

SC14-I: Complaints Policy & Procedure

Domestic and International Students

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline BCC Institute’s approach to managing dissatisfaction, formal complaints of students, clients, staff and other members of the community. It provides a transparent approach for all complaints to be addressed in a fair, efficient and confidential manner.

This policy and procedure ensures compliance with the Standards for RTOs 2015, Clauses 1.7, 5.4 and 6.1-6.6 as well as as well as compliance with the of the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, Standard 10.

Definitions

ASQA means Australian Skills Quality Authority, the national VET regulator and the RTO’s registering body

DET means Department of Education and Training

Complaint means a person’s formal expression of dissatisfaction with any product or service provided by BCC Institute.

PRISMS means Provider Registration and International Students Management System

Services means training, assessment, related educational and support services and/or activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners. It does not include services such as student counselling, mediation or ICT support

Standards means the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 from the VET Quality Framework and the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

Policy

1. BCC Institute responds to all allegations involving the conduct of:
 - The RTO, its trainers and assessors and other staff.
 - Any third party providing Services on behalf of BCC Institute.
 - Any student or client of BCC Institute.
2. Complaints may be made in relation to any of BCC Institute’s services and activities such as:
 - the application and enrolment process
 - marketing information
 - the quality of training and assessment provided
 - training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements

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- the way someone has been treated
 - the actions of another student
3. BCC Institute is committed to developing a procedurally fair complaints process that is carried out free from bias, following the principles of natural justice.
 4. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, a process is in place for lodging a formal complaint which must be in writing and addressed to the CEO/Principal. Through this policy and procedure, BCC Institute ensures that complaints:
 - Are responded to in a consistent and transparent manner.
 - Are responded to promptly, objectively, with sensitivity and confidentiality.
 - Are able to be made at no cost to the individual.
 - Enable the complainant to be accompanied by a support person at any meetings that occur during the process.
 - Are used as an opportunity to identify potential causes of the complaint and take actions to prevent the issues from recurring as well as identifying any areas for improvement.
 5. BCC Institute acknowledges the need for students for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant and the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter. Costs associated with independent parties to review a matter must be covered by the complainant unless the decision to include an independent party was made by BCC Institute.

Where an international student is not satisfied with the outcome or conduct of the internal process, they are referred to the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO). This service is free of charge.

6. Complaints should be made in writing using the Complaints and Appeals Form, or other written format such as an email (info@bcc.edu.au) and sent to BCC Institute's head office at Level 1, 457 Chapel Road Bankstown NSW 2200 attention to the Chief Executive Officer.

When making a complaint, provide as much information as possible to enable BCC Institute to investigate and determine an appropriate solution. This should include:

- The issue you are complaining about– describe what happened and how it affected you.
 - Any evidence you have to support your complaint.
 - Details about the steps you have already taken to resolve the issue.
 - Suggestions about how the matter might be resolved.
7. Some or all members of the management team of BCC Institute will be involved in resolving complaints as outlined in the procedures. Where a third party delivering Services on behalf of the RTO is involved, they will also be included in the process of resolving the complaint.
 8. Where a student chooses to access this policy and procedure, the student's enrolment with BCCI will be unaffected while the complaints handling process is ongoing.
 9. Complaints will be finalised within 60 calendar days unless there is a significant reason for the matter to take longer. In matters where additional time is needed, the complainant will be advised in writing of the reasons and will be updated weekly on the progress of the matter until such a time as the matter is resolved.
 10. BCC Institute will maintain a record of all complaints and their outcomes on the *Complaints and Appeals Register* to allow all parties appropriate access. All records relating to complaints will be treated as confidential and will be covered by the BCC Institute Privacy Policy.
 11. This policy and related procedure do not replace or modify those or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of an individual to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws and it does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

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Procedure

1. Complaints

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>A. Receive and acknowledge complaint</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per policy, complaints are to be made in writing by the complainant, attention to the CEO. • The CEO should review all complaints upon receipt. • Acknowledge receipt of complaint in writing by sending a letter or email to complainant within 3 working days of receipt. • Record details of the complaint on the <i>Complaints and Appeals Register</i>. • Commence process of investigation within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. 	Chief Executive Officer
<p>B. Investigate the complaint</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon receiving the complaint, the matter is to be investigated to ensure all relevant information is available and it is accurate and complete. • Further details from the complainant, respondent or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face. Where the meeting is face to face, the complainant may be accompanied by a support person. • If the matter is in relation to a third party delivering Services on behalf of the RTO, the third party should be involved in the resolution of the complaint. • The CEO will review the information and decide on an appropriate response. Where deemed necessary by the CEO, the matter may be reviewed by other members of the management team to arrive at an appropriate resolution. • Note: The complaint must be completely resolved within 60 calendar days of receipt of the original complaint. If the matter is particularly complex and it is going to take longer to resolve, the complainant is to be advised in writing along with reasons for the extra time. They must be provided with updates on progress on a weekly basis thereafter until the matter is resolved. 	Chief Executive Officer
<p>C. Advise of the outcome and update records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a written response to the complainant outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The RTO's understanding of the complaint – The steps taken to investigate and resolve the complaint – Decisions made about resolution, with reasons for the decisions made – Areas that have been identified as possible causes of the complaint and improvements to be recommended – Their right to access the appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaints process. • Update the <i>Complaints and Appeals Register</i> so it includes the outcome 	Chief Executive Officer

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Procedure	Responsibility
<p>of the complaint.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update the <i>Continuous Improvement Register</i> if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome.• Keep a copy of the complaint and supporting documents in the Complaints file and in the student or staff file (where relevant).• Discuss the complaint and its outcome at the next management meeting.	

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2. Independent Reviews by External Party

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>D. External complaint or appeal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If dissatisfied with the internal processes, the complainant may initiate an external complaint. • Additionally, a complainant who has been through the internal processes may request BCC Institute to appoint an independent party to review the matter. • For domestic students, the independent party used is Fair Trading NSW, however complainants are able to seek their own external parties at their own cost. • For international students, the independent party is the Overseas Students Ombudsman. • BCC Institute will co-operate fully in the process of the external party to investigate and review the matter. This will include and not be limited to providing full access to the relevant student file/s and the internal complaints records where permitted to do so by law. All staff will be instructed to cooperate in such instances and to give an accurate account of the events as they understand them. • 	Staff as required

Document Control

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