

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

STD 6	Complaints and Appeals (including Academic Grievance)		Clause 6.1 – 6.6
Approved:	Glenn Smith Chief Compliance Officer	Version 3	Annual Review Date: August, 2017

1. Policy

- 1.1 Smart City Vocational College is committed to providing learners, staff and stakeholders with the best possible environment in which to study or work.
- 1.2 Smart City Vocational College understands that on occasion, there may be instances of dissatisfaction and invites complaints and appeals from a dissatisfied party so that a resolution can be found and provide an opportunity to consolidate the feedback into a review and improvement of our policies and practices. This right to a complaint and appeal also extends to persons seeking to enrol.
- 1.3 Smart City Vocational College will address all complaints and appeals in a timely manner and openly and honestly so as to resolve problems through fair and reasonable means. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeals process.
- 1.4 The complainant has the right for their complaint to be heard and for an impartial decision to be made at no cost to themselves. Complainants have the right to appeal a decision made about a complaint, as well as submit an appeal about an assessment decision.

1.5 This policy manages and responds to allegations involving the conduct of -

- (a) Smart City Vocational College, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- (b) a third party providing services on Smart City Vocational College's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- (c) a learner of Smart City Vocational College

1.6 This policy also manages requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by Smart City Vocational College or a third party providing services on its behalf.

1.7 A complaint or appeal may include, but is not limited to:

Complaints:

- General complaints including dissatisfaction with services
- Marketing and promotional activity
- Personal safety
- Administration
- Behaviors of others
- Equity and access, discrimination, harassment and bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Unfairness and injustice
- Vilification
- Student amenities
- Complaints about financial matters, fines and payments,
- Application procedures,
- Exclusions from events and facilities; and
- The use or misuse of personal information, breach of privacy

Academic Grievance:

- Course advice and enrolment
- Suspension and/or cancellation of enrolment
- Program delivery
- Learning resources
- Assessment
- Issue of results, certificates, statement of attainment

Appeals:

- Assessment process and decision
- Learner progress and academic progress decisions

1.8 This policy and procedure ensures that both the requirements of the Standards for RTOs 2015, as well as the Higher Education Support Act 2003 Schedule 1A VET Guidelines 2015 are met.

1.9 Initial contact may be lodged verbally, or through an advocate and at all times the complainant will be provided with an opportunity to have their complaint formally recorded.

1.10 Complainants are encouraged to speak directly to the person involved to try and resolve their complaint informally, however if the informal discussion does not resolve the matter or the complainant is uncomfortable with approaching the person directly, the complainant should access the formal process. All formal complaints or appeals (including assessment appeals) must be made in writing using the Complaints and Appeals Form and forwarded to the Campus Manager within 20 working days of the matter occurring. The Complaints and Appeals Form can be accessed via the Smart City Vocational College website or provided by email or in hardcopy to the complainant/appellant.

1.11 Smart City Vocational College will:

- (a) acknowledge all complaints and requests for an appeal in writing within 3 working days of receipt;
- (b) regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of their complaint or appeal;
- (c) aim to finalise all complaints and appeals processes within 20 working days, or as soon as practicable;
- (d) inform the complainant or appellant in writing if it considers that more than 60 calendar days will be required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required;
- (e) Inform the complainant or appellant in writing of the outcome of their complaint or appeal including the reasons for the decision; and
- (f) ensure that in relation to assessment appeals, that the original assessment decision will be reviewed by an independent qualified assessor and the appellant notified of the outcome.

1.12 Where a face to face meeting is required during any stage of the complaint or appeal process, complainants and/or appellants have the right to have a third party such as a family member or friend accompany them.

1.13 If a complainant or appellant is unsatisfied with the outcome of their complaint or appeal they may seek review of Smart City Vocational College's decision by referring their complaint or appeal to an external dispute resolution body appointed for this purpose by Smart City Vocational College.

The details for the external body and contact person are:

Resolution Institute

(02) 9251 3366 / 1800 651 650

Level 1, 13-15 Bridge Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Smart City Vocational College will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review.

The costs of an external dispute resolution process must be borne by the complainant and Smart City Vocational College will inform the complainant of such costs in writing.

- 1.14 Complainants may also contact the National Training Complaints Hotline 13 38 73 where they have a complaint against Smart City Vocational College as a training provider.
- 1.15 Smart City Vocational College staff and the complainant/appellant will observe strict confidentiality during all stages of the complaints resolution process. All communications and proceedings arising from the complaints process will remain confidential at the conclusion of the complaints resolution process.
- 1.16 Smart City Vocational College securely maintain records of all formal complaints and appeals and their outcomes on the Complaints and Appeals Register. Only authorised individuals have access to complaints and appeals records. Records are available for 5 years from the date of the initial complaint. *For further information on how to access these records please refer to the Personal Information Policy and Procedure.*
- 1.17 Smart City Vocational College aims to identify potential causes of complaints and appeals and take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

1.18 Learners are advised of the Smart City Vocational College Complaints and Appeals Policy in the Learner Handbook.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to learners and employees of SC Admin Pty Ltd ATF SC Administrative Trust and its associated entities, including Smart City Vocational College Pty Ltd.