

Policy - Complaints Rationale

It is the desire of CCAE to implement a Complaints process that supports Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance by providing students who may be dissatisfied with decisions, implementation plans and services, with a formal method of communicating their concerns and/or dissatisfaction so that issues can be brought to the attention of Management and Board and the matters raised be addressed in a formal and rational manner.

Policy – Complaints Aims

- The Complaints provisions apply to all persons enrolled with or seeking enrolment with the CCAE for the delivery of education and training together with all assessment services provided by the CCAE.
- CCAE will encourage the parties to approach a Complaints with a view to resolution via discussion and conciliation. Where a Complaints cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, and CCAE acknowledges the need for an appropriate external/independent agent to mediate the parties, CCAE will make arrangements for such.

All Enrolees, and in the case of Traineeships the employer of the trainee, will be provided with a copy of the Complaints and Appeals policy to ensure:

- All parties have a clear understanding of the steps involved in the Complaints policy.
- Complainants are provided with details of external authorities if required.
- All Complaints will be managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.
- All disputes or Complaints will be handled professionally and confidentially.
- Complainants will be provided the opportunity to present his/her case at each stage of the Complaints process.
- All discussions relating to complaints, Complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing and both the complainant and appellant provided with a written statement of the outcomes, including the reasons for the decision.

Procedure - Responsibilities

- The **Manager** is responsible for the control and facilitation of this procedure.
- A Complaints, complaint or appeal is deemed to be a formal Complaints, complaint or appeal when it is lodged in writing to the Manager and is signed by the Complainant.
- A Complaints will only be acted upon if it is formally communicated in writing to the Manager and signed by the Complainant. **Unsigned Complaints will be viewed as vexatious and destroyed.**
- Students will have problems addressed effectively, efficiently, professionally and confidentiality.
- A formal Complaint should only be lodged with the Manager or Board when a **student believes that they have not received an adequate hearing or redress of matters they have already raised** with CCAE personnel: Teachers/Trainers, Administrative Support Staff, Supervisors and/or Manager.

Procedure - Possible Areas Where Concerns May Arise

A Complaint may take the form of a complaint or appeal involving some form of dissatisfaction with the procedures, outcomes or the quality of service provided by employees or CCAE policies and systems in relation to the following:

- Enrolment.
- Training Delivery.
- Complainant and Staff Amenities.
- Occupational Health and Safety issues.
- Fees, Charges and Refund matters and value for money issues.
- Unfair treatment such as discrimination, sexual harassment, racism.
- Training/competency assessment including recognition of prior learning.
- The issuing or refusal to issue results, certificates and/or statements of attainment.
- Any other activities associated with the delivery of training and assessment services.
- Programming matters, staff responsibilities, contractual negotiations and issues of TOIL.

Procedure – Steps In Formal Complaints Process

- [1] **Discussion with the relevant Employee:**
 - ✦ There is an obligation on the complainant to be fair and to raise their concern in a confidential manner with the staff member, *verbally and/or written*, and give the staff member an opportunity to respond professionally.
 - ✦ The staff member may seek to resolve the issue at a personal level and only they and the complainant are aware that any concern existed at all.
 - ✦ The staff member may raise the concern with their immediate Supervisor to seek advice on means of resolution, but the resolution should be communicated and implemented by the staff member.
- [2] **Discussion with the relevant Supervisor:**
 - ✦ If the response does not resolve a complainant's concern, they must *in a signed document* communicate the issue in a confidential manner to the staff member's immediate supervisor. Verbal and/or unsigned complaints received by a supervisor are to be treated as vexatious, the event reported immediately to the Manager who will inform the complainant to use proper processes or risk being dismissed/contracts terminated.
 - ✦ The supervisor will hold separate confidential discussions with employee and complainant to ascertain facts.
 - ✦ The supervisor, with the consent of the employee, and informing the complainant, may raise the matter directly with the Manager to seek advice on means of resolution.
 - ✦ The supervisor will bring the parties together to find a meeting of the minds. If a negotiated resolution is not possible the supervisor will decide, communicate it in writing to all concerned and oversee its implementation.
 - ✦ If the individual who is the subject of the complaint is in fact a supervisor, then the matter must be directly communicated *in a signed document* to the Manager.
- [3] **Formal lodgement of signed letter of complaint or Complaints addressed to the Manager:**
 - ✦ Manager only acts in cases of written/signed Complaints, regards all verbal/unsigned complaints as vexatious, and will inform such a complainant to use proper processes or risk being dismissed/contracts terminated.
 - ✦ The Manager will conduct separate interviews with each of the parties to verify the facts.
 - ✦ The Manager will bring all parties together to find a meeting of the minds. If a negotiated resolution is not possible the Manager will decide, communicate it in writing to all concerned and oversee its implementation.
 - ✦ The Manager will seek to resolve any Complaints fairly and equitably within five (5) working days.
- [4] **Formal lodgement of signed letter of complaint or Complaints with the Board:**
 - ✦ If the complainant feels aggrieved by the Manager's response the matter is referred to an Appeals Committee consisting of 3 Board members conducted by the Chairperson of the Board according to governance processes.
- [5] **Formal lodgement of signed letter of complaint or Complaints with ACFE Regional Manager:**
 - ✦ If the Complaints cannot be resolved internally, the CCAE will advise the complainant of the appropriate Regional Personnel where they can seek further assistance in addressing their concerns.
- [6] **Formal lodgement of signed letter of complaint or Complaints with Ombudsman:**
 - ✦ If the Complaints cannot be resolved internally or regionally the complainant will be advised to contact the ombudsman to seek further assistance in addressing their concerns.

Procedure – Document Availability and Documentation of Final Decision

CCAЕ will provide to the complainant in writing, the outcome of each complaint, Complaints or appeal, including reasons for the decision, within five working days of the decision being made by the Manager.

- Complaints application – available on 'S' Drive or from Administrative Manager
- Complaints report signed by the Manager
- Appeals application – available on 'S' Drive or from Administrative Manager
- Appeal report signed by the chairperson of the Board of Management

Evaluation

This policy is subject to continuous review. After each Complaint the Manager review the procedure in consultation with affected staff and complainant as an element of continuous improvement and quality assurance. The responses and outcomes may result in immediate changes to policies and practices.

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