

# Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

## Purpose

This policy and procedure is to provide clear and practical guidelines to ensure that complaints and appeals of students can be resolved in accordance with the principles of equitably and efficiently.

## Scope

This complaints and appeals policy applies to all students enrolled with 3Bridges Community RTO 41056.

## Definitions

**Complaints and Appeals** include but are not restricted to matters of concern to a student relating to training delivery and assessment; the quality of the training; student support and materials and discrimination.

3Bridges Community applies procedural fairness by ensuring:

- Decisions are free from bias
- All parties have the right to be heard
- The respondent has a right to know of what s/he is accused
- All parties are told the decision and the reasons for the decision

## Policy

3Bridges Community believes that a student, who has a complaint or appeal, has the right to raise the complaint or appeal and expect that every effort will be made to resolve it in accordance with this policy, without prejudice or fear of reprisal or victimisation.

The student has the right to present the complaint or appeal in writing.

3Bridges Community will manage all complaints and appeals fairly, equitably and efficiently as possible. 3Bridges Community will encourage the parties to approach the complaint or appeal with an open mind and to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation. Where a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, 3Bridges Community acknowledges the need for an appropriate external and independent person to mediate between the parties. The parties will be given the opportunity to formally present their case to the independent person.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process of making and resolving complaints. 3Bridges Community seeks to protect the rights and privacy of all involved and to facilitate the return to a comfortable and productive learning environment.

A copy of this Policy is publicly available to all students and staff via the 3Bridges Community website and is available in the Student Handbook together with details of external authorities that they may approach.

## Procedure

Should a student have a complaint or appeal, the following steps are to be followed:

1. Student should discuss the issue / complaint with the person involved to try and resolve it verbally.
2. If no resolution is reached, the student should discuss the issue / complaint with his / her trainer/assessor to see if it can be resolved.
3. If still no resolution and the student wishes to formalise the issue and take the matter further they should put the relevant information relating to the complaint or appeal in writing using the appropriate form/s which are attached.
4. Complaints cannot be anonymous because this is considered unfair as ongoing discussion cannot take place to resolve the issue between all parties
5. The student brings the complaint or appeal form to the attention of their trainer, email it to [training@3bridges.org.au](mailto:training@3bridges.org.au) or the Coordinator, Education and Training.
6. 3Bridges will ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness is adopted at every stage of the complaint and if required the appeal process. In the interests of transparency, the matter will be discussed with all parties involved
7. Information submitted to a trainer or any staff member is treated with respect and taken as an opportunity to improve the organisation's practices and Management System. Privacy requirements and student / individual rights are maintained
8. Where a meeting is required via skype, telephone or in person, the complainant has the right to bring a support person to be present (someone to assist or speak for them) with them to the meeting as well as to assist during the complaint and appeals process. 3Bridges will record notes of the meeting/s and copies will be provided to the complainant.
9. The complaint or appeal will be addressed and the student notified in writing stating the outcomes and reasons for the decisions made within 30 days of the form being received.

10. If the complaint or appeal is not dealt with to the student's satisfaction, s/he may bring it to the attention of the Director of Finance. The Director of Finance will either deal with the issue personally or arrange for it to be dealt with by a management representative. This process must commence within 5 days from the time the Director of Finance receives written notification from the student about their dissatisfaction to the response received from their trainer and a response / resolution must be presented within 30 days but may take up to 60 days.
11. Should the issue still not be resolved to the student's satisfaction, the 3Bridges Community will make arrangements for an independent third party to resolve the issue and outline any costs that may be involved with this to the student. Note that the losing party will incur the cost of using the services of the independent third party. The student will be given the opportunity to formally present his or her case. The time frame for this process may vary but should take no longer than 30 days.
12. All parties involved will receive a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision within the 30 day period. If the process is taking longer than 60 days from the complaint or appeal being received the student will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and kept informed about all progress.
13. If the student is still not happy with external mediation, he / she may take his / her complaint to the VET Regulator; Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), 1300 701 801
14. All documentation relating to complaints or appeals should be archived for audit purposes.
15. To limit the likelihood of a similar complaint being made again in the future, the raised issue may result in a continuous improvement process triggering a change being made to the policies and procedures manual, the staff handbook and the student handbook as these are the mechanisms of control. Documents will be changed and all stakeholders will be kept in the loop until the final; documented change has been completed and implemented.
16. The complaints process will be subject to internal audit and to annual review

The 3Bridges Community Coordinator, Education and Training will be person responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy.

Appendix 1

## Assessment Appeal Form

**Part One – Lodgment of Appeal**

**Name of Candidate:**

**Contact Details:**

**Name of Course/Qualification:**

**Name of Assessor(s):**

**Assessment Date:**     .../.../ ...

Units of Competency – UNDER APPEAL	REASONS FOR APPEAL

- I have read and understood the information about lodging an appeal under 3Bridges’s Appeals Policy
- I have discussed this appeal with the assessor.
- I have discussed the appeal with the RTO Compliance, Training and Development Coordinator.

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ to act as “support person” in my appeal.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: .../.../ ...

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Received by ..... Date: .../.../ ...  
 (RTO Compliance, Training and Development Coordinator)

Due date for decision .../.../ ...

Student notified of outcome .../.../ ...

## Appendix 2 - Complaint Form

By completing this form you will be lodging a formal complaint.

We thank you for taking the time to notify us of your concern. We value your feedback and hope to be able to resolve your complaint as soon as possible.

A reply will be forwarded to you within 30 days.

Date	
Name	
Contact Numbers	
Please detail your concern in full, giving as much detail as possible	
Signature	

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Received by		Complaints Number Issued	
Date		Complaint form given to	
Date Issued		Follow up Date	
Action Taken			
Specify possible improvement based on complaint			

## Appendix 3

### Appeal Form

#### Part One – Lodgment of Appeal

Name of Candidate:

Contact Details:

Name of Course/Qualification:

Name of person spoken to from the 3Bridges Education & Training Team:

Decision under Appeal	REASON FOR APPEAL

- I have read and understood the information about lodging an appeal under 3Bridges’s Appeals Policy
- I have discussed this appeal with the 3Bridges Education and Training team.
- I have read the 3Bridges Student Handbook.

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ to act as “support person” in my appeal.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: ....../....../ ....

#### OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by ..... Date: ....../....../ ....  
 (RTO Compliance, Training and Development Coordinator)

Due date for decision ....../....../ ....

Student notified of outcome ....../....../ ....