



Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Adamattrin Pty Ltd as Trustee for Mesaric Family Trust T/A Forme Education

[ABN: 43 288 767 600 ACN: 130 686 001]
[RTO No. 31744]



Overview

Forme Education is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential complaints and appeals procedure and aims to:

- Foster a culture that welcomes complaints as a valuable opportunity to improve organisational or academic processes or products;
- Ensure that complaints are resolved promptly, objectively, fairly, with sensitivity and confidentiality;
- Ensure that both corrective and preventative actions are implemented to prevent recurrence of issues

This policy applies to both academic and non-academic matters from learners, potential learners, and other stakeholders, and includes an informal process, and a three (3) stage formal process including:

- Lodging a formal complaint;
- An internal appeal or review of the issue; and
- Provision for independent review.

Academic matters include issues that relate to learner progress, assessment, course content or awards in a VET course of study.

Non-academic matters include the general performance or decisions of Forme Education, its staff or partners, in the delivery of products or services, such as financial matters (fees, refunds and payment terms), staff and learner behaviour or conduct, management of personal information, or facilities and resources.

Responsibility

Forme's Managing Director is responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation and learners and complainants are made aware of its availability.

Application

In the first instance stakeholders (complainants or appellants) are encouraged to discuss the matter(s) informally with Forme staff or learners involved. Where possible, disputes should be managed and resolved informally, although recorded for future reference (in event of a systemic or recurrent issue).

General principles applying to all stages of this complaints and appeals procedure will be adhered to by Forme Education and are outlined as follows:

- The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be applied at all times throughout all complaints and appeals process.

- Anonymous complaints will be investigated but complainants will be encouraged to access the informal or formal processes to enable a thorough investigation and resolution process
- The complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
- The complainant and the respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) if they so desire.
- The complainant and the respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints and appeals will be recorded. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the complainant and/or the respondent if requested.
- Where Forme Education considers that the issue may not be able to be resolved within 60 calendar days (due to availability of or access to 'evidence' or sources, or specialist expertise,) the complainant will be notified in writing of the reasons and will be regularly updated on the progress of the matter.
- Records of all complaints, appeals including outcomes will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored at the office of the Managing Director. The complainant shall have appropriate access to these records without charge.

Procedure

Stage One

If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally the complainant should submit a formal complaint to Forme's Lead Educator

Whilst a complaint form is available to lodge a formal complaint, a complaint may also be made via email, website feedback, letter or via an interview or verbal conversation with any Forme Education staff member who will record the necessary details. Complainants are encouraged to supply sufficient information (and supporting evidence if available) about the matter(s) to enable Forme Education to investigate including (if applicable)

- When the incident(s) took place,
- Who was involved or may have witnessed the incident(s),



- Whether the matters have previously been discussed with or reported to RTO staff, and the complainant's desired outcome to resolve the issue(s).

Learners lodging an appeal about an assessment outcome must do so within 14 calendar days of being notified of the initial assessment decision.

The Lead Educator will acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal in writing, and will make contact with the complainant within five (5) working days to discuss and/or seek any additional necessary information to investigate the issue.

The Lead Educator will determine the outcome and advise the complainant in writing of their decision within ten (10) working days (of receipt of the complaint).

All complainants will be advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

Stage Two

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the Forme General Manager, at PO Box 2969 Burleigh BC, QLD 4221.

To enable timely resolution, the appeal should be submitted by the complainant within 14 calendar days of notification of the formal complaint decision.

The appeal will be investigated and determined by an appointed Reviewer - an officer or review committee (consisting of the Managing Director (or delegated Senior Officer) and at least one other person with relevant RTO, training or Industry relevant expertise as required by the nature of the complaint) independent of the original decision.

The Reviewer will conduct all necessary consultations with the appellant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision, within twenty (20) working days.

The appellant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three complaints and appeals procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

Stage Three

If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may:

- Contact the commonwealth government's National Training Complaints Hotline (13 38 73 or skilling@education.gov.au) or
- Queensland Training Ombudsman QTO Office (1800 773 048 or info@trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au)

Should the complainant wish to pursue the matter through an external review stage, they should be aware that fees and charges, payable by the complainant, may be applicable.

The details for the external body and contact person appointed for this purpose by Forme are:

Therese Skinner

LEADR

Association of Dispute Resolvers
Level 1, 13-15 Bridge Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000
P: 02 9251 3366
F: 02 9251 3733

Forme Education will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review and inform the appellant within ten (10) working days.

Fees & Charges

Mediator Costs: \$350 +GST (up to 4 hrs) Additional Mediator Costs: \$125 + GST per hour after the initial 4-hour consultation (Estimated at time of publication and subject to change)

Review of Refund and Re-Credit Decisions

Learners requesting to appeal or review a refund or re-credit (VET FEE-HELP) decision should apply in writing via the Complaint and Appeals form, providing relevant supporting evidence. Special conditions and strict timelines apply - refer to the Withdrawal, Refund and Re-Credit Policy and Procedure for more information.

Publication

This Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is available on the Forme Education website, www.forme.edu.au and will be made available to learners on request.

This Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure was agreed to and ratified by the Director, Adamattrin Pty Ltd as Trustee for Mesaric Family Trust t/a Forme Education on 13th of October, 2016.