitions

What is a complaint?

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by The Moreland Group in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by students and/or employers.

What is an appeal?

An appeal is an application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during training and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 28 days of the decision or finding is informed to the student.

Early resolution of complaints and appeals

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved.

Relationship to continuous improvement

Frequently, the complaints and appeals handling process will expose weaknesses in the training and assessment system that can flow into the continuous improvement system as opportunities for improvement. This outcome of complaints and appeals handling is very positive and should be actively applied by all persons involved.

## Complaints and appeals handling

The Moreland Group undertakes to apply the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- A written record of all complaints and appeals is to be kept by The Moreland Group including all details of lodgement, response and resolution.
- A complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost.
- Each complainant or person lodging an appeal may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The handling of a complaint or appeal is to commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to have the opportunity for a person or a body that is independent of The Moreland Group to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal The Moreland Group complaint or appeals process. It is noted that a review of findings by an independent person or body will generally only relate to the appeals process and is less likely to be required in complaints handling.
- The Moreland Group shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant or person lodging an appeal during the complaint or appeals process.

- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeals process that find in the favour of the student shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints and appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No representative of The Moreland Group is to disclose information to any person without the permission of the Chief Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only to be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur.
- Complaints and appeals are to be considered on the basis of procedural fairness and lead to opportunities for improvement as a Continuous Improvement Report.

## Process

### Complaints Handling Procedure

Matters that cannot be resolved at the time they occur should be referred to The Moreland Group Chief Executive Officer for review. The following procedure is to be followed when a complaint form is received:

- A Complaints and Appeals form is requested by a student via the Contact Page or email to [training@moreland-grp.com.au](mailto:training@moreland-grp.com.au)
- A Complaints and Appeals Form is received by The Moreland Group and is to be immediately recorded into The Moreland Group Complaints and Appeals Register by the RTO Manager.
- Complaints which are received in other forms such as phone or email, are to be detailed on a Complaints and Appeals Form and then recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register.
- The Complaints and Appeals Form is to be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer who is to review the matter and make recommendation as to how to respond to the matter. The Chief Executive Officer may choose to consult with others within The Moreland Group or relevant agencies external to The Moreland Group in determining his or her recommendation.
- The Chief Executive Officer may choose to make inquiries about the matter or may task another person to research the matter against relevant policy.
- The Chief Executive Officer is to finalise his or her response to the complainant and provide the complainant a response within 10 working days from when the complaint is received at The Moreland Group.
- The response to the complainant must include information that demonstrates that the matter was thoroughly reviewed and what actions and outcomes have been identified as a result of the complaint.
- Opportunities for improvement that were identified as a result of the complaint are to be recorded in a Continuous Improvement Report and submitted for the next Continuous Improvement Committee meeting. The Chief Executive Officer may, at his or her discretion, follow-up with the complainant after consideration by the Continuous Improvement Committee to inform the complainant of the improvement actions identified.
- The 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.

## Appeals Handling Procedure

Applications by students for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding are to be treated with the highest importance. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 28 days of when the decision or finding is communicated to the student. The following procedure is to be followed when an application for appeal is received:

- A Complaints and Appeals Form is received by The Moreland Group and is immediately recorded into The Moreland Group Complaints and Appeals Register.
- Persons lodging appeals in other forms such as phone or email, are to be provided with the Complaints and Appeals Form and advised of the correct format for submission.
- The Complaints and Appeals Form is to be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer who is to review the matter and make recommendation as to how to respond to the matter. The Chief Executive Officer may choose to consult with others within The Moreland Group or relevant agencies external to The Moreland Group determining his or her recommendation
- The Chief Executive Officer may choose to make inquiries about the matter or may task another person to research the matter against relevant policy. The Chief Executive Officer is to consider applications for appeal on the basis of procedural fairness. In most cases, this should include a careful examination of the system that the applicant is required to negotiate (such as the assessment system), the information they have been provided which has led to the disputed situation and the timeframes involved.
- The Chief Executive Officer is to finalise their response to the applicant and provide the applicant a response within 10 working days from when the appeal is received at The Moreland Group.
- The response to the applicant must include information that demonstrates that the appeal was thoroughly reviewed and what actions and outcomes have been identified as a result of the appeal.
- Opportunities for improvement that were identified as a result of the appeal are to be recorded in a Continuous Improvement Report and submitted for the next Continuous Improvement Committee meeting. The Chief Executive Officer may, at their discretion, follow-up with the applicant after consideration by the Continuous Improvement Committee to inform the applicant of the improvement actions identified.
- If the applicant is satisfied with the response, the appeal is to be closed in the Complaints and Appeals Register. If the applicant is not satisfied with the response, the applicant is to have the opportunity for a person or a body that is independent of The Moreland Group to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal The Moreland Group complaint or appeals process. This service is to be provided by The Moreland Group at no cost to the applicant. The applicant is however required to meet their own costs in relation to travel, time and in preparing any submission to an independent person or body.
- At the conclusion of the review, decisions or outcomes of the appeals process that find in the favour of the student or otherwise shall be implemented immediately.
- The 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 appeal was received to the date the appeal was resolved.



**Other Information** - [www.asqa.gov.au](http://www.asqa.gov.au)

Students may lodge a complaint about The Moreland Group at any time with the Federal Regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). Please note: in the first instance, ASQA will advise the student to manage the complaint locally before they get involved.