

Complaints and Appeals Policy

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that all complaints and appeals are managed transparently, fairly, and efficiently in accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2025.

PICAC is committed to fostering an environment of mutual respect and accountability where learners, staff, and stakeholders feel safe and supported to raise concerns or contest decisions. This policy ensures that:

- Learners and stakeholders can lodge complaints or appeals without fear of disadvantage.
- All concerns are addressed objectively and resolved promptly.
- Complaint and appeal outcomes contribute to continuous improvement across PICAC's training, assessment, and administrative functions.
- The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are upheld at every stage.
- PICAC meets all regulatory requirements under the SRTOs 2025.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all complaints or appeals raised by current or prospective learners, PICAC staff or contractors, employers or clients using our training services, and any third-party providers working with PICAC. Also, this policy aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 2019 (Principles 6 and 10) to ensure processes are child-focused where applicable. PICAC ensures that any complaint or feedback involving children or young people is handled in accordance with our Child and Youth Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.

3. Standards Referenced

Standards for RTOs 2025:

Outcome Standards 2025

- Standard 2.7 – Feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement of the NVR registered training organisation.
- Standard 2.8 - Effective appeal processes are available to VET students where decisions of the NVR registered training organisation or a third party adversely affect the student.

Compliance Standards 2025 – NA

Applicable Legislation:

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

4. Policy Statements

PICAC ensures:

- Complaints and appeals are managed fairly, confidentially, and without bias.
- All formal complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged, and resolved efficiently.
- All decisions are reviewed objectively and documented appropriately.
- Findings are used to strengthen quality and compliance systems.
- Feedback is welcomed as a tool for improvement and safety across all areas of PICAC operations.

5. Definitions

- Feedback: Any verbal or written input provided to PICAC, either positive or constructive, relating to the delivery of services.
- Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction with services, actions, behaviours, or decisions made by PICAC or its representatives.
- Appeal: A formal request for the review of a decision made by PICAC or its third-party providers.

6. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Compliance Manager	- Oversee overall compliance with policy and regulatory requirements- Monitor trends and report patterns- Review resolved complaints and appeals for systemic improvement
Operations Manager	- Manage the complaints and appeals resolution process- Ensure impartial assignment of investigators- Ensure procedural fairness and timeline compliance- Act on findings to improve services
Administration Manager	- Maintain the Complaints, Appeals and Feedback Register- Acknowledge submissions within required timeframes- Manage secure recordkeeping and communications- Assign unique ID numbers and ensure proper digital filing
Trainers and Assessors	- Promote a culture of open feedback- Escalate complaints and concerns to the relevant manager promptly
Administration Staff	- Provide access to forms (hard copy or digital)- Assist learners and stakeholders in lodging submissions- Refer formal matters to the Operations Manager
All Staff (involved in child-related complaints)	- Must be appropriately trained in child safety- Handle child-related complaints in line with PICAC's Child and Youth Safe Policy and Code of Conduct

7. Complaints

Individuals may lodge complaints relating to:

- The actions or decisions of PICAC as an organisation
- Conduct of PICAC trainers, assessors, or staff members
- Behaviour of other learners
- Services provided by third parties on behalf of PICAC
- Quality and amenity of facilities

All complaints are investigated by an authorised delegate and handled through a formal complaints management process.

8. Appeals

Appeals may be submitted in relation to:

- Assessment decisions
- Disciplinary decisions
- Refund or financial decisions
- Any other decision made by PICAC or its third parties

The appeals process provides an opportunity to contest decisions made by PICAC representatives or those contractually engaged.

9. Guiding Principles

PICAC's complaints and appeals process:

- Upholds natural justice and procedural fairness
- Is publicly accessible (via the RTO website/Student Handbook and upon request)
- Acknowledges all formal complaints or appeals in writing within 5 business days
- Target resolution within 30 calendar days, finalised within 60 calendar days
- Provides written explanation if resolution exceeds 60 days, with ongoing progress updates
- Allows for independent third-party review if requested
- Maintains secure storage of all related documentation
- Ensures that all matters are fed into continuous improvement mechanisms
- Is free from victimisation or reprisal

10. Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance

All feedback, complaints, and appeals are reviewed regularly through the Complaints, Appeals and Feedback Register and feed into the Continuous Improvement Register.

The CEO or their delegate will:

- Analyse all complaints and appeals to identify trends and root causes
- Document actions taken to prevent recurrence
- Use findings to inform systemic improvements across PICAC operations
- Update relevant policies, procedures, or training delivery accordingly

11. Supporting Processes

Process Name	Purpose
PRO_Complaints,AppealsandFeedback_V1	Receive, investigate, and resolve complaints and appeals from learners or stakeholders.
PRO_Support&Progression_V1	Processes and Procedures

12. Supporting Documents

Document ID	Name
FORM_ComplaintsandAppealandFeedback_V2.2	Complaints and Appeals Form
REG_ComplaintsAppealsandFeedback_V1	Register of all complaints and appeals
REG_ContinuousImprovement_V1	Continuous Improvement Register
FORM_ApprenticeSupportsInformationCollation And Feedback_V1	To collect and provide feedback on apprentice support information.

13. Version Control

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	27/10/2017	First release
1.1	29/08/2018	Updated 'Supporting Forms and Documents'
2.0	23/05/2024	Review for clarity and procedural improvements
2.1	20/05/2025	Aligned with SRTOs 2015 & 2025, added target timeframes, third-party rights, continuous improvement links, and improved structure
2.2	01/09/2025	The logo has been updated to include PICAC, STC, CEPUTEC, and FIT.
2.3	13/01/2026	The SRTO 2015 reference has been removed.

14. Summary of Changes:

Category	Change Type	Summary
Policy Structure	Simplified layout	Clearer sections and headings to make the policy easier to follow.
Standards Alignment	Updated references	Now aligned with SRTOs 2015 and 2025.
Scope	Expanded coverage	Includes third-party services in complaints and appeals.
Quality Improvement	Stronger process link	Complaints now feed into ongoing improvements.
Fairness & Transparency	Policy strengthened	Reaffirmed fairness and added option for independent review.
Tools & Forms	Documents updated	Forms and registers refreshed to match the new structure.