



# **Complaints & Appeals Policy**

## 1. Scope

Churchill Education aims to provide a quick and effective resolution to concerns, issues and difficulties in relation to:

- Churchill Education services, including Recognition of Prior Learning and Corporate Training
- Churchill Education Assessors
- Churchill Education staff
- A student, prospective student or past student of Churchill Education

This Policy does not extend to Churchill Education staff alleging workplace discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or bullying. This is covered by a separate internal Equal Employment Policy.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Address concerns raised by person/s
- Provide an avenue for communication and feedback
- Recognise, promote and protect a person's rights, including the right to comment and provide feedback on service
- Provide an efficient, fair and accessible framework for resolving complaints and monitoring feedback to improve service delivery

## 3. Definitions

**Appeals:** An appeal is when a person seeks a review of the decision made by Churchill Education. Appeals could be related to academic or non-academic matters. Examples of possible appeals could be related to a complaint outcome, an enrolment, an assessment result and termination of enrolment.

**Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction with a service, decision or action of Churchill Education, its Assessors, Staff or Students. Complaints can be of an academic or non-academic matter. This includes Churchill Education's services, or the performance, behaviour and conduct of staff or representatives, or the complaints handling process itself. A complaint may be made in person, by phone, email or in writing.

**Complainant:** A person making the complaint.

**Persons:** Any student, prospective student, individual, entity (including government agencies), group or member of the public who is affected by the actions of the Churchill Education.

**Respondent:** A person who responds to a consumer complaint.

**Staff:** Churchill Education's employees or contractors.

## 4. Underlying Principles

### 4.1 Natural Justice

Natural Justice is concerned with ensuring procedural fairness:

- Decisions and processes should be fair and free from bias
- All parties have the right to be made aware of any allegations against them
- All parties have the right to present their side of the matter
- All parties are told the decision and the reasons for the decision

### 4.2 Objectivity

Each complainant should be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner through the complaints handling process.

The principles of objectivity include:

- Openness: to ensure both personnel and complainants understand the complaints handling process
- Impartiality: to ensure a balanced consideration of all information/evidence is undertaken before a complaint can be resolved without fear or favour
- Confidentiality: to ensure the complainants and other parties details are protected.
- Accessibility: to ensure all parties concerned are aware of the complaints handling process and the lodged complaints progress.
- Completeness: to ensure all available information/evidence has been collected from both sides.
- Equity: to ensure equal treatment to all people.
- Sensitivity: to ensure each case is considered on its merits, paying due care to individual differences and needs.

### 4.3 Withdrawal

A complainant has the right to withdraw their complaint at any time.

### 4.4 Support

If a complainant would like to nominate someone to speak their behalf, Churchill Education is happy to speak with this person. The complainant will first be contacted to ask permission either via phone or in writing to ensure they are happy for us to discuss the complaint and personal details with the support person.

If a person would like to make a complaint but requires assistance to do so (for example if a person has a hearing impairment), they can contact us via a language interpreter service.

Churchill Education recognises that there are times when those involved would like to be accompanied or assisted by another person party during the complaint and appeals process, Such assistance or support will be met by each respective party, that party's cost.

## 5. How to Make a Complaint

Churchill Education believes that a person has a right to make a complaint or lodge an appeal and expect that every effort will be made to resolve it in accordance with this policy, without prejudice, fear of reprisal, discrimination or victimisation.

Churchill Education will encourage the parties to approach a complaint or appeal with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation.

### 5.1 Ways to Lodge a Complaint

A complaint can be made in four ways:

1. Call 1300 793 002 between 8am – 5pm Monday to Friday
2. Email [Student Support](#) or send an enquiry through the [Contact Us](#) page on our website
3. Written complaints can be posted to PO Box 691, Samford Qld 4520
4. In person by visiting our office at 2 Cliff Salisbury Court, Samford Village Qld 4520

### 5.2 Steps in the Complaint & Internal Appeals Process

Should a person have a complaint, the following steps can be followed:

#### **Informal Complaint**

1. If appropriate, the complainant should call and discuss the issue/complaint with the Skills Recognition Advisor, Assessor, Student Support, or other individual involved to try to resolve it verbally. If the complaint can't be resolved, it will be escalated to the relevant line manager.
2. The relevant line manager will respond to the complaint within 48 hours.

#### **Formal Complaint**

3. If no resolution, or if Step 1 & 2 are not appropriate in the circumstances, the complainant should provide the following information relating to the complaint either verbally or in writing to the Director/CEO:
  - Description of the complaint
  - State whether they wish to formally present their case
  - Any previous steps taken to deal with the complaint or appeal
  - What they would like to happen to fix the problem and prevent it from happening again.
4. The Director/CEO will respond in writing to the complaint within 48 hours and follow-up with a phone call to the complainant. This will include what steps are being taken to investigate and resolve the complaint.
5. The complainant will be regularly updated regarding the progress of their complaint.
6. The complainant and relevant parties will be advised in writing of the outcome of the complaint within 30 days of the complaint being received. This includes the reasons for the decision and information regarding how to appeal the decision.

If the process will take longer than 60 days from the complaint being received, the complainant will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and kept informed about the ongoing progress both in writing and through phone contact.

#### **Internal Appeal**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcomes of their complaint, they may lodge an Internal Appeal.

There is no cost to lodging an Internal Appeal. Appeals should be lodged within 14 days.

7. If the complaint or appeal is not dealt with to the complainant's satisfaction, they may bring it to the attention of the Director/CEO.

The Director/CEO will either deal with the issue personally or arrange for it to be dealt with by an appropriate management representative or committee who have not been involved with the complaint. This process will commence within 48 hours from receiving the written notification from the complainant expressing their dissatisfaction/appeal. The complainant will receive written notice that their appeal is being reviewed.

8. All parties involved will receive a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision within 14 days of the appeal being lodged. The parties are also advised in writing of the External Appeal process.
9. If the process will take longer than 60 days from the appeal being received, the complainant will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and kept informed about the ongoing progress both in writing and through phone contact.

### **External Appeal**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcomes of the Internal Appeal Process, they may access an External Appeal Process. External bodies do apply a reasonable fee to consider such appeals.

10. Should the issue still not be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, they may lodge an External Appeal by contacting the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73.

## **5.3 How the External Appeals Process Works**

The purpose of the external appeals process is to consider whether Churchill Education has followed its Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure. It is not to make a decision in place of Churchill Education's decision.

For example, if a student appeals against his or her assessment results and goes through Churchill Education's internal appeals process, the external appeals process (if accessed) would look at the way in which the internal appeal was conducted; it would not make a determination as to what the subject result should be.

Following receipt of the outcome of the external appeal, Churchill Education will immediately implement the decision and convey the outcome to the complainant and other involved stakeholders if the representative from National Training Complaints has not already done so.

## **6. Recording of Complaints & Appeals**

Complaints and Appeals will be recorded and reviewed regularly to identify systemic or recurring instances and to identify opportunities for continual improvement. This will allow Churchill Education to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence, enabling us to constantly improve our service to stakeholders.

All documentation regarding complaints should be placed on the official Complaints Register.

Documentation regarding complaints shall be retained in perpetuity.

An annual submission of the Register of Complaints should be reported and include:

- Number of complaints received; and where appropriate
- Amount of time taken to resolve the complaints; and
- Service improvements made as a result of the complaints received.

## 7. Responsibility

### 7.1 All Staff

All Churchill Education staff are responsible for receiving customer feedback. All staff are required to give priority to assist in the resolution of complaints. This will include resolving minor verbal complaints where appropriate or refer more serious verbal or written complaints directly to the relevant line manager.

### 7.2 Manager's Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the relevant manager to:

- a) Ensure that this Complaints & Appeals Policy is implemented in their respective areas
- b) Advise the Chief Executive Officer of the nature of any major complaints and action taken/to be taken
- c) Document all complaints received and how they were resolved, including any changes that may be required to delivery of service
- d) Review and investigate all unresolved complaints under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer
- e) Implement any improvement actions or recommendations within area of responsibility which have been identified through the Complaints & Appeals process
- f) Comply with the requirements of the ASQA, DET and all other relevant regulatory bodies.

### 7.3 Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO will take overall responsibility for any complaints and have them addressed through Managers as appropriate. It is also the CEO's responsibly to brief the Board and Directors on serious complaints and systems issues, including the resolution thereof.

## 8. Version Control

Version No	Approval Date	Authorised By	Sections Modified and Summary of Changes
2.0	30/05/2016	CEO	Updated to extend definition of who can complain. Added Appeals.
3.0	29/01/2020	CEO	Removed references to training.