



Complaints and appeals

Policy

This policy outlines the commitment of Guild Training to providing learners with the best possible learning opportunities and at the same time acknowledging the principles of continuous improvement. Guild Training recognises that from time to time there may be reason for some dissatisfaction and welcomes feedback as an opportunity to review and improve the practices of Guild Training. Guild Training acknowledges that members, course participants and staff have a right to raise concerns and have them addressed promptly and appropriately.

Guild Training will deal with client complaints and appeals constructively and promptly and maintain written records of each matter and its outcomes. All learners and staff have the right to be heard and the right to an impartial decision, which will be free of charge. Complaints will be considered in a transparent and unbiased manner. Complainants have the right to appeal a decision.

A complaint or appeal may include, but is not exhaustive, the following:

- Course advice and enrolment
- Assessment and assessment decisions
- Suspension and/or cancellation of enrolment
- Training delivery
- Marketing and promotional material
- Personal safety
- Customer service and administration
- Learner progress and academic progress decisions
- Issue of results, certificates and/or statements of attainment
- Training and assessment resources
- Fees and charges
- Equity and access, discrimination, harassment and bullying

This policy and procedure has been developed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia as an all-inclusive document for delivery of training and assessment services in the state/territory Branches and should be read in conjunction with the individual state/territory Branch policies and procedures.

Procedure: actions and responsibilities

Action	Responsibility
Despite all efforts of Guild Training to provide excellent services to its learners, complaints may occasionally arise that require formal resolution. The following procedures provide learners with the opportunity to have grievances and appeals resolved and resolutions reached. The principles of procedural fairness shall apply at all stages of the complaint and appeal resolution process. Guild Training will not be affected by bias or conflict of interest and will act fairly and impartially.	National Secretariat State Branches
The policy is freely available to learners and staff. It is published on the Guild Training websites, Training Agreement and Learner Handbook. Written information is provided in the policies and procedures, staff and learner information handbooks. Information regarding complaints is communicated at the time of induction.	
Complaints and appeals may be received internally from staff or learners or externally from stakeholders or members of the public by a variety of means, verbal during a face-to-face meeting or over the telephone, in writing by e-mail or letter or as part of a survey or evaluation document.	National Secretariat State Branches
All complaints and concerns, no matter the format, should be addressed using this procedure. The complaint should be recorded, actioned, and documented. Both the complainant and the Guild staff member need to be informed of the outcome of the complaint.	
Guild Training strives to deal with issues as soon as they emerge with an open view to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation in order to avoid further disruption or the need for a formal complaint. Guild Training will encourage the parties to approach a complaint or appeal with an open view to attempt to resolve problems through discussion and conciliation with an informal approach.	

<p>Learners, workplace supervisors, pharmacist, and other stakeholders who cannot resolve a complaint or appeal through informal means are asked to complete a Complaint Form which is then forwarded to the Training Manager.</p> <p>Once a complaint or appeal is received it is to be entered into the Complaints Register which is monitored by the Training Manager. The information contained within the register is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission date of complaint/appeal • Name of complainant/appeal • Description or nature of the complaint/appeal • Date of the event which lead to the complaint/appeal • Determined resolution • Date of resolution • Attachments (if applicable) <p>If the learner, workplace supervisor, pharmacist or other stakeholder does not wish to complete the Complaint/Appeal Form this can be done the by the Training Manager.</p>	State Branches
<p>The Training Manager and Branch Director will investigate the issue and identify a solution to the problem. A strategy will be outlined to resolve the issues to the satisfaction of the learner, workplace supervisor, pharmacist or other stakeholder.</p> <p>Upon resolution the Training Manager will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the learner or staff member with a written response to their complaint or appeal. • Document the action taken and record the complaint in the Complaint Register. All documentation related to this complaint will be retained by the State Branch. • If necessary the Training Manager will record the complaint in the personnel file of the Guild Training staff member. • If applicable, the issue may result in a change to a policy, procedure, document or process. If this is the case, continuous improvement documentation needs to be maintained to record the change and Guild Training need to be informed of the corrective action. 	State Branches
<p>Should the outcome not be acceptable, the Training Manager will refer the matter to the National Secretariat. The National Secretariat will undertake negotiation with the State Branch and the complainant to identify a solution. If agreement is reached the National Secretariat will follow all documentation, recording and communication requirements as outlined above.</p>	National Secretariat State Branches
<p>Where a complaint cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, Guild Training acknowledges the need for an appropriate external and independent agent to mediate between the parties. Where this is the case, the matter shall be referred to the following person/organisation at no cost to the learner: Australian Mediation Association.</p> <p>The Australian Mediation Association will review the complaint and the subsequent decisions. Each appellant has an opportunity to formally present his/her case and is given a written statement of the appeal outcomes including reasons for the decision.</p> <p>The decision of the Australian Mediation Association is final and any further action the learner wishes to take is outside Guild Training’s policies and procedures. Should the outcome not be acceptable to the learner they will be informed in writing of the opportunity to lodge a complaint with the State Training Authority. Learners are also provided with the option of contacting the National VET Regulator.</p> <p>If agreement is reached the National Secretariat will follow all documentation, recording and communication requirements as outlined above. Where a decision or outcome is in favour of the learner, Guild Training shall follow the required action to satisfy the learner’s grievance as soon as practicable.</p>	National Secretariat State Branches
<p>The outcome of the complaint or appeal should be maintained. Written notes of outcomes, agreements and actions are to be kept at all stages of the process, including the informal state. On completion of a complaint all hard copy records relating to any and every stage of the complaint shall be collated for appropriate filing and storage and maintained for seven (7) years.</p>	National Secretariat State Branches

Any changes to processes or policies should be undertaken and actions documented in the Continuous Improvement Register.	
<p>Guild staff need to be informed about the outcome of a complaint and appeal.</p> <p>No learner or staff member should be subject to any detriment as a result of a complaint being made and/or heard. Complainants and respondents will not be subject to discrimination or harassment resulting from their participation in the complaints process.</p> <p>Learners and staff will observe strict confidentiality when dealing with all stages of the complaint process. All the communications arising from the complaints process, together with the proceedings of the complaint meetings/hearings will remain confidential.</p> <p>Each learner will have the opportunity to formally present his or her case and is given a written statement of the complaint outcomes, including reasons for the decision</p> <p>Complainants and/or respondents have the right to be represented by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person) if they so desire.</p>	National Secretariat State Branches
State Branches will maintain a Complaint/Appeal Register which will allow identification and detail of the complaints/appeals. State Branches will submit their Complaint/Appeal Register to the National Secretariat as part of the annual internal assessment process.	National Secretariat State Branches
<p>The Guild will identify the timeframes that will apply to resolution of complaints and appeals, so that complainants know how long it should take to get a response at all stages of the process. This will minimise the chance of complainants referring their complaint to ASQA, which can incur additional costs.</p> <p>Where the Guild or state Branch considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the Guild will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required, and • Regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter 	National Secretariat State Branches
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia will make our policy/procedure on complaints and appeals publicly available by including them on all websites, both National and state. Staff will review this policy/procedure as part of their annual review.	National Secretariat State Branches
<p>The complaints handling process will be reviewed at least annually, in accordance with the Schedule for Review of Policies at the Training Managers Meeting.</p> <p>Training Managers are responsible for monitoring complaints and complaint registers. Complaint registers will be submitted to the National Secretariat during both internal audit and as part of reporting requirements.</p>	National Secretariat State Branches National Secretariat State Branches

Associated documentation

- Learner handbook
- Staff induction manual
- Access and equity – information sheet
- Training Agreement
- Complaint form
- Complaint register

Related topics

References

Authority

National Training Manager – 24.03.2009

National Training Manager – 15.06.2010

National Training Manager – 29.07.2011

Academy Compliance Manager – 21.10.2013

Academy Compliance Manager – 17.06.2014

Head – Guild Pharmacy Academy – 09.07.2016