

Complaints and Appeals Procedures

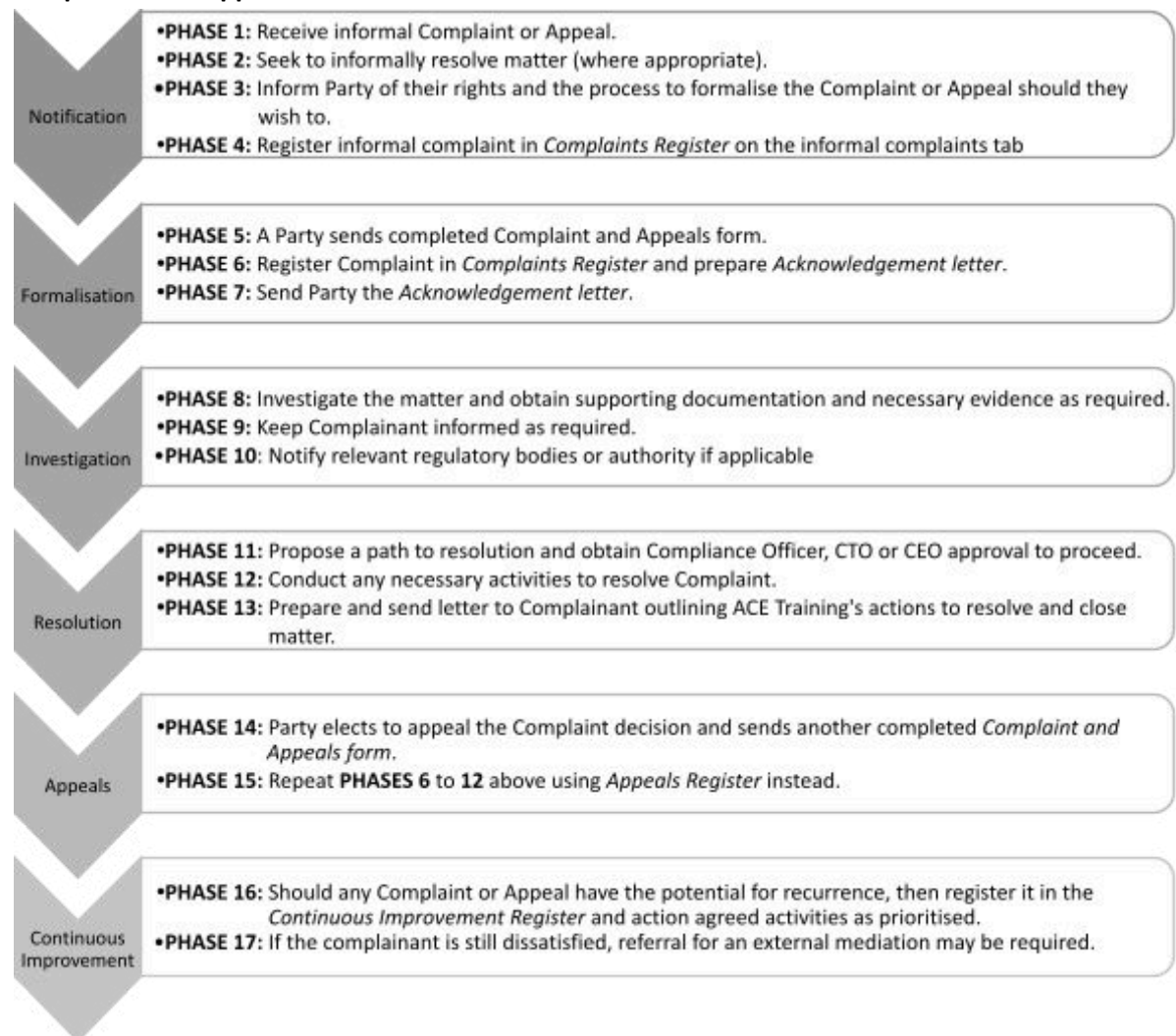
P & N Thomas Pty Ltd ta ACE Training – RTO: 21716



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| Purpose: | The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that ACE Training manages its Complaints and Appeals to Complaints within the principles outlined by the <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i> . |
| Scope: | This procedure applies to all ACE Training staff, contractors, relevant third parties and students. |
| Responsibilities: | The CEO is ultimately accountable for adherence to this procedure. |
| Standards: | Outcome Standards for RTO's 2025 2.7, 2.8 |
| Policy: | This procedure supports compliance with the <i>Complaint and Appeals</i> and <i>Compliance and Governance</i> policies. |
| Tools: | This procedure is supported through the application of the <i>Complaint and Appeals Form</i> , <i>Complaints and Appeals Acknowledgement Letter</i> , <i>Complaints and Appeals Investigation Checklist</i> , <i>Complaints & Appeals Register</i> . |

NOTE: The term Party referred to within this procedure could relate to ACE Training staff, contractors, students or any applicable third parties, employers of students or guardians/parents of students. The terms Complaint and Appeals take the meaning as defined within the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Complaints and Appeals Process Flow



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PHASE 1: Receive Informal Complaint or Appeal.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A party refers a Complaint or Appeal matter to an ACE Training representative informally either in-person, via phone call or by emailing complaints@aceassessments.com.au | Complainant or Appellant | At their sole discretion. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACE Training's representative receiving the informal Complaint or Appeal must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive information in an empathetic manner creating a safe environment for the Party to clearly express their grievances or guarantees for an outcome; Under no circumstances volunteer an opinion regarding the issue relating to the grievance; If ACE Representative can suggest an informal approach to resolution (if appropriate) – refer to PHASE 2 of this procedure; If ACE Representative is not able to suggest an informal approach to resolution (as appropriate), refer the Party to another ACE Representative who will be able to nominate an informal approach to resolution (and brief and handover the matter to an alternative ACE representative to continue with this procedure); Remind the Party of their rights under ACE Training's <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i> to raise a formal complaint; Should the matter be of a serious nature, apply the judgement necessary to refer the matter immediately to ACE Training's Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO for their discernment, including informing authorities. | ACE Representative receiving Complaint or Appeal | Immediately if via phone, or, for all other methods, within one business day of informal Complaint or Appeal. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the party be open to an informal resolution, proceed with Phase 2 of this procedure. Should the party decide not to proceed with either informal or formal resolution, the procedure concludes with no further action required. If the party wishes to pursue a formal Complaint or Appeal, proceed to Phase 3 or 5 of this procedure. | ACE Representative receiving informal Complaint or Appeal | Immediately if via phone, or, for all other methods, within one business day of informal Complaint or Appeal. |

Note: in some instances, this procedural step may be redundant should the party decide to go straight to Phase 4 with lodgement of a formal Complaint or Appeal.

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PHASE 2: Seek to resolve matters informally (where appropriate).

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Considering the principles outlined by paragraph (a) in the <i>Complaint and Appeals Policy</i>, suggest an informal resolution to the Party outlining the merits, process and intended outcomes of the suggested approach and ascertain their appetite to participate in an informal resolution to the matter. | ACE Representative assigned to the informal Complaint or Appeal | Within one business day of receiving informal Complaint or Appeal. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should the party consent to an informal resolution which involves parties interacting, then ensure each party is adequately briefed, treated fairly, and feel safe to volunteer their perspectives on the matter. If the matter is subsequently resolved, no further action is required concluding this procedure.Should ACE Training Representative conclude that there may be potential recurrence of similar causes for future Complaints or Appeals, then the matter needs to be registered in the <i>Continuous Improvement Register</i> and treated in accordance with the <i>Compliance and Governance Policy</i> with judgement applied on the importance and urgency of working on the issue. | ACE Representative assigned to the informal Complaint or Appeal | At RTO Representative's discretion and agreement between parties. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should the party decide not to proceed with either an informal or formal resolution, conclude this phase of the procedure with no further action required. If the party wishes to pursue a formal Complaint or Appeal, then proceed to either Phase 3 or Phase 5 of this procedure. | ACE Representative assigned to the informal Complaint or Appeal | Within 1 Business Day of informal Complaint or Appeal. |

Note: in some instances, this procedural phase may be redundant should the party decide to go straight to **Phase 4** with a lodgement of a formal Complaint or Appeal.

PHASE 3: Inform Party of their rights and process to formalise the Complaint or Appeal.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should the Party decide to raise a formal Complaint or Appeal, direct them to the <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i> and then the <i>Complaint and Appeals Form</i> (published on the website and further contained in the <i>Student Handbook</i>). Request that they complete the form in a timely manner at their discretion and follow the instructions contained in the form. Return the form either in-person, via phone call or by emailing complaints@aceassessments.com.au | ACE Representative assigned to the informal Complaint or Appeal | Immediately or as soon as practicable. |

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PHASE 4: Register Informal Complaint in *Complaints Register*.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Register informal complaints in the <i>Complaints & Appeals Register</i> on the Informal Complaints tab. Transcribe key information regarding the informal complaint. | ACE Representative receiving the complaint | Immediately or as soon as practicable. |

PHASE 5: A Party sends completed *Complaint and Appeals form*.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Check <i>Complaints and Appeals form</i> for legibility and completeness (including any supporting documentation). Should this suffice, proceed to Phase 6. Otherwise, liaise with the party to resolve open issues. | ACE Representative receiving <i>Complaint and Appeals Form</i> . | Immediately or as soon as practicable. |

PHASE 6: Register Complaint in *Complaints Register* and prepare *Acknowledgement letter*.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Register the Complaint in the <i>Complaints Register</i> by transcribing key information at this stage of the process and obtain a Complaints Reference Number.Pre-populate the <i>Complaint and Appeals Acknowledgement letter</i> with the specifics of the matter and include the corresponding Complaints Reference Number obtained from the <i>Complaints Register</i>.Provide a copy of the <i>Complaint and Appeals form (and any supporting documents)</i> and the pre-prepared <i>Complaint and Appeals Acknowledgement letter</i> for the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO's review, approval, and signature to release the letter to the party. The Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO to assign the matter to appropriate Representative and provide any initial procedural guidance. | ACE Representative receiving <i>Complaint and Appeals Form</i> | Immediately or as soon as practicable. |

PHASE 7: Send Party the *Acknowledgement letter*.

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|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Send Party the <i>Complaint and Appeals Acknowledgement letter</i>. <p>Note: This can be done electronically via email if the attachment is a pdf or via post.</p> | ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | Within two business days of receipt of completed form. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Update the Complaint in the <i>Complaints Register</i> with the date of the acknowledgement letter and ACE Training Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO. | ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | Within two business days of receipt of completed form. |

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PHASE 8: Investigate the matter and obtain supporting documentation and necessary evidence as required.

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|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACE Training's Representative assigned to investigate the Complaint or Appeal, ensuring:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ All parties involved with the complaint or appeal are informed and liaised with ensuring that they feel safe and treated fairly with minimum disruption to current training services (where possible);○ The investigation is conducted procedurally upholding all principles outlined by paragraph (a) in the <i>Complaint and Appeals Policy</i>;○ Supporting evidence is gathered whereas appropriate.○ The merits of independent external management of the complaint are assessed; and○ Adequate discernment of all facts of the matter to conclude a proposed path to resolution, including any associated recommended actions. | ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | At ACE Training's discretion but before 30 calendar days from receipt of the <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> . |
|---|---|---|

PHASE 9: Keep Complainant informed as required.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• During the investigation, ensure that the complainant and any other parties are regularly updated at your discretion, within the parameters outlined within the <i>Complaints and Appeals Policy</i>. If the investigation takes more than 60 calendar days to resolve, written notification is provided to the Claimant outlining clear reasons for the nominated timeframe. <p>When providing updates, ensure that you do not volunteer your opinion or make any representations on the outcome, stick to procedural updates. Should ACE Training decide to provide an update in written form, use the <i>Student Complaint and Appeals Acknowledgement letter</i> template and provide the letter for the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO's review, approval, and signature prior to release to the Party.</p> | ACE Representative assigned by CEO to matter | At ACE Training's discretion but before 30 calendar days from receipt of the <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> . |

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PHASE 10: Contact the relevant regulatory body or authority if applicable.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">At the conclusion of the investigation, if a serious offence or breach of law, legislation or regulatory requirements has been committed, the relevant authority or regulatory body must be advised immediately. | ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | As soon as the investigation has identified the offence or breach has occurred. |

PHASE 11: Propose a path to resolution and obtain CEO approval to proceed.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">At the conclusion of the investigation, present the facts of the matter and make a considered recommendation for a path to resolution for the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO's approval. Should the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO concur with your recommendation, proceed to Phase 12 of this procedure; otherwise, take the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO's instruction for any remediation required. <p>Note: the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO is ultimately responsible for the management of Complaints, and as such, this procedure should not proceed further without this approval. There will be instances where 'no further action required' is the conclusion of the investigation.</p> | ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | At ACE Training's discretion but before 30 calendar days from receipt of the <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> . |

PHASE 12: Conduct any necessary steps to resolve Complaint.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Action any corresponding actions that result from the approved recommendation from Phase 9 of this procedure. In conclusion, update the complaint record in the <i>Complaints Register</i>. | ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | At ACE Training's discretion but before 30 calendar days from receipt of the <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> . |

PHASE 13: Prepare and send letter to Complainant outlining ACE Training's actions to resolve and close issue.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Use the <i>Complaints and Appeals Acknowledgement Letter</i> Template to generate a letter to notify the complainant of ACE Training's actions (if any) to resolve and close issue. Provide letter for the CEO's review, approval, and signature to release letter to party. Send the letter to the Complainant. Update the complaint records in the <i>Complaints Register</i>. Proceed to Phase 16 if and as applicable. | ACE Representative Assigned by CEO to matter | At ACE Training's discretion but before 30 calendar days from receipt of the <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> . |

Note: This procedure document can conclude for Complaints after this **phase**, however, should a party elect to Appeal the resolution by ACE Training, then follow the remainder of this procedure document.

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PHASE 14: Party elects to Appeal the Complaint and sends another completed *Complaint and Appeals form*.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Check <i>Complaints and Appeals form</i> for legibility and completeness (including any supporting documentation). Should this suffice, proceed to Phase 15, otherwise liaise with the party to resolve open issues. | ACE Representative receiving Form | Immediately or as soon as practicable. |

PHASE 15: Repeat PHASES 6 to 13 of this Procedure using the Appeals Register instead.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|--|------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">ACE Training's approach to assessing, investigating, and resolving a complaint does not differ from an appeal lodged against a former complaint. Therefore, repeat PHASES 6 to 13 outlined in this procedure document, with the only exception being the utilisation of the <i>Appeals Register</i> rather than the <i>Complaints Register</i>. | Refer to PHASES 6 to 13 above for respective accountabilities and expected timelines. | |

STEP 16: Should any Complaint or Appeal have the potential for reoccurrence, then register it in the *Continuous Improvement Register* and action agreed activities as prioritised.

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Apply judgement necessary to determine if there is any merit in a solution that might reduce the risk of a reoccurrence and if so, register this in the <i>Continuous Improvement Register</i>. | ACE Representative Assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO | Registered within one business day on the resolution of the formal Complaint or Appeal. |

STEP 17: Referral for external mediation

| Procedural Step | Accountability | When |
|---|----------------|---------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the decision, they may wish to seek legal advice or submit an application with an external dispute resolution process by a relevant body appointed at their own cost. <p>The Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV) is a free dispute resolution and mediation service funded by the Victorian Government. It may be able to assist or resolve any outstanding complaint or issue with the complaint handling process. Further details and office locations for this service are available from http://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Organisation: Disputes Settlement Centre of Victoria Contact Point: Melbourne Office Level 4, 456 Lonsdale Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Tel: 1300 372 888</p> | Appellant | At their sole discretion. |

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