

## Complaints Policy

<b>Document Name:</b>	Complaints Policy	
<b>Document Reference:</b>	PO7	
<b>Document Version:</b>	5	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Divisional General Manager	
<b>Functional Owner:</b>	Complaints Resolution Manager	
<b>QAS Owner:</b>	Manager Academic Governance	
<b>Date Approved by EMT:</b>	9 November 2012	
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<b>Date Effective:</b>	16 November 2012	
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	15 December 2016	
<b>Versions:</b>	<p>This Procedure replaces the Grievance Policy (Version: 1 Effective: 20111004) Version 2: Minor administrative changes (Apr-13). Version 2 did not require ETAB approval.</p> <p>Version 3: Version 3: Minor terminology changes in accordance with annual policy review (Feb-14). Version 3 did not require ETAB approval.</p> <p>Version 4: Changes made to reflect new organisational structure and Standards for RTOs. Version 4 endorsed by the ETAB March 15.</p> <p>Version 5 23/2/16: Changes made to remove reference to the Divisional Appeals and Complaints Committee and the Organisational Complaints Committee. Additionally removing reference to 'Informing students of this Policy during their induction'</p>	
<b>Scope:</b>	<b>Course Type</b>	All
	<b>RTOs:</b>	Open Colleges Pty Ltd Integrated Care & Management Training Pty Ltd College of Fashion Design Pty Ltd
	<b>Partner RTOs</b>	Yes

### Communication:

All Policies, Procedures, Forms and Guidelines are loaded into the Quality Management System (QMS) in Firefly. This will automatically update documents in OCTIVE and OpenSpace. Updates are communicated to staff through Firefly Chatter, Trainers and Assessors through OCTIVE News and students through the Student Lounge in OpenSpace.

## 1. Scope

According to the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015:

*Standard 6: Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively.*

This policy outlines the Open Colleges' approach to the management of complaints from Open Colleges' students and other interested parties regarding the courses and learning experience it offers. The management of complaints and feedback from Trainers and Assessors and staff are covered in the Course Management Policy and Human Resources Policies, respectively. It is important to note that Assessment Appeals are covered in the Assessment Policy (PO5).

## 2. Definitions

Please refer to the Glossary of Terms for all defined terms in this Policy.

## 3. Policy

Open Colleges seeks open and honest feedback from students and other parties on their experiences with Open Colleges. Students are encouraged to provide feedback on their experience throughout their studies. Open Colleges provides opportunities for students and other parties to provide formal and informal feedback on their experiences.

### **Feedback, Issue and Areas for Improvement**

Where a student would like to provide feedback or they believe that their learning experience with Open Colleges has not met their expectations, they are encouraged to raise their concerns with the Student Support Team. This will be noted as Feedback or Issue and will be managed by the Student Support Team.

### **Complaint**

Where a student is unsatisfied by the resolution of an issue; an issue has not been addressed; new supporting evidence comes to light; or a student believes the outcome of the issue is inconsistent with Open Colleges Policies and Procedures they may submit a complaint. This will be noted as a complaint and will be managed by the relevant Divisional Complaints Officer. Other interested parties including industry, employers, education institutions and the general public may also lodge complaints.

Where a complainant is unsatisfied by the resolution of their complaint, they may lodge a Complaint Appeal.

### **Complaint Appeal**

All Complaint Appeal cases will be investigated by the Divisional Complaints Officer and reviewed by the Appeals and Complaints Committee.

In managing Complaints and Complaint Appeals, Open Colleges is committed to:

- Ensuring a complainant or respondent is not victimised or discriminated
- Conducting complaints processes in accordance with the principles of natural justice;
- Considering complaints in a consistent, transparent, objective and unbiased manner;
- Addressing complaints in a prompt and timely manner
- Resolving complaints in a mutually agreeable way
- Systematically implementing improvements arising from Complaints;

- Making all details of this Policy and related Procedures publicly available;
- Communicating the Complaints procedures in writing to all staff and stakeholders; and
- Allowing the complainant to be assisted by a third party if desired.

#### **External Review**

Open Colleges is a member of the LEADR Student Mediation Scheme. Where a complainant has exhausted the internal complaint process and is unsatisfied by the resolution of their Complaint Appeal, they may apply to LEADR for a review of their complaint.

Where a complainant chooses to apply for a review with LEADR, they will be required to pay 50% of the fees and charges as prescribed by LEADR in the Student Mediation Scheme Information Kit. The complainant will be responsible for any additional costs associated with the review including travel and third party representation.

The Appeals and Complaints Committee will manage all external review cases.

#### **4. Procedures & Forms**

The following Procedures, Forms and Guidelines give effect to this Policy:

- PR7.1 Complaints Procedure
- PR7.1 Complaint Form
- PR7.2 Complaint Appeal Form
- DC13.4 Terms of Reference: Appeals and Complaints Committee

#### **5. Quality and Continuous Improvement**

This Policy, and its related Procedures, Forms and Guidelines, are subject to systematic annual review by the date noted on Page 1. In addition, this Policy may be reviewed at any time based on feedback from:

- Quality and Continuous Committee
- Divisional Education Management Team
- Results of Assessment Moderation
- Results of Assessment Validation
- Results of Student and Trainer and Assessor Surveys
- Informal Student and Trainer and Assessor Feedback

#### **6. Other Related Documents**

- Assessment Policy: PO5
- Assessment Procedures: PR5.1
- Open Colleges' Student Handbook
- Open Colleges' Trainer and Assessor Handbook

#### **7. Related Legislation & Guidelines**

- [Standards for Registered Training Organisations](#)
- [Best Practice Guidelines on Complaints Handling](#), Commonwealth Ombudsman
- [LEADR Student Mediation Scheme Information](#)

**How can we improve this document?**

If you can identify opportunities for us to improve this document, please email [improvements@opencolleges.edu.au](mailto:improvements@opencolleges.edu.au). This request will automatically be logged on our Continuous Improvement Register. Please include the document reference number in your email and specific details about how we can improve the document.