

## Policy

All disputes or grievances will be handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

All parties will have a clear understanding of the 3 stages involved in the grievance procedure.

Each complainant will be provided with the opportunity to present his or her case at each stage of the grievance process.

All grievances will be managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.

The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against in any of the stages set out in this policy, or as a result of a grievance being raised.

Apex Human Resources Pty Ltd (“Apex HR”) will encourage the parties to approach a grievance with an open view and attempt to resolve issues through discussion and conciliation. The policy provides an avenue for most grievances to be addressed. However, where a grievance cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation following the stages set out internally, Apex HR acknowledges the need for an appropriate external and independent agent to moderate between the parties, as set out below.

Apex HR will endeavour to resolve any complaint referred to it by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) within ten working days of its receipt of the complaint.

This policy is communicated to academic and support staff through the Trainer’s Handbook and the RTO’s website. The Director is responsible for the training of academic staff in the application of the policy.

At all stages of the process, the complainant and/or respondent have the right to be represented by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person) if they so desire.

Discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals are to be recorded in writing during each stage of the process. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures will be given, if requested, by the complainant and/or respondent.

Students of Apex HR are entitled to use the grievance procedures set out in this policy, regardless of the location of the campus of the school at which the grievance has arisen, the student’s place of residence or the mode in which they study.

## Student Privacy

Apex HR acknowledges and respects the privacy of students. It is required under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cwth) to comply with the national Information Privacy Principles in respect of the collection, use and disclosure of personal information from individuals. Records of all grievances, applications for review of decisions and outcomes of the grievance process will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be strictly confidential and filed in a separate file (not kept on the student or staff file).

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## Academic Grievances

### Definitions

A grievance, complaint or appeal is deemed to be dissatisfaction with the procedures, outcomes or the quality of service provided by employees of Apex Human Resources in relation to academic matters. Academic matters arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider and will cover issues such as:

- Student assessment
- Decision regarding student progress
- Curriculum and awards in a course

A grievance, complaint or appeal is deemed to be a formal grievance, complaint or appeal when it is lodged in writing with Apex HR.

### Grievance Procedures

Students or people seeking to enrol in any accredited course of Apex HR have access to a three stage academic grievance process which is set out below.

Each stage is free of charge.

#### Stage 1

Initially, complaints and grievances should be discussed with the trainer/assessor or with the Student Support officer (Diana Bevacqua on 9755 7453 or [diana@apexhr.com.au](mailto:diana@apexhr.com.au)) and dealt with, within the organisation.

The complaint will be documented and a resolution will be sought within 14 days of receipt of the complaint.

#### Stage 2

If dissatisfied with the response to the complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter under stage 1, the complainant may submit an appeal or subsequent complaint in writing to the Director. The Director will arrange for a second assessment by another assessor within a reasonable time, normally within 15 days of receipt of the appeal/complaint.

#### Stage 3

If not satisfied with the decision in stage 2, the complainant may request that the matter be further reviewed by an independent body appointed by Apex HR.

The details of this external body are as follows:

**Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria**  
 Level 4, 455 Lonsdale Street  
 Melbourne VIC 3001  
 Ph: 9603 8370  
 Fax: 9603 8355

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This final stage will be addressed within 30 days.

If the independent mediator makes recommendations in relation to a complaint they have reviewed, the Director or his delegate will ensure that the recommendations are implemented within 21 days.

## Non Academic Grievances

### Definitions

A grievance, complaint or appeal is deemed to be dissatisfaction with the procedures, outcomes or the quality of service provided by employees of Apex Human Resources in relation to non-academic matters. Non-Academic matters arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider and will cover issues such as:

- complaints in relation to privacy/personal information that the provider holds in relation to the student
- discrimination
- unfairness and injustice
- vilification
- sexual harassment
- other forms of harassment, eg. bullying
- student amenities
- general complaints including dissatisfaction with services
- complaints about financial matters
- fines and payments, application procedures, exclusions from events and facilities and the use or misuse of personal information.

A grievance, complaint or appeal is deemed to be a formal grievance, complaint or appeal when it is lodged in writing with Apex Human Resources

### Grievance Procedure

Students or people seeking to enrol in any accredited course of Apex Human Resources have access to a three stage non-academic grievance process which is set out below.

Each stage is free of charge.

#### Stage 1

- a) Initially, complaints and grievances should be discussed with the person/s involved or with the Student Support officer (Diana Bevacqua on 9755 7453 or [diana@apexhr.com.au](mailto:diana@apexhr.com.au)).

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b) If this is impracticable or unsatisfactory, students should communicate with the Student Support Officer.

The complaint will be documented and a resolution will be sought within 14 days of receipt of the complaint.

## Stage 2

The second stage of the grievance process is as follows:

If dissatisfied with the response to the complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter under stage 1, the complainant may submit the appeal or subsequent complaint in writing to an independent, impartial and senior officer to the first assessor, the Director. The Director will deal with the appeal/complaint within a reasonable time, normally within 10 days of receipt of the appeal/complaint.

## Stage 3

The third stage of the non-academic grievance process is as follows:

If not satisfied with the decision of the Director in stage 2, the complainant may request that the matter be further reviewed by an independent body appointed by Apex Human Resources.

The details of this external body are as follows:

**Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria**  
 Level 4, 455 Lonsdale Street  
 Melbourne VIC 3001  
 Ph: 9603 8370  
 Fax: 9603 8355

This final stage will be addressed within 30 days.

If the independent mediator makes recommendations in relation to a grievance they have reviewed, the Director or delegate will ensure that the recommendations are implemented within 21 days.

## Continuous Improvement

Any improvement action arising from a complaint or appeal will be recorded in the 'Continuous Improvement Register' which will be reviewed by Senior Management bi-annually in order to identify potential causes of complaints and appeals for corrective action in order to reduce the chance of reoccurrence.

**Note:** The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under statute or any other law.

## Reference Documents:

Complaints and Grievance

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