



POLICY 4: Complaints and Appeals



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RTO No. 32353



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SCOPE

Southpac has established this policy to support the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO) 2015. The policy has been developed and implemented to support and provide clear instruction and guidance to both Southpac staff and students on the handling of complaints and appeals from students.

POLICY

OUR COMMITMENT

Southpac is committed to providing students, staff and stakeholders the best possible environment in which to study or work. The organisation understands that on occasion, there may be instances of dissatisfaction and acknowledges that the cause(s) must be addressed and rectified promptly.

In such instances, Southpac invites feedback from the dissatisfied party so that a resolution can be found and as an opportunity to consolidate the feedback into a review and improvement of the Southpac's policies and practices.

Southpac will address any and all complaints in a fair, constructive and timely manner. The complainant has the right for their complaint to be heard and for an impartial decision to be made at no cost to themselves. Complainants have the right to appeal a decision.

This policy and associated procedure support Southpac to provide a process for complaints and appeals to be heard and actioned. All complaints and appeals received by Southpac will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.

TYPES OF COMPLAINTS OR APPEALS

A complaint or appeal may include, but is not limited to;

Complaints

- Course advice and enrolment
- Suspension and/or cancellation of enrolment
- Course delivery
- Marketing and promotional activity
- Personal safety
- Customer service and administration
- Issue of results, certificates, statement of attainment
- Learning resources
- Fees and charges
- Equity and access, discrimination, harassment and bullying

Appeals

- Assessment process and decision
- Student progress and academic progress decisions

PROCEDURE: ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Southpac acknowledges that occasionally complaints may arise that require a formal resolution. The following procedures provide information on how to have a complaint or appeal resolved and a resolution reached by all parties.

GENERAL COMPLAINTS

Action	Responsibility
<p>Southpac may receive complaints from students, staff or stakeholders and members of the public through a variety of means e.g.: verbally, written documentation, electronically (email).</p> <p>Where possible all non-formal attempts shall be made to resolve the issue. This may include advice, discussions, and general mediation in relation to the issue and the complainant's issue. Any staff member can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but once an individual has placed a formal complaint /appeal the following procedures must be followed.</p> <p>Once a formal complaint is received, the Training Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing to the complainant, and will seek to identify the issue and resolve the concern so as to avoid any further disruption to the complainant (where applicable). The organisation encourages both staff and complainants to approach the complaint openly and honestly so as to resolve problems through fair and reasonable means.</p>	<p>Southpac Staff</p> <p>Complainant</p>
<p>Any student, potential student, or third party may submit a formal complaint to Southpac with the reasonable expectation that all complaints will be treated with integrity and privacy. There is no cost for accessing the internal complaints and appeals process.</p> <p>When a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through informal discussion, the complainant is asked to complete a <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i>, stating their case and providing as much detail as possible, and submit this to the Training Manager either by email admin@southpac.biz or post; 2/a, 5 Executive Drive, Burleigh Waters, QLD 4220. The Training Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing to the complainant.</p>	<p>Southpac Staff</p> <p>Training Manager</p> <p>Complainant</p>



Action	Responsibility
<p>Complaints are to include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission date of complaint • Name of complainant • Nature of complaint • Date of the event which lead to the complaint; and • Attachments (if applicable) <p>The Complaints and Appeals Form can be found by clicking this link or can be sent to the complainant on request.</p> <p>Once the written information is received, the details will be recorded on a 'System Improvement Request' Form and on the SIR Register.</p> <p>A letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent by the Training Manager to the complainant and, where a complaint refers to an individual, the individual will be informed by the Training Manager of the complaint and will be invited to respond to the allegation either through discussion (minuted), or written correspondence.</p> <p>A separate interview will be held by the Training Manager (or a member of the Management Team if the complaint is about the Training Manager).</p>	
Complainants have the right to access advice and support from independent external agencies and/or persons at any point of the complaint and appeals process. Use of external services will be at the complainant's costs unless authorised by Southpac.	<p>Southpac Staff</p> <p>Complainant</p>
<p>The Training Manager will investigate all complaints received and identify a satisfactory resolution to the issue.</p> <p>The proposed resolution will be communicated to all parties involved in the complaint within 10 working days and agreement to the proposed resolution sought. Upon receipt of the agreement, the Training Manager will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the Complainant with written confirmation of the resolution • Record the action(s) taken to resolve the complaint on the SIR Form and Register • Where applicable communicate the outcome of the complaint resolution to the relevant Southpac staff member • If applicable, document the need for amendment to Southpac policy and/or procedure documentation for Continuous Improvement on the SIR Register and implement the necessary improvement 	<p>Training Manager</p> <p>Complainant</p>

Action	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the notification of the outcome of the formal complaint the Complainant shall also be notified that they have the right of appeal. To appeal a decision Southpac must receive, in writing, grounds of the appeal. <p>Where Southpac feels the complaint may take longer than 60 days to resolve, the Training Manager will;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and provide regular updates to the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter. <p>The Training Manager will act immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the Complainant, Southpac will act immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required, and advise the Complainant of the outcome</p>	
Any documentation including written notes of the progress of a complaint, outcomes, actions and resolution, will be kept by Southpac and filed in the student's personal folder. Any complaint received that is not from a student, will be stored in the dedicated Complaints and Appeals folder maintained by Management.	Southpac Staff Training Manager
<p>No student, staff member, stakeholder or member of the public will be disenfranchised in any way during the complaint and resolution process.</p> <p>A student's progress through a study program will not be disrupted whilst a complaint is being heard unless the nature of the issue itself means further progress is not possible.</p> <p>Complainants will observe strict confidentiality during all stages of the complaints resolution process. All communications and proceedings arising from the complaints process will remain confidential at the conclusion of the complaints resolution process.</p> <p>Complainants have the right to nominate third party representation (e.g.: a family member or friend, counsellor, professional representation or support person) if they require.</p>	Complainant Southpac Staff



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Action	Responsibility
An annual review of the complaints resolution process will be conducted as determined on the Quality Schedule.	Training Manager

APPEALING A DECISION – ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Action	Responsibility
<p>Students are entitled to formally appeal the outcome of the assessment decision. This is to be done in writing by stating their case, providing as much detail as possible, and submit this to the Training Manager either by email or post.</p> <p>Students are to include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission date of appeal • Name of person making the appeal • Nature of appeal • Supporting documentation regarding their assessment outcome • Attachments (if applicable) <p>The Complaints and Appeals Form is available on the Southpac website or can be sent to the Complainant on request by emailing assessment@southpac.biz</p> <p>Once the written information is received, the details will be recorded on a 'System Improvement Request' Form and on the SIR Register.</p>	<p>Student</p> <p>Training Manager</p>
<p>The Training Manager will seek details from the Assessor involved and any other relevant parties.</p> <p>A decision will be made regarding the appeal either indicating the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a third party. The third party will be another Assessor appointed by Southpac.</p>	<p>Southpac Staff</p> <p>Training Manager</p>
<p>The student will be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the 'SIR Register' updated. The student will also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify Southpac if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process</p>	<p>Student</p> <p>Southpac Staff</p>

Action	Responsibility
<p>EXTERNAL APPEALS</p> <p>If a Complainant (student or third party) is not satisfied with the decision of Southpac, they may wish to seek legal advice or place a complaint about Southpac to Exemplar Global or ASQA directly (please be aware that ASQA does not act in a mediation capacity).</p> <p>If, after Southpac’s internal complaints and appeals processes have been completed, the Complainant still believes Southpac is breaching or has breached its legal requirements, they can submit a complaint to ASQA directly through ASQA’s asqanet system: https://asqanet.asqa.gov.au/</p> <p>Except in exceptional circumstances, complaints must attach evidence to the complaint form showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That they have followed Southpac’s formal complaints procedure; and • Southpac’s response. <p>ASQA’s processes require the Complainant to identify themselves to ASQA as “the” Complainant, although a Complainant may request that their identity is kept confidential throughout any investigation that ASQA undertakes.</p> <p>Australian Skills Quality Authority Tel: 1300 701 801 www.asqa.gov.au</p> <p>If, after Southpac’s internal complaints and appeals processes have been completed, the Complainant still believes Southpac is breaching or has breached its legal requirements, they can submit a complaint to Exemplar Global directly through Exemplar Global’s website: https://exemplarglobal.org/contact-us/</p>	Complainant