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Authorised by	General Manager Quality and Compliance
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## Policy: Grievances, Complaints and Appeals

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### Overview

CWBTS are committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling procedure for all students for both Academic and Non-Academic matters.

We are committed to continuous improvement and approach complaints and appeals as an opportunity to refine and improve our service delivery.

We respect both privacy and natural justice considerations when handling complaints or appeals. This policy is publicly available and is published on our website.

Smart and Skilled funded students or potential students (NSW) should also refer to the Smart and Skilled Consumer Protection Policy and Strategy available on the CWBTS website. The Consumer Protection Officer is:

NSW / QLD / ACT Operations Manager  
CWBTS  
Office: 1300 429 287  
Mob: [+61438605195](tel:+61438605195)

### Definitions

**Grievance** – an expression of dissatisfaction

**Complaint** – a dissatisfaction with any service provided by CWBTS coupled together with a request for action.

**Appeal** – a dissatisfaction with any decision by CWBTS coupled together with a request for review

**Student/s** refers to all persons enrolled in a VET course including those that are enrolled in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and who are or would be entitled to VET Student Loans assistance under this Act.

**Complainant** refers to Students who are lodging a complaint with CWBTS.

**Appellant** – refers to Students who are lodging an application for review of a decision made by CWBTS

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

- **Academic Matters** include those matters, which relate to student progress, assessment, course content, training environment or awards in a VET course of study. For example: Learners may have decisions on their assessments reviewed if they feel a decision has been made in error.
- **Non-Academic** matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study and includes complaints in relation to personal information that the VET provider holds in relation to the VET student and the handling of student personal information, the behaviour or actions of a CWBTS staff member and the behaviour or actions of another student.

## How to Raise a Grievance or Make a Complaint

You can make a complaint in two ways:

### Verbally (informal)

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 (formal)

Written complaints can be made:

- Via email: [cwbts@cwbts.com.au](mailto: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. CWBTS encourages the Student or Client to raise a grievance or complaint 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

When a 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.

CWBTS will advise the Complainant in writing of the outcome (including details of the reasons) within 10 working days of the complaint being received. At this time, the Complainant will be advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

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

Written appeals can be made:

- Via email: [cwbts@cwbts.com.au](mailto:cwbts@cwbts.com.au), or
- Via hardcopy: PO Box 546, Coolangatta QLD 4225.

The appellant 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 the appellant received the original decision.

The decision being appealed will be reviewed, and determination made by the General Manager Quality and Compliance who is an independent person not associated with the training function.

The General Manager Quality and Compliance will commence their review within 5 business days of the appeal being received and will advise the Appellant in writing of the outcome (including details of the reasons) within 10 business days of the complaint being received.

At this time, and no longer than 10 business days of concluding the review, the Appellant will be advised of their right to have their matter referred to a third-party mediator if they are not satisfied with the outcome.



### **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.

You will be notified about who CWBTS has appointed as the external appeals mediator. There will be no cost charged to the Student.

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.

### **Unresolved Complaints and Appeals – Smart and Skills Funded Students (NSW)**

Where complaints and appeals are unable to be resolved directly with CWBTS then consumers are advised to contact Training Services NSW. This can be done by:

- Applying online ([www.training.nsw.gov.au/build/online\\_forms/general\\_enquiry\\_form.html](http://www.training.nsw.gov.au/build/online_forms/general_enquiry_form.html))
- Phone: 1300 772 104
- In person at a Training Services NSW regional office (see [http://www.training.nsw.gov.au/about\\_us/sts\\_contacts.html](http://www.training.nsw.gov.au/about_us/sts_contacts.html))

For further information about Training Services NSW complaints process please read the Smart and Skilled Consumer Protection Strategy  
[https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms\\_documents/smartandskilled/contract/consumer\\_protection\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/smartandskilled/contract/consumer_protection_strategy.pdf)

## **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 endeavours 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 Compliance Team 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

These matters are handled with confidentiality in mind.

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

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 staff member from the Compliance Team 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.