

Complaints and Appeals Procedures

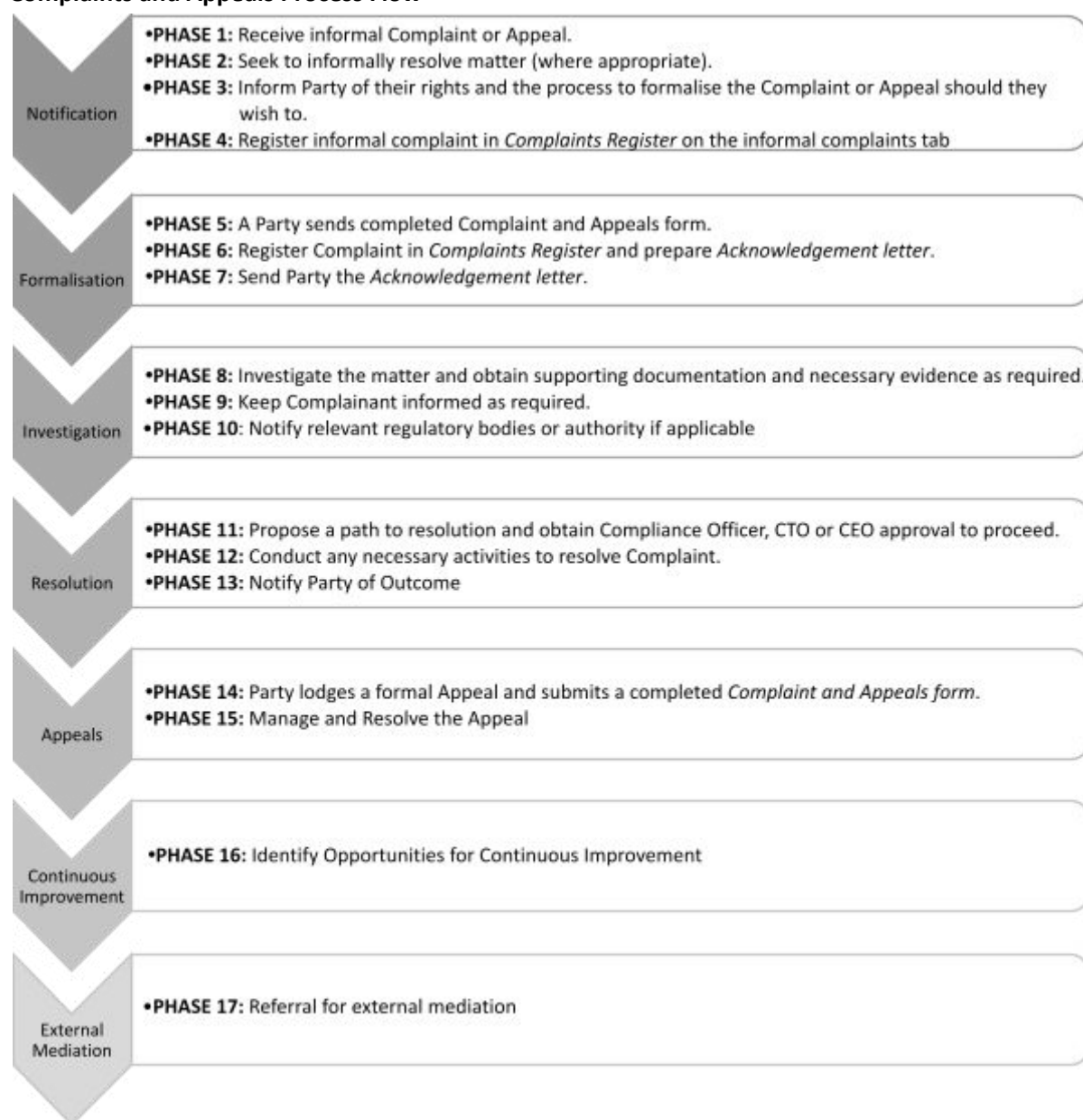
P & N Thomas Pty Ltd t/a ACE Training – RTO: 21716



Purpose:	The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that ACE Training manages Complaints and Appeals in accordance with the principles outlined in 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 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
1.1 A party refers a Complaint or Appeal matter to an ACE Training representative informally either in-person, via phone call or by emailing complaints@aceassessment.com.au	Complainant or Appellant	At their sole discretion.
1.2 ACE Training's representative receiving the informal Complaint or Appeal must: ○ 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 or appeal; ○ 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. ○ The ACE Training representative receiving an informal complaint must notify their direct Manager as soon as practicable to ensure the complaint is appropriately recorded and managed.	ACE Representative receiving Complaint or Appeal	Immediately if via phone, or, for all other methods, within one business day of informal Complaint or Appeal.
1.3 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 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 5** 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
2.1 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.
2.2 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 the 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>Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement 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.
2.3 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 Phase 3 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 5** 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
3.1 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 or by emailing complaints@aceassessment.com.au	ACE Representative assigned to the informal Complaint or Appeal	Immediately or as soon as practicable.

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

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
4.1 The ACE Training representative receiving the informal complaint must notify their direct Manager of the complaint. The Manager is responsible for recording the informal complaint in the <i>Complaints & Appeals Register</i> on the Informal Complaints tab, including the key details of the matter.	ACE Representative receiving the complaint and their direct Manager	Immediately or as soon as practicable.

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

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
5.1 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
6.1 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.	ACE Representative receiving <i>Complaint and Appeals Form</i>	Immediately or as soon as practicable.
6.2 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> .		
6.3 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.		

PHASE 7: Send Party the *Acknowledgement letter*.

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
7.1 Send Party the <i>Complaint and Appeals Acknowledgement letter</i> . Note: This can be done electronically via email if the attachment is a pdf or via post.	ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO	Within two business days of receipt of completed form.
7.2 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.

8.1 ACE Training's Representative assigned to investigate the Complaint or Appeal, ensuring: ○ 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 where 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	As soon as practicable, with the aim of resolving the complaint or appeal within 30 calendar days from receipt of the completed <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i>.
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PHASE 9: Keep Complainant informed as required.

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
9.1 During the investigation, ensure the complainant/appellant and any other relevant parties are provided with appropriate updates on the progress of the matter. Where the complaint or appeal cannot be resolved within 30 calendar days, the complainant/appellant must be advised of the delay, including the reasons for the delay, and provided with regular progress updates until the matter is resolved. When providing updates, ensure that you do not volunteer your opinion or make any representations on the outcome, stick to procedural updates. Where a progress update is provided in writing, the correspondence must be reviewed and approved by the Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO prior to release to the Party.	ACE Representative assigned by CEO to matter	As soon as practicable, with the aim of resolving the matter within 30 calendar days from receipt of the completed <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i>.

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

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
10.1 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.

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

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
11.1 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. 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.	ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO	As soon as practicable, with the aim of resolving the matter within 30 calendar days from receipt of the completed <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> .

PHASE 12: Conduct any necessary steps to resolve the complaint.

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
12.1 Action any corresponding actions that result from the approved recommendation from Phase 11 of this procedure. In conclusion, update the complaint record in the <i>Complaints Register</i>.	ACE Representative assigned by Compliance Officer, CTO or CEO	As soon as practicable, with the aim of resolving the matter within 30 calendar days from receipt of the completed <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i> .

PHASE 13: Notify Party of Outcome

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
13.1 Prepare a letter or email to notify the complainant or appellant of ACE Training's decision, including any actions taken to resolve and close the matter. Provide the correspondence to the CEO for review and approval prior to release to the Party. Send the approved correspondence to the complainant or appellant and update the relevant record in the <i>Complaints & Appeals Register</i>. Proceed to Phase 16 if applicable.	ACE Representative Assigned by CEO to matter	As soon as practicable, with the aim of resolving the matter within 30 calendar days from receipt of the completed <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 lodges a formal Appeal and submits a completed *Complaints and Appeals Form*.

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
14.1 Where a Party wishes to appeal a decision made by ACE Training, including a decision relating to course admission, refund assessment, a Complaint outcome, or a training and assessment outcome, they must complete and submit the <i>Complaints and Appeals Form</i>. Check the completed form for legibility and completeness, including any supporting documentation. If complete, proceed to Phase 15. Where further information is required, liaise with the Party to obtain the necessary information.	ACE Representative receiving Form	Immediately or as soon as practicable.

PHASE 15: Manage and resolve the Appeal

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
15.1 ACE Training's approach to acknowledging, assessing, investigating and resolving an Appeal will follow Phases 6 to 13 of this Procedure, with the Appeals Register used in place of the Complaints Register. The nature of the Appeal and the decision being reviewed must be considered when determining the appropriate investigation and resolution process.	Refer to Phases 6 to 13 above for respective accountabilities and expected timelines.	

PHASE 16: Identify Opportunities for Continuous Improvement

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
16.1 Apply judgement necessary to determine if there is any merit in a solution that might reduce the risk of a recurrence 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.

PHASE 17: Referral for external mediation

Procedural Step	Accountability	When
17.1 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. 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/ Organisation: Disputes Settlement Centre of Victoria Contact Point: Melbourne Office Level 4, 456 Lonsdale Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Tel: 1300 372 888	Appellant	At their sole discretion.

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