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| RTO | City-Wide Building & Training Services Pty Ltd (RTO ID 91138) |
| Type | Public |
| Applicable standards | Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 State and Territory Funding contracts |
| Authorised by | National Compliance Manager |
| Effective date | 18 November 2016 |
| Version | v20170303 |

Policy: Grievances, Complaints and Appeals

Overview

City-Wide Building and Training Services (CWBT S) is committed to providing the highest quality training services and to ensuring that all students and clients have a positive experience when dealing with us.

However, we recognise that there may be times that we don't live up to your expectations. We view grievances and complaints as an opportunity to review continuous improvement opportunities.

CWBT S has a Complaints committee which reviews all complaints and grievances formally lodged. The Complaints committee consists of the following CWBT S staff members:

- National Compliance Manager
- Student Welfare Officer
- Training Manager

CWBT S will address any and all complaints in a fair, constructive and timely manner.

Definitions

CWBT S defines complaints and grievances as:

- Grievance – an expression of dissatisfaction
- Complaint – a dissatisfaction with any service provided by CWBT S coupled together with a request for action.

A complaint or grievance may be about an Academic or Non-Academic matter:

- Academic matters – matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards, etc
- Non-academic matters – all other matters which do not to academic matters such as fees, concerns about privacy, matters relating to other students, harassment etc.



How to raise a grievance or make a complaint

You can make a complaint in two ways:

Verbally

Students and clients are encouraged to raise any concerns that they may have informally with the relevant Trainer/Assessor.

Alternatively, you can also speak with one of our student support officers on 07 5536 1000.

In writing

Written complaints can be made:

- Via email: cwbts@cwbts.com.au, or
- Via hardcopy: PO Box 546, Coolangatta QLD 4225.

What happens when you lodge a complaint or grievance?

Informal grievances and complaints

Most issues are resolved at the local level. If a complaint or grievance occurs, CWBTS encourages the student or client to raise it with the appropriate staff member or party involved (e.g. the trainer/assessor). If a mutually agreed resolution at a local level is not achievable, the matter must be formalised.

Formal grievances and complaints

Please allow 10-15 days for a complaint to be investigated and to provide you with an outcome.

When a verbal or written complaint/appeal is received, CWBTS will contact you to formally acknowledge receipt of the complaint by email or in writing. Investigation into the issue will commence within 5 working days of the complaint being received.

You may be contacted for further information as part of this process.

The outcome will then be issued in writing within 10 working days from the commencement of the investigation into the complaint.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved within 15 business days, CWBTS will contact you to advise you and will keep you informed of the progress of the matter.

Can another person lodge a complaint or grievance on your behalf?

Yes. However, we will respond directly to you unless you have given us permission in writing to respond to a nominated third party.

Exceptions to this rule include:

- Parents / Legal guardians where a student is under 18
- Employers on behalf of apprentices / trainees or for students where they have paid part or all of the cost directly to CWBTS
- Authorised relevant government bodies



Request for further information

In some cases, the CWBTS representative investigating your complaint or grievance may need more information from you to assist us in understanding and / or investigating your concerns.

We may contact you by phone or email. In the event that you do not return to us with further information after two contact attempts, we may elect to close your complaint. We will notify you in writing where this is the case.

Appeals

How do I appeal a decision?

You can appeal a decision by contacting us verbally or in writing.

The student or client should provide a summary of the grounds that the appeal is based on and the reason why they feel that the initial decision was unfair. The appeal must be lodged within 20 working days from the time they received the outcome of their initial complaint or decision.

The appeal application will then be addressed by the National Compliance Manager and Complaints Committee members to consider the claim and arrive at an outcome. The outcome, including rationale, will be presented in writing within 10 business days of receiving the appeal application.

Referring the matter to a third party mediator

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of an appeal, you may request that the matter be referred to a dispute resolution process by an external independent body appointed for this purpose by CWBTS.

The complainant will be notified about who CWBTS has appointed as the external appeals mediator. There will be no cost charged to the student or client.

CWBTS will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within 10 days. Generally, CWBTS will follow recommendations made by the third party and will confirm this in writing.

Where either party does not agree to the third party's finding, they may take the matter further.

Any costs associated with a complainant taking the matter further, will be borne by the complainant unless a court of law directs CWBTS to pay for such costs.

Where CWBTS does not agree with the outcome of the third party recommendation, CWBTS will notify the complainant in writing outlining our decision and how we have come to that decision.



Improvement actions

CWBTS confirms its commitment to investigate and act on any complaint raised, and also to take appropriate action in any case where the complaints are substantiated. In cases where a complaint is upheld, CWBTS endeavors to identify the cause of the complaint and implement steps to prevent the situation happening again.

All improvement actions arising from complaints are raised via the complaints register. CWBTS maintains a Continuous Improvement Register for recording the receipt and management of improvement records.

Once improvement records are raised, the Complaints Committee review complaints and their causes, evaluate corrective action to resolve the issue and prevent reoccurrence, implement appropriate actions, record results of actions undertaken and review these actions to ensure effectiveness after implementation.

Confidentiality

All complaints are handled with confidentiality in mind.

However, we acknowledge that some complaints may be of a more sensitive nature than others.

You can request to log your request directly with a member of the Complaints Committee or the Training Manager.

The complaints register is located on an internal intranet database and access is limited to key staff who deal with complaints due to the confidential and / or sensitive nature of some complaints.



Frequently asked questions

My complaint is about my trainer – will they be aware that I've complained?

In most situations, if the matter concerns your trainer, it is best that we discuss the matter with them as part of our investigation. We will handle such situations with sensitivity.

If you do not want your trainer to be aware of your complaint, please let us know. However, this may limit our ability to fully investigate your concerns.

If you wish to remain anonymous you can, but we may not be able to fully resolve your concerns.

I don't want to get anyone in trouble

CWBTS views all complaints and grievances as an opportunity for continuous improvement. We recognise that our staff at times may make errors and it is important for us to be aware of these issues so that we can provide coaching and / or training if required. In other cases, it may not be a human error, but systematic issue that we could implement a new process for.

I just want to give you feedback, I don't want any response

We always welcome feedback and try to incorporate it where we can. If you don't want us to respond, just let us know when lodging the feedback.

I'm not angry, but I just want to let you know that I have an issue

We welcome all feedback and certainly welcome the opportunity to address your issue. You don't need to be angry to have an issue!

Who can view the details of my grievance or complaint?

We lodge the details of your grievance or complaint into our internal complaints database. This database has restricted access to maintain confidentiality, particularly when a complaint is of a sensitive nature.