

COMPLAINTS & APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Introduction

FIREtrain has an effective complaints and appeals process to comply with the conditions of registration as well as giving students and client's faith in the RTO and the quality of its operations.

Purpose

To ensure complaints and appeals are addressed efficiently and effectively for learners, trainers and staff.

Scope

The Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is available to all clients of Firetrain. Staff should refer to the Firetrain Staff Handbook should they have a complaint to make.

Responsibilities

The Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure are the responsibility of the Director/Training Manager.

Policy Statement

Firetrain ensures an appropriate internal complaints handling and appeals process that satisfies the following requirements:

- a) A process is in place to lodge a formal complaint or appeal if the matter cannot be resolved informally, written record of the complaint or appeal on file
- b) Each complainant has an opportunity to formally present their case at minimal or no cost to themselves
- c) Each party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings
- d) The complainant or appellant is given a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome
- e) The process commences within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the complaint or appeal and supporting information and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

Principles

Any complaint will be handled fairly, recognising the rights of the person making the complaint, Firetrain and the person against whom the complaint is being made. All parties concerned will be treated with courtesy and appropriate confidentiality will be maintained.

Firetrain will be transparent and accountable in relation to client complaints by ensuring information about the procedure available and by informing stakeholders about feedback received and actions taken to improve services resulting from analysis of feedback.

At any point a complaint may be withdrawn by the complainant.

Firetrain will collect data and maintain records of complaints received and their outcomes. These will be analysed and assessed and form part of the continuous improvement strategy.

Procedure

Staff and Client Information

Management must inform all staff of complaint and appeal procedures. This takes place at the staff induction and as improvements are made to the complaints and appeals procedure.

Firetrain Trainers and Assessor must inform clients of the complaint and appeal procedures. This takes place prior to commencement of training.

Complaints and Appeals System

The complaints and appeals procedure ensures complaints and appeals are resolved within the specified time frame.

Management must, as part of the complaints and appeals procedure, inform clients clearly of the complaint or appeal outcomes in writing.

The complaints and appeals process will be available to all clients of Firetrain.

Complaint Process

To initiate the complaint process:

1. The client/training participant should discuss their concerns with the staff member with whom they are in closest/most regular contact.
2. Firetrain must act on each substantiated complaint.
3. All complainants will be provided with a Complaints Resolution Form for completion.
4. All complaints shall be recorded on the Complaints Register.
5. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties the client should be instructed to seek an appointment with the Director. The client should be instructed at this point of their right to invite a support person to attend this and any further discussions relating to the complaint.

To investigate the complaint:

1. Firetrain to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and investigate the matter with all concerned parties;
2. For complaints regarding assessment, organise remarking or reassessment as necessary;
3. For non-assessment complaints, ensure that the investigation is appropriate to the nature and seriousness of the complaint, calling on external investigators if necessary; and
4. In all cases, the investigation is to be conducted, fairly, openly, and impartially.

To resolve the complaint:

1. Respond to the client in writing within 21 days of receiving the complaint with results of the investigation;
2. If the complaint requires more than 60 calendar days to resolve, then the client will be notified in writing, including being provided a reason why, and will be notified in writing of the progress of the complaint every week thereafter until the complaint is resolved;
3. Ensure the results of the investigation include any corrective action necessary to prevent similar complaints and ensure that the changes are implemented.

To finalise the complaint:

Update records including the Complaints & Appeals Register.

Appeal Process

To initiate the appeal process:

1. The client lodges an appeal directly to the Director within 21 days of being advised of the outcome of a complaint or assessment; and
2. Recommend the client lodges the appeal in writing.

To resolve the appeal:

1. Acknowledge the appeal in writing and alert all concerned parties that an appeal has been lodged within 7 days of receiving the appeal;
2. For assessment appeals, organise remarking or reassessment acceptable to all parties to the appeal. Either the Director or the client may seek reassessment or arbitration by a third party acceptable to all parties;
3. For non-assessment appeals, first meet all parties to seek conciliation. If unsuccessful, refer the matter to a third party/panel acceptable to all parties;
4. If the appeal requires more than 60 calendar days to resolve, then the client will be notified in writing, including being provided a reason why, and will be notified in writing of the progress of the complaint; and
5. In all cases the appeal is to be conducted fairly, openly and impartially.

To notify all parties of the appeal decision:

1. Firetrain must report the results of the appeal and any corrective action to be taken to all concerned parties in writing.

To finalise the appeal process:

1. Update all records including the Complaints & Appeals Register.

Corrective Action

Management must monitor the area of complaint or appeal to ensure that corrective action is taken and the problem resolved. Management must also monitor any required changes are implemented and that there is no recurrence of the problem.

Preventive Action

Management must implement preventive or corrective action as appropriate to the problem identified through the Complaints & Appeals Process and monitor the implementation for effectiveness, to ensure that it:

1. Prevents the identified problem; and
2. Does not have any unforeseen side effects.

Management must review complaints and appeals to determine causes and take action to prevent reoccurrence of these causes.

Improvements to Complaints and Appeals System

Complaints and appeals are subject to the Monitoring & Review Procedure, Continuous Improvement of Client Services Procedure and Continuous Improvement of Training & Assessment Procedure.

All improvements must document:

1. Complaint and appeal process and resolution;
2. Preventive measures; and
3. Client feedback data.

Refer: Complaints & Appeals Register