

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES (ACADEMIC & NON-ACADEMIC)

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Student/s refers to all persons enrolled with Forsythes Training, including persons enrolled in an approved course under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016*. For the purposes of non-academic grievances the term Student also refers to a person seeking to enrol with Forsythes Training.

Complainant refers to Students (as defined above) who have lodged a grievance with Forsythes Training.

1. Overview

Forsythes Training Pty Limited (Forsythes Training) is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling procedure for all Students. This policy covers both academic and non-academic grievances and appeals.

Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards for a course.

Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards for a course and include grievances in relation to personal information that the provider holds in relation to the Student as well as enrolment in a course. Non-academic grievances tend to arise from events occurring at a provider or from decisions made by a provider.

Complainants are entitled to access the grievance procedures regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the Complainant's place of residence or mode of study.

This policy does not replace or modify policies or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Also, the dispute resolution procedures outlined below in this document do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

If a Student chooses to access this grievance handling procedure, Forsythes Training will maintain the Student's enrolment while the grievance and appeals process is ongoing.

2. Responsibility

The Director is responsible for implementation of this policy and procedure and ensuring that all staff are fully trained in its operation during staff induction and Students and Complainants are made aware of its availability through student orientation and our website.

3. General principles

These principles, which will be adhered to by Forsythes Training, apply to all stages of this grievance procedure:

- Forsythes Training will ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the grievance and appeals process.
- The Complainant and any respondent will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the grievance and appeals procedure.

- The Complainant and any respondent have the option of being accompanied/assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) at their own cost if they so desire.
- The Complainant and any respondent will not be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the Complainant and/or any respondent if requested.
- Records of all grievances will be kept for a period of at least five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and stored at Forsythes Training, 9 Denison Street, Newcastle West. Access to these records may be requested by parties who have used this procedure by writing to the Director at the aforementioned address.
- A Complainant shall have access to these grievance procedures at no cost.
- Forsythes Training will analyse all grievances and appeals to determine any underlying causes and take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.
- Forsythes Training will ensure that all decisions arising from the grievance procedure are fully implemented.

4. Informal Grievance Procedure

Students are encouraged initially to attempt to resolve a grievance informally by talking directly with the person concerned to resolve the problem. This step is not mandatory and a Student may proceed directly to the Formal Grievance Procedure.

5. Formal Grievance Procedure

5.1 Stage One

Formal grievances should be submitted in writing to the Compliance Manager at Forsythes Training, Locked Bag 2050, Newcastle.

The Compliance Manager will notify the Complainant of receipt of the grievance within 5 working days.

The Compliance Manager will then assess the grievance, determine the outcome and advise the Complainant in writing of their decision, including reasons for the decision within 20 working days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to access Stage Two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

5.2 Stage Two

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal in writing with the Director at Forsythes Training, Locked Bag 2050, Newcastle. The Director will notify the Complainant of receipt of the appeal within 5 working days.

The Complainant's appeal will be determined by the Director who will conduct all necessary consultations with the Complainant and other relevant persons and make a determination of the appeal. The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision within 20 working days.

The Complainant will be advised of their right to progress to Stage Three of the grievance procedure if they consider the matter unresolved.

5.3 Stage Three

Domestic students:

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal then an independent mediator can be requested to review the decision through the Resolution Institute. Complainants can contact the Resolution Institute directly as follows:

Address: Level 1, 13-15 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: 02 9251 3366 **Freecall:** 1800 651 650
Fax: 02 9251 3733 **Email:** leadr@leadr.info

Costs of such mediation will be borne by Forsythes Training.

The Complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of the external review, including the reasons for the decision on review within 20 working days.

Forsythes Training will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review of the grievance within 30 days of receipt of the recommendations and the Director will ensure that they are fully implemented.

5.4 Further action:

If the Complainant has been through all stages of this grievance handling process and remains unsatisfied with the outcome of their grievance, then they may:

- contact the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73 (Monday–Friday, 8am to 6pm nationally) or by email: skilling@education.gov.au
- contact the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). For contact details and information please see: www.asqa.gov.au.

6. Publication

This *Student Grievance Policy and Procedures (Academic and Non-academic)* will be made available to students and those seeking to enrol with Forsythes Training through publication on the website: www.forsythestraining.com.au/studentresources.aspx.