



Feedback, Complaints & Appeals Policy & Procedure

Background

This Policy and Procedure outlines Camden Haven Community College's commitment to effectively manage and proactively learn from feedback, complaints, and appeals. It ensures compliance with the **Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025**, which emphasise a focus on quality outcomes, continuous improvement, and robust student support.

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction with the services, conduct, or operations of Camden Haven Community College, its trainers, assessors or other staff.

An **appeal** is a request for a review of a decision made by Camden Haven Community College (e.g., an assessment outcome, an enrolment decision, or a decision made in response to a complaint), where that decision adversely affects the learner.

Feedback is information, comments, suggestions or observations provided about the services, training, assessment, support, facilities or operations of the College. Feedback may be positive or constructive and is used to recognise good practice, identify opportunities for improvement, and inform continuous improvement activities.

Complaint – expresses dissatisfaction.

Appeal – seeks review of a decision.

Feedback – provides comments, suggestions or observations to support improvement, whether positive or constructive.

Policy Statement

Camden Haven Community College is committed to fostering a culture of quality, transparency, and continuous improvement by actively encouraging, receiving, responding to, and learning from feedback, complaints, and appeals. We recognise that stakeholder input is essential to maintaining high-quality training and assessment, supporting positive learner experiences, and continually improving our services and operations.

We will:

- **Promote Open Feedback:** Actively encourage and value feedback, including compliments, suggestions, complaints, and appeals, as important mechanisms for recognising good practice, identifying opportunities for improvement, and enhancing the quality of our training, assessment, learner support, and organisational services.
- **Encourage Feedback from Multiple Sources:** Welcome feedback from learners, prospective learners, employers, staff, trainers, assessors, contractors, work placement hosts, and other stakeholders. Feedback may be received through a variety of channels, including face to face discussions, emails, telephone conversations, student and employer surveys, evaluation forms, meetings, social media, suggestion boxes, online forms, and other communication methods.
- **Respond to Feedback Appropriately:** Acknowledge and consider all feedback in a timely and respectful manner. Positive feedback will be shared and recognised where appropriate, while constructive feedback will be reviewed to identify opportunities for improvement. Where feedback identifies a significant concern or dissatisfaction, it may be managed as a complaint with the consent of the person providing the feedback, or where necessary to address a serious issue.
- **Fair and Impartial Processes:** Ensure all complaints and appeals are handled fairly, objectively, confidentially, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. This means all parties are informed of allegations or reasons for decisions, have an opportunity to present their case, and decisions are made by an impartial person.
- **Accessibility and Transparency:** Make our feedback, complaint, and appeal processes clear, easy to understand, and readily accessible to all prospective and current students, staff, employers, and

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relevant third parties through our website, Student Handbook, enrolment information, and at points of service.

- **Prompt Resolution:** Respond to and manage feedback, complaints, and appeals as quickly as practicable, acknowledging receipt within established timeframes and providing regular updates where resolution requires additional time.
- **No Cost to Customers:** Handle internal complaints and appeals processes at no direct charge to the complainant or appellant. Feedback may be provided at any time without cost or disadvantage.
- **Protection from Disadvantage:** Ensure that no person is disadvantaged, discriminated against, or subject to adverse treatment because they have provided feedback, made a complaint, or lodged an appeal in good faith.
- **Skilled Personnel:** Ensure all staff involved in receiving or managing feedback, complaints, and appeals receive appropriate training to respond professionally, consistently, impartially, and in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.
- **Strategic Use of Feedback:** Analyse feedback, complaints, appeals, survey results, compliments, and other stakeholder input to identify trends, recognise good practice, investigate root causes of issues, address systemic and recurring problems, and inform evidence-based continuous improvement across all aspects of our operations.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Record and monitor actions arising from feedback, complaints, and appeals through the Continuous Improvement Register or other appropriate quality assurance systems. The effectiveness of implemented improvements will be reviewed to ensure intended outcomes have been achieved.
- **Leadership Accountability:** Maintain leadership accountability for the effectiveness of our feedback, complaints, and appeals management system, ensuring information gathered is regularly reviewed by management and used to improve learner outcomes, service quality, compliance, and organisational performance.

Feedback Procedure

1. Receiving Feedback

CHCC welcomes feedback from learners, prospective learners, employers, staff, trainers, assessors, contractors and other stakeholders. Feedback may be received through multiple channels including face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, emails, student and employer surveys, evaluation forms, meetings, suggestion boxes, online forms, social media and other communication methods.

2. Responding to Feedback

Staff should:

- thank the person for their feedback and clarify any issues if required
- respond where appropriate
- forward feedback to the relevant manager if it identifies an improvement opportunity.
- Positive feedback should be shared with the relevant staff member(s) and recognised where appropriate.

3. Recording Feedback

Routine feedback that is immediately addressed does not require formal recording. Feedback that identifies one or more of the following should be recorded in the Feedback Register and considered through the College's

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continuous improvement processes. Records will be retained in accordance with CHCC's Records Management Policy:

- recurring issues
- risks or non-compliance
- improvement opportunities
- significant compliments

4. Escalation to a Complaint

Feedback will be managed as a complaint where:

- the person requests a formal investigation;
- the feedback expresses dissatisfaction requiring a formal response;
- the matter alleges misconduct, discrimination, bullying or other serious behaviour;
- the issue presents a risk to learners, staff or compliance; or
- CHCC determines that a formal investigation is required.

Where feedback is escalated to a complaint, the person providing the feedback will be advised that the matter will be managed in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

Complaints and Appeals Procedure

1. Lodgement and Initial Acknowledgement

- **Channels:** Complaints and appeals can be lodged informally (e.g., verbally with the person involved) or formally in writing (e.g., via email, dedicated form, or letter). We provide multiple mechanisms for students to lodge appeals about decisions (e.g., in-person, telephone, email).
- **Acknowledgement:** All formal complaints and requests for an appeal will be acknowledged in writing within **five (5) business days** of receipt. This acknowledgement will outline the next steps in the process.

2. Informal Resolution (where appropriate)

- Where appropriate, concerns should first be addressed informally with the person or area most closely involved. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, is of a serious nature, or the complainant requests a formal investigation, the matter will proceed immediately to the formal complaints process.

3. Formal Review and Investigation (internal process)

- If the issue cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant/appellant prefers to proceed directly to a formal process, the matter will be referred promptly to the **Manager**.
- The Manager, or a delegated Program Manager or other suitable impartial person, will conduct a thorough investigation, gathering all relevant information and providing all parties involved with an opportunity to present their case.
- **Decision and Communication:** A decision will be made based on objective evidence and communicated in writing to the complainant/appellant, including the reasons for the outcome.

4. Timelines for Resolution

- All complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable, and **no later than 30 calendar days** from the date the formal complaint or appeal was first received.
- Should the resolution of a complaint or appeal require **more than 30 calendar days**, the complainant or appellant will be informed in writing, detailing the reasons for the delay, and will receive regular updates on the progress of the matter.

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5. Internal Escalation (Committee Review)

- If the complainant/appellant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the initial formal review by the Manager, they may request an internal appeal to the governing body, the Committee.
- The complainant/appellant must submit their appeal in writing to the President of the Committee, addressed to the College, to be passed on by the Manager.
- The President will acknowledge receipt in writing and advise that the issue will be brought to the next Camden Haven Community College Inc Committee meeting.
- The Committee will consider the written appeal at its first meeting after receipt.
- The President will notify the complainant/appellant in writing of the Committee's decision regarding the appeal, including the reasons for the decision.

6. Independent Review (External Appeal)

- If, after exhausting Camden Haven Community College's internal complaints and appeals processes, the complaint/appeal remains unresolved to the satisfaction of the complainant/appellant, they may request a review by an appropriate **independent party**.
- This independent person or panel will have proven mediation/negotiation skills and/or industry expertise.
- Camden Haven Community College will advise the complainant/appellant of suitable independent bodies and outline any associated costs. While CHCC covers the costs of its internal processes, the cost of an external independent review will typically be borne by the complainant/appellant, unless otherwise determined by CHCC based on the circumstances of the case and its commitment to fairness.
- The RTO will fully cooperate with any independent review process.

7. Record Keeping and Continuous Improvement

- All complaints, appeals, their investigations, outcomes, and any corrective actions taken will be securely recorded in a dedicated complaints and appeals register/system. These records will be maintained for a minimum of seven (7) years.
- Records will include details of the resolution and the reasons for the outcome.
- Regular reviews of complaint and appeal data will be conducted by management and the governing body to identify trends, root causes, and opportunities for continuous improvement in our policies, procedures, training, and support services. This informs our self-assurance model.

External Avenues for Complaints and Appeals (Smart & Skilled and General)

If a complainant or appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of Camden Haven Community College's internal complaints and appeals processes, they may pursue the matter with external bodies:

- **For Smart and Skilled Funded Training:** Complaints related to Smart and Skilled training, fees, or consumer protection can be lodged directly with **Training Services NSW** via their official channels <https://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/students-and-job-seekers/support-to-help-with-your-studies/smart-and-skilled-consumer-protection#Who1>. CHCC will always provide information on how to contact Training Services NSW for Smart and Skilled related complaints.
- **For General RTO Compliance:** Concerns relating to CHCC's compliance with the **Standards for RTOs 2025** may be lodged with the national VET regulator, the **Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)**.
- **Other Mediation Services:** Students may also explore independent mediation services, such as a local Community Justice Centre or other relevant consumer protection bodies, for further resolution.

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