

# PICAC – Training & Assessment Complaints and Appeals Procedure

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Review Date: 04/09/2027

Responsible Officer: Compliance Specialist

Approved by: Compliance Manager

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## 1. General Policy

Whilst the PICAC S7 Complaints and Appeals Policy is broader/broadly-scoped the purpose of this policy and associated procedures addresses the specific issue and purpose of managing requests for a review of training assessment decisions made by PICAC or by a third party.

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## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

All students, potential students, or third parties wishing to submit a complaint or appeal regarding training and assessment decisions.

All PICAC staff, trainers, assessors, and third-party providers delivering services on behalf of PICAC.

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## 3. Standards Referenced

### Standards for RTOs 2025

#### Outcome Standards

- Standard 2.7 – Feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement.
- Standard 2.8 – Effective appeal processes are available to VET students where decisions adversely affect them.

#### Applicable Legislation:

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 - Clause Part 4.6A - Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution

#### National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 2019

- Principle 6 – Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.
- Principle 10 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

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## 4. Policy Statement

PICAC is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and accessible process for all training and assessment complaints and appeals. All matters will be handled promptly, confidentially, and in accordance with natural justice, with students supported to access internal and external resolution options without disadvantage.

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## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Student	Submit complaints or appeals using the Complaints and Appeals Form; provide supporting documentation; may be assisted or accompanied by a support person.
Student Support & Administration	Provide Complaints and Appeals Forms; assist students in lodging complaints/appeals; log complaints/appeals in the Complaints and Appeals Register.
Training Manager	Receive formal complaints/appeals; manage resolution within 10 working days; notify Compliance Specialist; refer to appropriate staff; inform students of outcomes and appeal rights; implement corrective actions.
Compliance Specialist	Maintain the Complaints and Appeals Register; ensure all documentation is securely stored; monitor outcomes via Compliance Management Meetings.
Head Trainer	Deal with complaints in the first instance.
CEO / Compliance Manager	Approve procedure and oversee compliance with Standards for RTOs 2025.

## 6. Procedure

### 6.1 Informal Process

Where possible all non-formal attempts should be made to resolve the complaint. This may include advice, discussions and general mediation in relation to the issue.

Any staff can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but once a student has placed a formal complaint/appeal the following procedures must be followed.

### 6.2 General Complaints

Any student, potential student or third party may submit a formal complaint to PICAC in the reasonable expectation that all complaints will be resolved with integrity and privacy.

There is no cost for the complaints process unless it is referred to a third party.

- A student wishing to submit a formal complaint or appeal can do so by completing the “Complaints and Appeals Form” and state their case providing as many details as possible. This application form can be obtained by contacting Student Support and Administration at PICAC.
- PICAC will maintain a fair, equitable complaints and appeals process over all allegations involving:
  - PICAC
  - Its Trainers, Assessors and other staff
  - A third-party providing services on behalf of PICAC, its trainers, assessors or other staff
  - A participant (learner/student) of PICAC.
- All formally submitted complaints or appeals are submitted to the Head Trainer who is to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints are to include the following information:
  - Submission date of complaint
  - Name of complainant
  - Nature of complaint
  - Date of the event which led to the complaint
  - Attachments (if applicable)
- Once a formal complaint is received it is to be entered into the “Complaints and Appeals Register” that is monitored by the Training Manager and Administration Manager regularly. The information to be contained and updated within the register is as follows:
  - Submission date of complaint
  - Name of complainant
  - Description of complaint/appeal
  - Determined Resolution
  - Date of Resolution

- A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person regardless of the nature of the complaint throughout the process at all times. Students can present their case in person.
- Once a complaint has been filed and logged in the “Complaints and Appeals Register” the Training Manager shall notify the Compliance Specialist of the complaint and provide any further documentation related to the matter.
- The Training Manager shall then refer the matter to the appropriate staff to resolve or decide on the complaint within 10 working days and keep the complainant informed of any decisions or outcomes concluded, or processes in place to deal with the complaint.
- Once a decision has been reached the Training Manager is required to inform all parties involved of any decisions or outcomes that are concluded in writing. Within the notification of the outcome of the formal complaint the student(s) shall also be notified that they have the right of appeal. To appeal a decision PICAC must receive in writing, grounds for the appeal. Student(s) are referred to the appeals procedure.
- The Training Manager shall ensure PICAC acts immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or an external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, PICAC must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective preventative action that is required and advise the student of the outcome.
- Copies of all documentation, outcomes and further action required will be placed into the “Complaints and Appeals Register” by the Compliance Specialist and a copy kept in the Student File.
- PICAC will adhere to the principles of fairness and natural justice in dealing with all complaints.
- The “Complaints and Appeals Register” will be monitored via the Compliance Management Meetings held every month.
- Where the Training Manager considers more than 60 days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, PICAC will:
  - inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 days are required; and
  - regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.
- All complaints and appeals documentation will be securely stored and protected consistent with the requirements prescribed in PICAC’s Records Management Policy & Procedure.

### 6.3 Appealing a Decision

- All students have the right to appeal decisions made by PICAC where reasonable grounds can be established. The areas in which a student may appeal a decision made by PICAC include:
  - assessments conducted
  - deferral, suspension or cancellation decisions made in relation to the student’s enrolment; or
  - any other conclusion/decision that is made after a complaint has been dealt with by PICAC.
- To activate the appeal, process the student is to complete a “Complaints and Appeals Form” which is to include a summary of the grounds upon which the appeal is based. The reason the student feels the decision is unfair is to be clearly explained. Help and support with this process is available from PICAC Student Support & Admin.
- The Training Manager shall then determine the validity of the appeal and organise a meeting with all parties involved in the matter aimed at seeking resolution where appropriate.
- The process for all formally lodged appeals will begin within 10 working days of appeal lodgement.
- The Training Manager will ensure PICAC acts on all substantiated appeals.
- Lodged appeals are reviewed, sorted as follows and appropriate procedures followed:

### General Appeals

- Where a student has appealed a decision or outcome of a formal complaint they are required to notify PICAC in writing within 20 working days of the grounds of their appeal. Any supporting documentation should also be attached to the appeal.
- The appeal is required to be lodged with PICAC student administration and Student Support and Administration staff who ensure details of the appeal are added to the “Complaints and Appeals Register”.

- The Training Manager will be notified and then seek details regarding the initial documentation of the complaint and decide based on the grounds of the appeal.
- The student will then be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decisions, and the “Complaints and Appeals Register” updated. The student will also be informed of the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify PICAC if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

#### **Assessment Appeals**

- Where a student wishes to appeal an assessment, they are required to notify their assessor in the first instance. Where appropriate the assessor may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable decision is gained. The assessor shall complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why assessment was or was not granted.
- If still not to the student’s satisfaction they can formally lodge an appeal by submitting a written letter outlining their reasons for the appeal with PICAC student administration and Student Support and Administration staff who log it in the “Complaints and Appeals Register”.
- The Training Manager shall be notified and shall seek details from the assessor involved and any other relevant parties. A decision will then be made regarding the appeal advising that either the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a ‘third party’ are provided. The third party shall be another assessor appointed by PICAC.
- The student is then formally notified of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the “Complaints and Appeals 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 PICAC if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

#### **External Appeals**

- Where a student is still dissatisfied with the decision of PICAC they have the option of referring the matter to an external independent / third party mediator.
  - PICAC will take the necessary steps to source and inform the student of details of the external independent/third party mediator.
    - One such possible entity is Melbourne Commercial Arbitration and Mediation Centre.
- Appeals can relate to other decisions including, for example, excluding a learner from a program. In such a situation and where an affected student wishes to appeal such an outcome, PICAC will:
  - seek to resolve such complaint(s) and appeal(s) through its internal resolution mechanisms.
  - if still not satisfied with the outcomes of these processes, PICAC will refer the student to the National Training Complaints Hotline.

#### **National Training Complaints Hotline**

- The hotline directs complaints to the appropriate Commonwealth, State or Territory organisation for help.
- The hotline also allows the Commonwealth Department of Employment & Workplace Relations - Skills & Training Division to analyse complaint trends in order to quickly identify what further action and improvements may be needed.
- The National Training Complaints Hotline is accessible on 13 38 73 and is available Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm.
- Complaints can also be sent via email to: [skilling@education.gov.au](mailto:skilling@education.gov.au)

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## **7. Supporting Forms and Documents**

- [Complaints and Appeals Policy](#)
- [Complaints and Appeals Form](#)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Fees, Charges Policy](#)