

# Complaints and Appeals

## Version Information

<b>Document Title</b>	Complaints and Appeals				
<b>Document Type</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Process / Workflow	<b>Version</b>	1.6
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guideline	<input type="checkbox"/> Checklist		<b>Implementation date</b>	20/02/2019
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## Purpose

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning seeks to continuously provide quality training and assessment. It is committed to implementing an effective complaints and appeals policy that enables students and clients to be informed of and to understand their rights and the responsibilities of Goodstart Institute of Early Learning as a Registered Training Organisation.

This document provides Goodstart Institute of Early Learning staff on how to manage and respond to all allegations involving the conduct of staff within the Goodstart Institute and students undertaking training and assessment.

## Scope

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is available on the Goodstart Institute of Early Learning website and Student Handbook to inform students of their rights and what they can expect from Goodstart Institute of Early Learning when managing their complaints and or appeals.

## Definitions

### Complaint

A complaint can be defined as a student's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the Institute's services and activities, such as:

- The enrolment, induction/orientation process
- The quality of education provided
- Fees and charges
- Learning resources
- Trainers and Assessors
- Marketing
- Other staff members who have interaction with the student
- Another student

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- Equity and Access, discrimination, harassment and bullying
- Academic matters, including student progress and assessment
- Handling of personal information and access to personal records.

## Appeal

An appeal refers to appeals against any of Goodstart Institute of Early Learning's training decisions that students would like investigated. An appeal may be a result of an issue such as but not limited to:

- Assessment process and decision
- Student progress and decisions.

## Assessment Appeal

Is when a student does not agree with an assessment decision and would like it reviewed.

# Complaints

All complaints received will be given consideration. The objective will be to find an immediate solution and amicable settlement for all parties concerned.

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning aims to:

- Ensure a complaints handling system is fair and reasonable at all times
- Provide students, clients and staff with contact details of public, independent authorities who may assist in complaint resolution
- Ensure that complaints are taken seriously, handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a speedy resolution.

If a student or client has a complaint they are encouraged to speak immediately with their Trainer and Assessor (Lead Trainer) to resolve the issue or by contacting Student Services if the complaint is about a trainer and assessor or other staff members; student services will direct the complaint accordingly, either they will deal with it or refer to the National Manager. Where possible, attempts will be made to resolve the issue, this may include advice and/ or discussions.

Some students may feel they have received unfair treatment or unreasonable services or products and may wish to make a formal complaint. In these cases students are asked to submit a formal written complaint to allow Goodstart Institute of Early Learning time to review and address the issue quickly and by the most appropriate qualified staff member.

# Appeals

Students are entitled to formally appeal the outcome of the assessment decision. Students dissatisfied with the assessment received are asked to discuss the results with their Trainer and Assessor (Lead Trainer) in an attempt to reach a decision before a formal appeal is submitted.

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Where a student is dissatisfied with the assessment practical work performed in the workplace, the student should discuss the results with their Trainer and Assessor (Lead Trainer) and/ or mentor/ supervisor in an attempt to reach an amicable solution. The appeal can be directed to the Student Services Manager who will reassess the assessment practical work performed and notify the student of their findings. If the issue cannot be resolved, a student may undertake a formal appeal.

In all cases, the appeals process will be:

- Formal and impartial
- Clearly defined and explained to the student
- Known to Trainers and Assessor and students before assessment takes place
- Supported with written documentation.

## Formal Complaints and Appeals

This section outlines the process to follow for a student to submit and undertake a formal complaint or appeal. A formal complaint or appeal may be in relation to matters of concern relating to quality of training, training delivery and assessment, student support, course materials, discrimination, harassment and assessment outcomes.

A student has the right to make a formal complaint or appeal and expect that every effort will be made to resolve it in accordance with this procedure, without prejudice or fear of reprisal or victimisation.

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will manage all complaints and appeals fairly, equitably and efficiently as possible. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will encourage the parties to approach the complaint or appeal with an open mind and to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation. Where a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, Goodstart Institute of Early Learning acknowledges the need for an appropriate external and independent person to mediate between the parties. The parties will be given the opportunity to formally present their case to the independent person. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning do not supply or promote an external mediator, the complainant is to source their own external mediator.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process of making and resolving complaints. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning seeks to protect the rights and privacy of all involved and to facilitate the return to a comfortable and productive learning environment.

### Information recorded

In order to investigate and respond to a complaint or appeal, certain information needs to be recorded. Below is a list of the types of information that is recorded when a student makes a complaint:

- Student details (name, contact details, enrolment details)
- Details of the complaint or appeal
- Student's preferred outcome
- Date of complaint or appeal

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- Actions taken while the complaint or appeal is investigated
- Complaint or appeal resolution.

All documentation retained is maintained in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

### Investigating and responding to your complaint or appeal

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning aims to assess and investigate complaints or appeals in a transparent manner to find a fair solution for all parties. When investigating and assessing complaints or appeals Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will consider:

- The law, industry standards and codes, guidelines, and legislation
- What is fair and valid for the student and other parties involved.

If the complaints and appeals process takes longer than 60 days to process and finalise Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will inform the student in writing and maintain regular updates to the student on the progress of the complaint or appeal.

### Monitoring and Improvement

All complaints and appeals practices are monitored by the National Manager and Quality and Compliance Manager and will be discussed at Management Review Meetings with areas for improvement identified and acted upon to ensure appropriate corrective action is undertaken to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

## Third Party Arrangements

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning has a third party arrangement in place with Open Colleges (RTO 90796) who support Goodstart Institute with the assessments of students work. If at any time the student wishes to make a complaint or appeal they are to contact their trainer and assessor (Lead Trainer) and discuss the complaint and/ or appeal. The Trainer and Assessor will escalate the complaint if required to the National Manager as per the procedure noted below.

## External Agencies

Where all internal avenues have been exhausted and the matter remains unresolved, complainants/appellants may choose to seek advice and support from an external agency.

Examples of such agencies include but are not limited to:

- A range of mediation services and dispute resolution agencies provided by local councils and state governments;
- National Training Complaints Hotline - telephone 13 38 73 (Monday to Friday, 8.00 am – 6.00 pm or via email to [skilling@education.gov.au](mailto:skilling@education.gov.au)), or
- Australian Quality Skills Authority – [www.asqa.gov.au](http://www.asqa.gov.au)

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Where the complainant or appellant chooses to seek support or advice from external sources the complainant or appellant will be required to meet any costs in doing so.

## State Contract Requirements

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will adhere to all contractual requirements throughout the term of the contracts per state, as required.

### Western Australia

Adhere to the WA ministerial corporation's complaints management policy.

The WA ministerial corporation may investigate any complaint it receives about Goodstart Institute of Early Learning, if it is considered necessary to conduct an investigation of a complaint the WA ministerial corporation will do so under the terms of their Complaints Management Policy. If it deems necessary Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will take action and comply accordingly.

### Victoria

As part of the contractual requirements Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will ensure their complaints and appeals policy will be on the website for students to access. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will co-operate with the Department in relation to handling complaints.

### Queensland

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning ensure business processes are in place to resolve any complaints in a timely and fair manner.

### New South Wales

#### Smart and Skilled

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning Complaints and Appeals Policy aligns with the Smart and Skilled Provider Consumer Protection Policy requirements. The Student Services Manager, together with the relevant stakeholders (i.e. Trainer and ASSESSOR (Lead Trainer), staff member), works with all complaints and appeals in a fair and equitable manner referring any students to the following VET complaints handling agencies:

- Australian Skills Quality Authority – [www.asqa.gov.au](http://www.asqa.gov.au)
- NSW Vocational Training Tribunal – Department of Education and Communities – [www.training.nsw.gov.au](http://www.training.nsw.gov.au)
- NSW Ombudsman – [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au)
- Commonwealth Ombudsman – [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – [www.heroc.gov.au](http://www.heroc.gov.au)
- Antidiscrimination Board of NSW – [www.antidiscrimination.lawlink.nsw.gov.au](http://www.antidiscrimination.lawlink.nsw.gov.au)
- People with Disability Australia Inc – [www.pwd.org.au](http://www.pwd.org.au)
- Workcover NSW – [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)

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- NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal – [www.ncat.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au)
- NSW Fair Trading – [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

## Procedure for Making a Formal Complaint or Appeal

Step No	Overview	Description/Actions to be taken
<b>STEP 1</b>	<b>Discussion with immediate parties</b>	Student should discuss their issue with the person directly involved, where practicable and try to resolve their issue verbally.
<b>STEP 2</b>	<b>Discuss with Trainer and Assessor (Lead Trainer) / Student Services Manager</b>	<p>When a resolution cannot be reached with the immediate parties, or the issue is sensitive the trainer and assessor or staff member will direct the complaint/ appeal to the Student Services Manager for further discussions.</p> <p>If a student has appealed their assessment outcome the Student Services Manager will reassess the assessment within 7 business days and make judgement on the marking. Informing the student of their decision.</p> <p>If the student is satisfied with this outcome no further action will be taken and a record of the complaint or appeal will be maintained for compliance purposes.</p>
<b>STEP 3</b>	<b>Formal written complaint or appeal</b>	<p>Where a resolution cannot be reached with the Trainer and Assessor (Lead Trainer), or the issue is sensitive and requires another party to mediate an outcome the student should submit a formal complaint in writing (via email or post).</p> <p>The formal complaint or appeal should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student details (name, student number, phone number, email address, enrolment details)</li> <li>• In the subject line it should state 'Formal Complaint' or 'Formal Appeal'</li> <li>• Outline of what the complaint or appeal is and how and what steps the student has taken to resolve the issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student may choose to add an appendix with further information such as chronologic details of the issue. i.e. on xx/mm/yy I experienced XXX.</li> <li>- For assessment appeals a copy of the assignment under question is to be attached</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How the student believes this issue should be resolved and what a successful outcome would entail.</li> <li>• Submit the written formal complaint either via email to <a href="mailto:goodstart@goodstart.edu.au">goodstart@goodstart.edu.au</a> or via post to:</li> </ul>

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Step No	Overview	Description/Actions to be taken
		<p>Goodstart Institute of Early Learning Attn: Student Services Manager PO Box 12089 George Street Brisbane Qld 4003</p>
<b>STEP 4</b>	<b>Receipt and investigation of complaint</b>	<p>The Student Services Manager will reply to the student's written complaint or appeal within 48 hours of receiving the complaint or appeal to acknowledge receipt. The Student Services Manager will review the information provided in the written complaint or appeal and start the investigation process with all required parties addressed in the complaint or appeal, involving relevant stakeholders and/ or management as required.</p>
<b>STEP 5</b>	<b>Response to complaint</b>	<p>Within 10 business days of receipt of the complaint Goodstart Institute of Early Learning's Student Services Manager will provide a response and/or resolution to the complaint. Should investigation of the complaint or appeal still be underway, Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will advise the student of this and provide an estimate on when their complaint will be responded to or resolved.</p> <p>If the student is satisfied with this outcome no further action will be taken and a record of the complaint or appeal will be maintained for compliance purposes.</p>
<b>STEP 6</b>	<b>Further action – insufficient resolution</b>	<p>If the student is not satisfied with the outcome the National Manager will discuss the findings with the Student to reach an amicable resolution.</p> <p>Should the issue still not be resolved to the student's satisfaction, the Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will make arrangements for an independent third party mediator to resolve the issue and outline any costs that may be involved with this to the student. The student will be given the opportunity to formally present his or her case. The time frame for this process may vary but should take no longer than 14 days.</p>
<b>STEP 7</b>	<b>Further action – outcome</b>	<p>All parties involved will receive a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision within the 14 day period. If the process is taking longer than 30 days from the complaint or appeal being received the student will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and kept informed about all progress.</p> <p>Complaints and appeals register updated.</p>
<b>STEP 8</b>	<b>Further action – VET Regulator</b>	<p>If the student is still not happy with external mediation, the student may take their complaint to the VET Regulator, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).</p>

# Complaints and Appeals

## Documentation

All complaints and appeals will be recorded on the complaints register with all documentation relating to the complaint archived for compliance and audit purposes.



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