

Complaints and Appeals

Purpose:	This policy ensures that CivilEdge has a system in place, so complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged, and dealt with fairly, efficiently, and effectively.
Reference:	ASQA – Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015; Standard 6, Clause 6.1 – 6.6 Phase of the Student Journey: Chapter 3 – Support and Progression
Who is responsible:	The General Manager is responsible for approving this Policy. The Compliance Learning and Development Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Policy is reviewed and adhered to. The RTO Administrator is responsible for implementing this Policy and ensuring that any related procedures are adhered to.
When:	Upon submission of a complaint or appeal.
Policy Standard Reference:	Subject to Clause 6.6, to be compliant with Standard 6 the RTO must meet the following: Clause 6.1 The RTO has a complaints policy to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of: a. the RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff; b. a third party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors, or other staff; or c. a learner of the RTO Clause 6.2 The RTO has an appeals policy to manage requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by the RTO or a third party providing services on the RTO's behalf. Clause 6.3 The RTO's complaints policy and appeals policy: a. ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process; b. are publicly available; c. set out the procedure for making a complaint or requesting an appeal; d. ensure complaints and requests for an appeal are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable; and e. provide for review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO and the complainant or appellant, at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal, if the processes fail to resolve the complaint or appeal. Clause 6.4 Where the RTO considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the RTO: a. informs the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and b. regularly updates the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

Complaints and Appeals

	<p>Clause 6.5</p> <p>The RTO:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. securely maintains records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes; and b. identifies potential causes of complaints and appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence. <p>Clause 6.6</p> <p>Where the RTO is an employer or a volunteer organisation whose learners solely consist of its employees or members, does not charge fees for the training and/or assessment, and does not have in place a specific complaints and appeals policy in accordance with Clauses 6.1 & 6.2, the organisation has a complaints and appeals policy which is sufficiently broad to cover the services provided by the RTO.</p>
<p>Policy Statement:</p>	<p>All students of CivilEdge have the right to raise any complaint or appeal without fear of retribution or threat to continuation of service.</p> <p>All students will be provided with assistance in reporting complaints or appeals.</p> <p>All complaints or appeals will be treated seriously and will be responded to promptly and confidentially.</p> <p>A secure record will be kept of all complaints and appeals and maintained in the CivilEdge Complaints and Appeals Register and Student Management System</p> <p>CivilEdge recognises the right of all students to seek the assistance of an external organisation to resolve the complaint or appeal</p> <p>All complaints and appeals will be treated as opportunities for improvement and actioned as part of the CivilEdge Continuous Improvement Register.</p>
<p>Process:</p>	<p>CivilEdge have the following process in place to handle complaints and appeals involving the conduct of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The RTO, its trainers, assessors, or other staff b) A third party providing services on the RTOs behalf, its trainers, assessors, or other staff c) A learner of the RTO <p>If students at any time need assistance in the complaints and appeals process, they are encouraged to contact the RTO Administrator for assistance. Complaints and appeals may also be lodged with ASQA; however, it is recommended that this policy is first undertaken to seek a suitable resolution.</p> <p>CivilEdge will ensure that this policy is available to all students, staff and third parties on the CivilEdge website and referenced in our Student & Employer Handbook.</p> <p>COMPLAINTS</p> <p>Informal Complaints:</p> <p>CivilEdge encourages open communication and an environment of trust. Therefore, any student/complainant is encouraged to raise issues directly with the other party concerned to attempt to resolve the issue mutually or they can contact The RTO Administrator.</p>

Complaints and Appeals

	<p>At this stage the RTO will try to resolve the issue through discussion and conciliation with all parties involved.</p> <p>Any staff member can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but if the student wishes to place a formal complaint, then the following process must be followed below.</p> <p>Formal Complaints:</p> <p>Any student, potential student or 3rd party may submit a formal complaint to CivilEdge with the reasonable expectation that all complaints will be treated fairly with integrity and privacy. There is no cost for the complaints process unless it is referred to a 3rd party. A formal complaint may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a direct connection to CivilEdge, its trainers/ assessors, or other staff • involve a third party providing services on CivilEdge’s behalf, its trainers, assessors, or other staff or • involve a student of CivilEdge <p>A student can submit a formal complaint by completing the ‘Complaints and Appeals Form’ located on the CivilEdge website or they can obtain a copy by calling the RTO Administrator on 1300 725 483.</p> <p>All formal complaints must be submitted to the RTO Administrator and contain as many details as possible including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date complaint was submitted • Name of complainant • Nature of complaint • Date of the event which led to the complaint • Attachments (if applicable) <p>Once a complaint has been received, the complainant will be acknowledged in writing that the complaint has been received and the information will be inserted into the ‘Complaints and Appeals Register’ spreadsheet. This is monitored by the RTO Administrator until resolved. The information to be inserted and retained on the register includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date the complaint was submitted • Name of complainant • Description of complaint • Determined resolution • Date of resolution <p>Once a formal complaint has been logged in the ‘Complaints and Appeals Register’, the following process will take place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The General Manager will be notified of the complaint and will be provided with all relevant documentation related to the matter. 2. The RTO Administrator and General Manager will confer and decide on the appropriate action to ensure a successful resolution is attained. 3. The relevant staff member/s or contract trainer/assessors will be informed of the complaint, and they will have the opportunity to present their side of the matter. 4. Once a decision has been reached, The RTO Administrator will notify all the relevant parties involved of the decision and outcome which is to be concluded in writing within 20 working days from the date the complaint was first received. Within the
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Complaints and Appeals

	<p>notification of the outcome, the student will be advised that they have the right to appeal the decision made by CivilEdge. Students will be referred to the appeals procedure as outlined below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The RTO Administrator will ensure that CivilEdge will act immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, CivilEdge must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required and advise the student of the outcome. 6. The outcome will be placed on the 'Complaints and Appeals Register' and copies of relevant documentation will be stored in the Student Management System. 7. The student has the right to be accompanied by any person of their choice during the complaints or appeals process. <p>Formal Appeals:</p> <p>If the student is not satisfied with the outcome from the formal complaint, then they have the right to appeal the decision made by CivilEdge where reasonable grounds can be established.</p> <p>The areas in which a student may appeal a decision made by CivilEdge may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment conducted • Deferral, suspension, or cancellation decisions made in relation to a student's enrolment • Or any other conclusion/decision that is made after a complaint has been dealt with by CivilEdge in the first instance <p>To activate the appeals process, the student must submit an 'appeal application' by completing the 'Complaints and Appeals Form' located on the CivilEdge website or they can obtain a copy by calling the RTO Administrator on 1300 725 483.</p> <p>The student is required to provide a summary of the grounds that the appeal is based on and the reason why they feel that initial decision made is unfair within 10 working days from the time they received the outcome for their initial complaint. Help and support with this process can be gained from the RTO Administrator.</p> <p>Once the appeal has been received, the complainant will be acknowledged in writing that the appeal has been received and the following process will take place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The RTO Administrator and General Manager will determine the validity of the appeal and where necessary, organise a meeting with all parties involved in the matter and attempt to seek resolution where appropriate. 2. The process for all formally lodged appeals will begin within 15 working days from the date that the appeal was lodged. 3. The RTO Administrator will ensure that CivilEdge acts on any substantiated appeal immediately. 4. The General Manager and RTO Administrator will review the initial documentation of the complaint and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal. 5. The student will be notified in writing within 20 working days from the initial lodgement of the appeal of the outcome with reasons for the decision. The 'Complaints and Appeals Register' will be updated. The student will also be provided
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Complaints and Appeals

	<p>the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome.</p> <p>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</p> <p>External Appeals</p> <p>If the student is still dissatisfied regarding the outcome/decision made that CivilEdge has provided, they may wish to refer the matter to an external/independent/third party mediator at their own expense.</p> <p>Appeals can relate to assessment decisions, and they can also relate to other matters such as the decision to exclude a student from a training program. Students should and are encouraged to resolve complaints and appeals through the CivilEdge complaint mechanism prior to consulting external parties.</p> <p>If the student is not satisfied by the complaints and appeal outcome, they can contact ASQA http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/make-a-complaint---domestic-students/before-you-make-a-complaint---domestic-students.html or the National Complaints Hotline https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH to resolve the complaint or appeal.</p> <p>This final stage will be addressed within 30 days.</p> <p>Outcomes from further mediation in relation to a grievance will be implemented immediately.</p> <p>Extensions</p> <p>If more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, The RTO Administrator will inform the individual in writing, including reasons why more than 60 days are required and regularly update the individual on the progress of the matter.</p> <p>In most cases this would not be necessary as the timeframes identified in the above processes keep well under 60 days. It may need to happen if an appeal was to reach an external stage.</p> <p>Record Management</p> <p>1. <i>Electronic records:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The complaints and appeals register and forms are maintained on the RTO drive. b. Confidentiality is maintained as limited staff have access to the RTO drive (password protected), and all student / client information is only released as per the CivilEdge Privacy Policy. All staff employed by CivilEdge will be required to apply themselves to the written procedures and safeguard confidential and personal information according to the Privacy Act 1988. <p>2. <i>Hard copy records:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Confidentiality is maintained and matters relating to a complaint or appeal are stored on the RTO drive. b. Contents of files are not discarded unless the state and national storage requirements for retention, archiving and retrieval of information have been met. <p>Corrective Action</p>
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Complaints and Appeals

	<p>The complaints and appeals register is reviewed as part of the Quarterly Quality Assurance Meetings to identify any further corrective action needed and any changes to procedures or practices required.</p> <p>In the instance that CivilEdge receives complaints and/or appeals which demonstrate a pattern or trend, the General Manager and RTO Administrator will take the appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.</p> <p>The form of corrective action applied will be determined on a case-by-case basis where there are continuing trends, patterns and causes.</p> <p>Note: Clause 6.6 is not applicable to CivilEdge.</p>
Relevant Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published policy on CivilEdge website • Student and Employer Handbook • RTO-SF803-AU Complaints and Appeals Form

Policy Review and Update			
Version	Date	Contact Name	Contact Details
1.0	November 2015	Karina Parkin	Karina.parkin@altustraffic.com.au
1.1	November 2017	Fiona McLean	Fiona.mclean@civiledge.com.au
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