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# **Student Complaints and Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure (SB012)**

## **Purpose**

This policy and procedure is to provide clear and practical guidelines to ensure that complaints and assessment appeals of students can be resolved equitably and efficiently in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

## **Scope**

This complaints and assessment appeals policy applies to all students enrolled with Skills Base Australia.

## **Definitions**

**Complaints and Assessment Appeals** include, but are not restricted to, matters of concern to a student relating to training delivery and assessment; the quality of the training; student support and materials; discrimination; and sexual harassment.

**Natural Justice** is concerned with ensuring procedural fairness:

- Decisions and processes should be free from bias.
- All parties have the right to be heard.
- The respondent has a right to know of what s/he is accused.
- All parties are told the decision and the reasons for the decision.

## **Policy**

Skills Base Australia believes that a student, who has a complaint or assessment appeal, has the right to raise the complaint or appeal and expect that every effort will be made to resolve it in accordance with this policy, without prejudice or fear of reprisal or victimisation.

The student has the right to present the complaint or appeal formally and in writing.

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Skills Base Australia will manage all complaints and appeals fairly, equitably and efficiently as possible. Skills Base Australia will encourage the parties to approach the complaint or appeal with an open mind and to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation. Where a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, Skills Base Australia acknowledges the need for an appropriate external and independent person to mediate between the parties. The parties will be given the opportunity to formally present their case to the independent person.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process of making and resolving complaints. Skills Base Australia seeks to protect the rights and privacy of all involved and to facilitate the return to a comfortable and productive learning environment.

A copy of this Policy is available to all students and staff via the Skills Base Australia website and is available in the Student Handbook. The information will also contain details of external authorities that they may approach.

## Procedure

Should a student have a complaint or appeal, the following steps are to be followed:

1. Student should discuss the issue/complaint with the person involved to try and resolve it verbally.
2. If no resolution is reached, the student should discuss the issue/complaint with their trainer to see if it can be resolved.
3. If still no resolution the student should use the *Assessment Appeal form (SB013)* or the *Complaint form (SB014)* to document their concerns. The following information relating to the complaint or appeal should be included:
  - description of the complaint or appeal
  - whether they wish to formally present their case
  - steps taken to deal with the complaint or appeal so far
  - what the student would like to happen to fix the problem and prevent it from happening again
4. The student should present the form to the Training Coordinator.
5. If the complaint or appeal is not dealt with to the student's satisfaction, they may bring it to the attention of the Director. The Director will either deal with the issue personally or arrange for it to be

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dealt with by a management representative. This process will commence within 48 hours of the Director receiving written notification from the student about their dissatisfaction with the response received from the Training Coordinator. A response/resolution must be presented within 30 days.

6. Should the issue still not be resolved to the student's satisfaction, Skills Base Australia will make arrangements for an independent third party to resolve the issue and outline any costs that may be involved to the student. The student will be given the opportunity to formally present his or her case. The time frame for this process may vary but should take no longer than 14 days.
7. All parties involved will receive a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision within the 14 day period. If the process is taking longer than 60 days from the complaint or appeal being received the student will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and kept informed about all progress.
8. If the student is still not happy with external mediation, they may take their complaint to the Australian Skills Quality Authority.
9. All documentation relating to complaints or appeals will be archived for audit purposes.
10. The Skills Base Australia Training Coordinator will be person responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy.

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