

Complaints and Appeals

Policy and Procedure

© Copyright 2025

WALGA Resources are protected by © Copyright. This is exclusively reserved to WALGA (Western Australian Local Government Association) ABN which is 28 126 945 127, West Leederville, WA.

Author	WALGA Training Services RTO 51992 T: 08 9213 2000 E: training@walga.asn.au www.walga.asn.au/training
Acknowledgement	Eva Godwin Training Services Manager Michaela Tarpley, RTO Consultant Paul Hardman, Director, Vocational Training and Skills Solutions
Policy Owner	RTO Governance
Original Created V1	14 Feb 2014
Version 1.6	17 April 2019
Version 2	Update reflects improved WALGA processes and replaces V 1.6 - V2 was created 1 June 2021
Version 3	Updated to match new style guide 15 July 2024 Added TAC Factsheet link to section 5
Version 4	15 July 2025 – Updated P&P to capture revised Standards for RTO's 2025
Last Reviewed	29 July 2025

1. Introduction	3
1.1. Purpose	3
1.2. Scope	3
1.3. Definitions	3
1.4. Reference Documentation	4
2. Policy Statement	5
3. Complaint Procedure	7
4. Internal Appeals Procedure	8
5. External Appeal	8
6. Resources	9
7. Key Performance Indicator	9

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy & Procedure (P&P) is to ensure that all complaints and appeals are dealt with in a constructive and timely manner and support quality improvements and self-assurance processes in accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2025

1.2. Scope

This P&P provides guidance on the resolution of complaints and appeals made against WALGA by a student in both non-accredited and Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) as well as stakeholders or staff.

This policy applies to all students, employers, staff, stakeholders and third parties, and is made available via the WALGA Student Portal and the Student Handbook.

1.3. Definitions

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction that relates to the conduct of WALGA Training, its staff, other WALGA Training learners or third parties contracted by WALGA Training to provided additional services on behalf of the organisation.

A complaint could be related but is not limited to:

- Academic Matters: Academic Program (structure or content), Teaching or Assessment, Attendance or Course Progress;
- Non-Academic Matters: the performance of WALGA Training staff, including our Student Services team. The complaint may relate to administrative action or non-action which has adversely affected a participant through actions and behaviours, unfair treatment on the grounds of access and equity or Work Health and Safety concerns;

What is an appeal?

An appeal is a request for a review of a decision made by WALGA Training where the decision has adversely affected the student. This could include but is not limited to:

- Enrolment processes
- Approval or rejection of an application to defer and/or suspend study at WALGA Training
- Course progression and consistently missing Assessment due dates
- Assessment outcomes and/or grounds for Re- Assessment
- Rejected access to support
- Grounds of cancellation by WALGA Training due to non-payment of fees (NOITC) or no course progress (NOITR) resulting in enrolment cancellation by WALGA Training.

1.4. Reference Documentation

Standards for RTOs 2025 Standard 2.7 and 2.8

Where the complaint or appeal is related to the delivery of Nationally Recognised Training the process implemented by the RTO must meet the requirement of the Standards for RTOs 2025

Standard 2.7: Feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement of the registered training organisation.

Performance Indicators

A registered training organisation demonstrates:

- it operates a complaints management system that:
 - allows feedback and complaints about the organisation, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the organisation;
 - ensures all parties are afforded procedural fairness;
 - identifies reasonable timeframes for responding to and resolving complaints; and
 - provides avenues for further action where complaints are not resolved;
- information about how to provide feedback and make complaints through the complaints management system is publicly available and easily accessible by VET students;
- VET students are supported to provide feedback and make complaints;
- outcomes of complaints are documented by the organisation and communicated to all parties to the complaint; and
- feedback and complaints are used by the organisation to inform continuous improvement.

Standard 2.8: Effective appeal processes are available to VET students where decisions of the registered training organisation or a third party adversely affect the student.

Performance Indicators

A registered training organisation demonstrates:

- (a) it operates an appeals management system that:
 - (i) allows VET students to appeal decisions of the organisation, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the organisation, where those decisions adversely affect the student;
 - (ii) ensures all parties to the appeal are afforded procedural fairness;
 - (iii) specifies reasonable timeframes for actioning appeals; and
 - (iv) provides avenues for review by an independent party if requested by the appellant (at no or low cost to the appellant);
- (b) information about how to appeal an adverse decision through the appeals management system is publicly available and easily accessible by VET students;
- (c) outcomes of appeals are documented by the organisation and communicated to the appellant; and
- (d) the outcomes of appeals are used by the organisation to inform continuous improvement.

TAC Documentation

The Training Accreditation Council (TAC) of WA also publishes a number of supporting materials for RTOs including, but not limited to:

- TAC Guidance Hub – Standards for RTOs - 2025
- TAC Fact Sheet
 - RTO complaints and appeals
 - Training Accreditation Council (TAC) Complaints Handling Policy

2. Policy Statement

WALGA Training is committed to providing a transparent, accessible, and fair complaints and appeals process. This policy is made publicly available via the website and student handbook, and may be provided in accessible formats upon request. Learners are informed of this process prior to enrolment and again during induction.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



WALGA Training will ensure that:

- the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaints and appeals process.
- all formal complaints and appeals must be documented in writing and will be acknowledged by WALGA Training in writing
- the individuals have full access to the relevant evidence and parties involved will be personally heard by an independent person who was not involved in the original issue.
- the review and investigation is evidence based, defensible and transparent and is documented at all stages and all parties involved are given a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome;
- all formal complaints and appeals are considered within 10 working days and dealt with and finalised within 20 working days of receiving the complaint or appeal.
- if WALGA Training considers more than 20 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the complainant or appellant will be informed of the reasons in writing and will be regularly updated on the progress of the matter.
- if the process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal, a review by an independent party via the external complaint and appeal process is available however the internal process must have been accessed and completed.

WALGA Training respects the rights of learners to remain enrolled throughout all stages of any internal and external complaint and/or appeals processes they enter, except in cases of suspension or cancellation of enrolment for serious misbehaviour (suspected criminal activity, a learner being a danger to themselves and/or others, etc.).

WALGA's Student Services Team will maintain a secure Complaints and Appeals Register, which documents all formal complaints, appeals and their outcomes and ensures open communication with all parties.

Any substantiated complaints and appeals or systemic issues identified will be reviewed as part of the continuous improvement process and appropriate corrective action will be taken to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of recurrence.

The legally registered person on the RTO's Scope of Registration is ultimately responsible for ensuring that WALGA Training complies with the regulatory standards. This includes the complaints and appeals policy and procedures.

3. Complaint Procedure

Disputes, grievances and/or complaints should be verbally addressed to the person concerned through an informal avenue first. Where this is not possible or the grievance is of serious significance and/or there is serious or ongoing concern for the welfare of a learner, the complainant can enter a formal complaints process by following this procedure.

1. Formal complaints must be in writing and emailed to training@walga.asn.au with the following title in the email subject box: **Confidential - Formal Complaint**
2. Formal complaints should be addressed to the RTO Compliance Officer at WALGA Training.
3. On receipt of a written complaint, a written acknowledgement is sent to the complainant and the complaint is forwarded to the Training Services Manager.
4. The Training Services Manager will either action the complaint or convene an independent panel to hear the complaint; this shall be the complaints and appeals committee.
5. The complaints committee shall not have had previous involvement with the complaint and will include representatives of WALGA Training, the Training Services Manager and Academic and independent Student Services staff. If required, an external independent person will be called onto the panel.
6. The complainant shall be given an opportunity to present their case and may choose to be accompanied by a support person.
7. The outcome/decision will be communicated to all parties in writing within 20 days.
8. If the complaint is not finalised within 20 calendar days, the complainant is informed of the reasons in writing and regularly updated on the progress of the matter.
9. If the process fails to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant will have the right to enter into the appeal process
10. The root cause of any complaint will be included in the systematic monitoring and evaluation processes of the RTO so that appropriate corrective action can be instigated to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of recurrence.
11. All formal complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner, documented and registered in the WALGA Training complaints and appeals register.

4. Internal Appeals Procedure

The WALGA Training appeals procedure is designed to review an outcome made by WALGA Training in relation to a student matter, where the learner feels unfairly treated, misunderstood or disadvantaged. Such decisions may include but are not limited to the following disputes:

- Refund of prepaid fees
- Variation of enrolment request e.g. change of course, early completion or extension of studies
- Deferral and/or suspension requests
- RPL Application rejections
- Academic results
- Cancellation due to non-payment of fees, low attendance, no course progression or serious student misconduct

Internal Appeals are processed by the Training Services Manager with the support of independent panel members within twenty (20) days and the outcome of the appeal will be conveyed to the student in writing.

5. External Appeal

If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal they will be provided an opportunity for an external review by an independent party who has no prior involvement. This may incur a low cost recovery fee to be paid by the appellant.

The independent party may be another RTO, an independent VET professional, or the Training Accreditation Council. The appellant has 20 days from written notification of the outcome of the appeal to initiate an external appeal.

For further information refer to the TAC Fact Sheet - RTO Complaints and Appeals - [Fact Sheet - RTO Complaints and Appeals - OCR PDF \(340KB\) \(1\).pdf](#).

Depending on the type of student category, the following external appeal channels are available to students:

Type of Student	Independent party	Web link
Domestic fee-for-services students (WA) and DTWD funded student	TAC Independent Training provider Independent VET professional	https://www.tac.wa.gov.au/students/Pages/Complaints-against-RTOs.aspx

6. Resources

The resources (Tools and Templates) that support the implementation of the P&P are listed below

- WALGA Training Template – Complaint Form
- WALGA Training Complaints and Appeals Register

7. Key Performance Indicator

The effectiveness of this P&P will be measured by the number of appeals and complaint resolved without the intervention of an independent adjudicator and evaluated by timeliness of resolution, identification of systemic issues, and evidence of continuous improvement actions resulting from complaint trends.