

RTO013 SOP Complaints and Appeals

1. Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure is to ensure that Health Information Management Association of Australia Limited (HIMAA) records and acknowledges all complaints and appeals and deals with them fairly, efficiently and effectively.

2. Scope

This standard operating procedure applies to all HIMAA staff.

3. Standard 6 Clauses 6.1-6.6

6. Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively.

Subject to clause 6.6, to be compliant with Standard 6 the RTO must meet the following:

6.1 The RTO has a complaints policy to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of:

- a) The RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- b) A third party providing services of the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- c) A learner of the RTO

6.2 The RTO has an appeals policy to manage requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by the RTO or a third party providing services on the RTO's behalf.

6.3 The RTO's complaints policy and appeals policy:

- a) Ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process;
- b) Are publicly available
- c) Set out the procedure for making a complaint or requesting an appeal;
- d) Ensure complaints and requests for an appeal are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable; and
- e) Provide for review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO and the complainant or appellant, at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal, if the processes fail to resolve the complaint or appeal.

6.4 Where the RTO considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the RTO;

- a) Informs the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and
- b) Regularly updates the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

6.5 The RTO:

- a) Securely maintains records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes; and

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- b) Identifies potential causes of complaints and appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

6.6 Where the RTO is an employer or a volunteer organisation whose learners solely consist of its employees or members, does not charge fees for the training and/or assessment, and does not have in place a specific complaints and appeals policy in accordance with Clauses 6.1 & 6.2, the organisation has a complaints and appeals policy which is sufficiently broad to cover the services provided by the RTO.

4. Definition

Assessment – means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.

Assessment Appeal – A process whereby the candidate or another interested party, such as an employer, may dispute the assessment decision and seek reassessment.

Assessment System – is a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure that assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8.2.

Complaint – is dissatisfaction with procedures, outcomes or quality of service that HIMAA has provided to the learner. Complaints can be related to the following issues:

- Training(course work, Education Office r, learning materials)
- Course information (includes enrolment advice and other information provided to the learner)
- Issues relating to results (includes statements of attainment issued)
- Issues related to WHS, access and equity, bullying, harassment or mistreatment by a HIMAA staff member or other learners.
- Any other activities that is associated with training and assessment services that HIMAA has provided.

Operations - of ant RTO include training, assessment and administration and support services related to its registration, including those delivered across jurisdictions and offshore.

Record – means a written, printed or electronic document providing evidence that activities have been performed.

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

Third party – means any party that provides services on behalf of the RTO but does not include a contract of employment between an RTO and its employee.

Training and assessment strategies and practices – are the approach of , and method adopted by, an RTO with respect to training and assessment designed to enable learners to meet the requirements of the training package or accredited course.

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Table 1.8-1 Principles of Assessment

Fairness	The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learners needs. The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.
Flexibility	Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting the learners needs • Assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and • Drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.
Validity	Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance; • Assessment of knowledge and skills integrated with their practical application; • Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and • Judgement of competence based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Reliability	Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

Table 1.8-2: Rules of Evidence

Validity	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of the learner's competency.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

5. References

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- User Guide Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- VET Act 2011
- RTO001 Doc Complaints and Appeals Flow Chart
- RTO008 Policy Quality Assurance of RTO Operations
- RTO008 SOP Quality Assurance of RTO Operations
- RTO003 Doc Complaints and Appeals Register
- ORG006 Policy Continuous Improvement
- ORG006 SOP Continuous Improvement
- ORG002 Form Continuous Improvement Action Request
- RTO005 Form Complaint
- RTO004Form Assessment Appeal
- RTO013 SOP Complaints and Appeals
- RTO011 Policy Providing Accurate and Accessible Information and Advertising and Marketing
- RTO011 SOP Providing Accurate and Accessible Information and Advertising and Marketing
- RT012 Policy Learners Informed and Protected
- RTO012 Sop Learners Informed and Protected
- RTO008 Policy Trainers and Assessors
- RTO008 SOP Trainers and Assessors
- RTO001 Policy Training Assessment Strategies and Practices
- RTO001 SOP Training Assessment Strategies and Practices
- RTO003 Policy Learner Support Services
- RTO003 Sop Learner Support Services

6. Procedure

6.1 Assessment Appeals

- 6.1.1 The learner is to approach the Education Officer to discuss their assessment result
- 6.1.2 The Education Officer must provide the learner with feedback regarding their assessment result
- 6.1.3 If the learner is still unhappy about the assessment decision after speaking to the Education Officer, the Education Officer is to provide the learner with information on how to appeal the assessment decision
- 6.1.4 The Education Officer is to provide the learner with the 015 Form Assessment Appeal to complete
- 6.1.5 The learner must submit the form with a copy of their assessment evidence within ten days after the assessment decision was made. The learner can submit the appeal application by fax, email or mail

Fax 02 9887 5895

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Email Training Manager Education Services lynw@himaa.org.au
Email Quality and Compliance Officer: annemariea@himaa.org.au
Training Manager Education Services or Quality and Compliance Officer
Health Information Management Association of Australia Limited
Locked Bag 2045 North Ryde NSW 1670 Australia

- 6.1.6 The Education Officer is to provide the Training Manager Education Services or the Quality and Compliance Officer with the learner's outcome and feedback. This is to be attached to the learner's appeal application
- 6.1.7 When the appeal is received the learner will be notified by the Student Support and Administration Officer that HIMAA has received the assessment appeal, and that it will be processed
- 6.1.8 The Training Manager Education Services is to organise another Education Officer to re-assess the learner's work (at HIMAA's expense)
- 6.1.9 The appointed Education Officer is to record the re-assessment result and any accompanying comments or feedback
- 6.1.10 After the re-assessment has been completed the Training Manager Education Services must inform the learner of the results in writing
- 6.1.11 The learner should receive a response to the re-assessment within ten working days of the submission being received
- 6.1.12 The Training Manager Education Services is to give all evidence to the Quality and Compliance Officer to put on the 008 Doc Complaints and Appeals Register. Original documents are to be scanned and uploaded onto the Student Management System (SMS). Quality and Compliance Officer to keep original document in a secure filing cabinet
- 6.1.13 If learner is still unhappy with the results they can then make a complaint about the services provided by HIMAA
- 6.1.14 The Training Manager Education Services is to inform the learner of the complaints procedure and send 014 Form Complaint to the learner

6.2 Complaints

- 6.2.1 Learners should approach their Education Officer to raise the complaint.
- 6.2.2 If the complaint is about the Education Officer the learner is advised to contact the Training Manager Education Services or Quality and Compliance Officer.
- 6.2.3 The Training Manager Education Services is to inform the student about the complaints procedure and provide them with the 014 Form Complaint to complete
- 6.2.4 The learner must submit the complaints form by fax, email or mail

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Email Training Manager: Education Services: lynw@himaa.org.au

Email Quality and Compliance Officer: annemariea@himaa.org.au

Training Manager Education Services or Quality and Compliance Officer

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- 6.2.5 The learner is to be informed in writing that the complaint has been received and will be investigated
- 6.2.6 The complaint to be forwarded to the Quality and Compliance Officer.
- 6.2.7 The Education Officer/ Training Manager Education Services / Quality and Compliance Officer must address the complaint raised and try to reach a resolution on the issue that is agreeable to all parties
- 6.2.8 The Quality and Compliance Officer is to record the complaint in 008 Doc Complaints and Appeals Register and issue a unique number to the complaint
- 6.2.9 The complaint is put in the register and complaint number given to the Training Manager Education Services. This number must be recorded on all documentation and correspondence regarding the complaint
- 6.2.10 The Training Manager Education Services and Quality and Compliance Officer are responsible for investigating the complaint
- 6.2.11 After the investigation the Training Manager Education Services or Quality and Compliance Officer is to inform the learner of the investigations findings and suggested solution to the complaint
- 6.2.12 The learner should receive a response to the complaint within thirty working days from submission of the complaint. If the complaint takes longer than thirty working days the learner must be informed of the progress on a regular basis
- 6.2.13 If the learner is still unhappy with the outcome and suggested solution they can raise the complaint with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- 6.2.14 The learner must contact HIMAA to organise either a face-to-face meeting with the CEO (at learner's expense for travel) or a phone meeting that is recorded. Another staff member or third party must be in either meeting to discuss the issues and reach a possible resolution
- 6.2.15 If applicable the CEO is to investigate further
- 6.2.16 The CEO must document the complaint and solution/resolution and send a copy of this to the Quality and Compliance Officer
- 6.2.17 After the investigation has concluded the CEO must write a letter or email to the learner outlining the solution to the complaint
- 6.2.18 The learner should receive a response within ten working days of the meeting. If still under investigation the CEO is to inform the learner of the progress
- 6.2.19 If the learner is still unhappy with the outcome or feels HIMAA has not addressed or handled the complaint properly they can meet with an external organisation
- 6.2.20 The CEO is to inform the learner of the relevant external organisation who can help them with their complaint

6.3 Complaints and Appeals Handling

Address Issue:

1. Acknowledge and address all complaints and appeals made by student
2. Keep all complaints and appeals confidential (do not disclose to other staff members unless necessary)

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Assess and inform:

3. Assess complexity of the complaint or appeal and prioritise in order of importance
4. Provide learner/ complainant with clear up-to-date information about progress of complaint or appeal and inform them of delays

Plan:

5. Plan investigation process (schedule meetings with people involved)
6. Inform complainant they can have a support person to accompany them to any meeting throughout the complaint/appeal process
7. Remain impartial during investigation and make a decision based on evidence only

Respond:

8. Respond to all complaints and appeals in writing
 - a. Summarise the complaint addressing all issues
 - b. Briefly explain investigation process
 - c. Outline findings of investigation
 - d. Offer possible solution/ resolution
 - e. Include unique complaint or appeal number in all documentation
 - f. Sign and date documents
 - g. Do not make claims or promises that cannot be delivered
 - h. Make sure the solution/resolution does not disadvantage others

Follow up:

9. Follow-up on agreed solution and make sure that it has been implemented and that complainant is satisfied
10. Check implementation of solution by:
 - a. Reviewing documented evidence
 - b. Complaints form or Assessment Appeals form
 - c. Complaints register
 - d. Written responses including outcome

Improve:

11. Use all complaints and appeals for continuous improvement to HIMAA services

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