

4. Complaints Policy

Purpose

Propel and Elysian Institutes approaches and devises strategies for student complaints that ensures resolution occurs according to the following guiding principles:

- student complaint policy is easily accessible to students;
- it is provided at no cost, or at a reasonable cost, which encourages timely resolution of complaints;
- student complaints will be addressed as close as possible to the source of student dissatisfaction;
- complaints will be resolved expeditiously and with due regard for confidentiality, with accurate records kept for a minimum of five (5) years;
- the resolution of student complaints will be handled informally where possible;
- student complaint processes will promote the principles of natural justice and students will be treated equitably without discrimination or victimisation;
- the policy includes provision for independent internal investigation of complaints which remain unresolved;
- the policy includes provision for external review of decisions made following any internal investigation, and a mechanism for considering any recommendations arising from external review;
- effective, reciprocal communication and feedback will underpin the relationship between Propel and Elysian Institutes and the students (all policies are communicated to staff involved);
- complaints will be regarded by staff as valuable input to the continuous improvement of programmes, policies, procedures and services, and monitored and acted upon accordingly;
- the policy is complete, unambiguous, is agreed to and by the Director's; and
- complaint procedures and the support available to students will be publicised to facilitate access to the complaint resolution process.

The Academic and Non-Academic Complaint Policy is designed to facilitate confidential resolution of complaints for any student who believes they have been unfairly treated. Complaints may include, but is not limited to academic matters, discrimination, complaints related to conditions, teaching, facilities, and support services.

All students of Propel and Elysian Institutes or those seeking to enrol in a VET course of study with Propel and Elysian Institutes are entitled to access the complaint procedures set out in this policy, regardless the student's place of residence or the mode of study. This policy is published on the Institutes' website at propel.net.au and/or elysianinstitute.com as part of our Policies and Procedures.

This policy is communicated to staff through the Institutes' website, Handbooks and via the Trainer Induction or Support Staff Induction process. The Director's is responsible for the training of all staff in the application of the policy. The Director's, will email all staff any updated versions of the Complaints Policy.

All students of the Propel and Elysian Institutes can use these procedures to submit a complaint about an academic or non-academic matter. Academic Complaint Procedures are for those grievances which relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study.

Students or people seeking to enrol in any accredited VET course or VET course of study offered by Propel and Elysian Institutes have three stages at which a complaint may be addressed. Each stage is free of charge/costs.

Stage 1

In the first stage, complaints should be discussed with the person/s involved. However, if this is impracticable, complainants should communicate with one of the staff listed (a) through (c) below. Students or people seeking to enrol may take the complaint to any of the following depending on the nature of the complaint, i.e. academic or non-academic: (a) Trainer; or (b) Administration Officer, or (c) Compliance Manager. The complaint must be dealt with in a reasonable time; every effort is made to ensure this is within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the complaint. This arrangement is free of charge.

The complaint is recorded within the Student Information System (AXE) upon receipt using the descriptor "Complaint". A brief note as to what was received, and to whom this was provided to must be noted by the receiver of the complaint. The staff member handling the complaint must record all of the relevant information and outcome within the designated section of the Student Information System.

Stage 2

The second stage of the process at which a complaint is addressed is as follows:

If unsatisfied with the response to the complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter at Stage 1, the complainant may submit the complaint in writing to the Directors who will deal with the complaint within a reasonable time, normally within 30 days of receipt of the complaint. This arrangement is free of charge.

Stage 3

The third stage of the process at which a complaint is addressed is as follows: If not satisfied with a decision of the Director's, the complainant may request that the matter be dealt with through an external dispute resolution process by the person/body appointed by the provider for that purpose.

External Complaints

If no mutually acceptable resolution can be found or a student is still dissatisfied with the decision made, they may wish to escalate the matter by contacting the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) by completing the online complaint form.

Alternatively, the complainant may wish to lodge a complaint or seek further advice by contacting the National Training Complaints Hotline on: 13 38 73.

The maximum timeframe for the processing of written complaints from the date of receipt from the student to the referral to an external mediator, if required, is fourteen (14) days. Should the matter continue to be unresolved after external mediation, the mediator will provide the complainant with information about appropriate bodies to which they can lodge their complaint.

If the external dispute resolution body chosen by the complainant makes recommendations in relation to a grievance they have reviewed, the person in charge of the external dispute resolution process chosen will forward those recommendations to the Director's within 14 days who will ensure that the recommendations are implemented within 14 days of receipt of said recommendations.

The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities, which may arise under other VET provider policies or under statute or any other law. There are no aspects in the Institutes' policy negates the complainant of the option to take action under Australian Consumer Protection laws or other legal remedies where the complaint is in the form of a financial dispute. This applies to all students.

At no time during three stages of the investigation will the complainant and respondent be victimised or discriminated against in any way shape or form. The policy as described will be adhered to at all times.

Students or people seeking to enrol (claimants) in any VET course or VET course of study at the Propel and Elysian Institutes and those staff acting on behalf of the Propel and Elysian Institutes (respondent) have the right to be accompanied, assisted or represented by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person) if they so desire.

At all stages of the process, reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures must be given if so requested by the complainant and/or respondent. Records of all grievances and applications for review of decisions must be kept and be accessible to all interested parties for a period of seven (7)

years. Records of complaints and their outcomes will be kept strictly confidential and filed in a separate file (not kept on the student or staff file) and stored in the office of the Director's for a period of 7 years. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records. A formal request for access must be made in writing to the Director. This will be processed and a meeting time arranged within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the formal written request.

Where a student complaint remains unresolved at internal level and is taken to stage three (3) external mediation, the Director will consider any recommendations made by the external mediator.

When appropriate these recommendations will be incorporated into the Institutes' policies and procedures for implementation ensuring the continuous improvement of service and quality education to our students.

Timelines for Review of Complaints

Admin Officer	14 days from date of initial complaint being lodged
Trainer	14 days from date of initial complaint being lodged
Compliance Manager	14 days from date of initial complaint being lodged
Director's	30 days from date of receipt of written request for review of complaint decision made at Stage 1.
External Mediation	14 days from date of complaint being lodged as requiring external mediation, the Director's must forward to external independent mediation. 30 Days to final decision.

Record Management	aXcelerate Dropbox
Reference Documents	Staff Induction Checklist Student Handbook Staff Handbook Bootcamp Compliments, Complaints or Concerns Form Compliments, Complaints or Concerns Register Trainer Procedures Manual
Link to SRTO 2015	Standard 1. The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices are responsive to industry and learner needs and meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses
	Standard 2. The operations of the RTO are quality assured
	Standard 3. The RTO issues, maintains and accepts AQF certification documentation in accordance with these Standards and provides access to learner records.
	Standard 4. Accurate and accessible information about an RTO, its services and performance is available to inform prospective and current learners and clients.
	Standard 5. Each learner is properly informed and protected.
	X Standard 6. Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively.
	Standard 7. The RTO has effective governance and administration arrangements in place.
	Standard 8. The RTO cooperates with the VET Regulator and is legally compliant at all times.
Developed By	Compliance Manager
Approved by	Directors