

	Reference Number Owner:	15.0 Principal School of Isolated and Distance Education RTO
	Created: Reviewed Date: Next Review:	August 2019 September 2021 September 2023
		Policy 15.0
Complaints		
School of Isolated and Distance Education RTO 52891		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that School of Isolated and Distance Education RTO (**SIDE RTO**) resolves complaints lodged in a prompt and efficient manner. School of Isolated and Distance Education RTO promotes the highest standard of professionalism in dealing with our learners and partners.

***What this really means:** SIDE RTO will deal with your complaint in a professional and respectful way.*

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of SIDE RTO and ensures that staff and executive are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes, complaints lodged.

This policy manages and responds to allegations involving the conduct of:

- a. the RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- b. a third-party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- c. a learner of the RTO.

***What this really means:** At SIDE RTO, we are all involved in the process to make sure we respond and look after your complaint in a quick and professional manner.*

2.1. Explanation

Complaints and Appeals are treated as different processes.

All complaints will follow both Regulator and Department of Education processes.

The Principal of SIDE will be informed immediately of a complaint and outcomes of any investigation.

***What this really means:** SIDE RTO follow a set of rules and we will advise the Principal of SIDE of any complaint results. All complaints are logged in our Complaints Register as per the RTO Standards 2015.*

3. Definitions

Complaint means a person's formal expression of dissatisfaction with any product or service provided by SIDE RTO.

A complaint may be about anything done, or not done by management, personnel or other students which the student feels has been unjust or unfair.

Complaints may be made in relation to any of SIDE RTO's services and activities such as:

- the application and enrolment process
- marketing information
- the quality of training and assessment provided
- training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements
- the way someone has been treated.

***What this really means:** You are able to make a complaint if you are unhappy with any of our services if you feel you are not being treated or herd in manner to which you would expect.*

4. References

4.1. Department of Education Policy – Disputes and Complaints

4.2. SIDE RTO Policy 5.1 – Product Review and Improvement

4.3. SIDE RTO Policy 14 – Records Management

4.4. *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*

Standard 5 Clause 5.1 to 5.4 – Inform and protect learners

Standard 6 Clause 6.1 to 6.6 – Manage complaints and appeals fairly

***What this really means:** These are the policies and Standards that SIDE RTO must follow to meet the requirements of this policy.*

5. Review and Improvement

The RTO Manager will review this policy bi-annually or as appropriate in accordance with the Department of Education.

***What this really means:** SIDE RTO review this policy every 2 years or when a change is required to ensure the policy reflects best practice.*

6. Procedure

6.1. General

SIDE RTO will make every effort to promptly resolve complaints and ensure the lodged complaints are confidential and processed according to the principles of procedural fairness. In all matters, the educational wellbeing of students is the priority.

***What this really means:** We view complaints seriously but in a good way because the outcomes if required, are viewed as continuous improvement. We encourage feedback on all matters both positive and negative.*

6.2. Complaints Process

SIDE RTO is genuinely interested in having complaints resolved at RTO level.

SIDE RTO recognises a learner's right to complain and to have their complaint dealt with seriously and fairly.

Each complainant is to be given the opportunity to present their complaint in person if they wish.

Where the complainant is under the age of 18 years old, the parent/guardian is to be included in all correspondence.

SIDE RTO will provide the complainant written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint within 2 working days.

SIDE RTO will inform the partner school of the complaint through the partner school principal.

SIDE RTO will inform SIDE principal of the lodged complaint.

Following the investigation conducted by an independent person, the outcome is reviewed and approved by SIDE RTO management.

The complainant will be notified of the outcome in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.

Where the RTO considers more than 60 calendar days are required for rectification, the complainant will be provided with regular written updates until the complaint is finalised.

Complaints are monitored, and their management evaluated to reduce the occurrence of systemic and recurring problems.

In all matters, the educational wellbeing of learners is the priority.

***What this really means:** Before putting in a complaint, we encourage students to discuss their problems with SIDE RTO. We treat all complaints seriously and fairly. It may take about 10 working days to respond to you. If your complaint is through a partner school, we will contact the Principal of that school. When an independent person has finished investigating your complaint, they will provide us with a result, and we will work to find a solution within 10 working days. All complaints are recorded in a Complaints Register which is a regulatory requirement.*

6.3. Reporting Complaints

All complaints will be handled in a transparent, objective and unbiased manner and will be kept strictly confidential.

A complaint may be reported by any aggrieved party who a perceived breach affects them in the conduct of the delivery and assessment of a qualification which SIDE RTO is involved. A Complaints Form is available for the complainant to complete or they can email RTO@side.wa.edu.au or phone SIDE RTO to report the matter. Similarly, a complaint made by phone in person or email shall be recorded on this form on behalf of the informing party.

***What this really means:** All complaints are private and confidential. You can either fill out a Complaints Form or make a complaint over the phone. With any complaints that are made by telephone, SIDE RTO will fill out a Complaints Form and keep a record of it in the Complaints Register. Where forms are filled out on behalf of the complainant, a copy will be sent back to ensure interpretation has been correctly recorded.*

6.4. Recording the Complaint

SIDE RTO shall record all complaints on a SIDE RTO Complaints Form and then enter it into the Complaints register.

SIDE RTO will document all verbal and written correspondence pertaining to any complaints. (See SIDE RTO Policy 14.0 – Record Management)

***What this really means:** SIDE RTO will record all complaints on a Complaints Register as part of our Record Keeping Policy and as required by the Regulator.*

6.5. Resolution

SIDE RTO is committed to resolving any complaint to the complainant's satisfaction. The result shall be agreed upon and SIDE RTO will enter all details on to the Complaints Register. Subsequent to this the Complaint, investigation and resolution shall be tabled at the next SIDE RTO Committee meeting and reviewed within next SIDE Executive meeting.

***What this really means:** SIDE RTO will discuss the result of any complaints at SIDE RTO Committee meetings and Executive meetings to help improve training and service.*

6.6. No Resolution

If no resolution has been agreed, the complainant or appellant will be advised of their rights and if appropriate to seek clarification from the regulator. The RTO Manager shall advise the Principal immediately of the complainant's/appellant's position. SIDE RTO will cooperate fully with the regulator and make available all documentation to the when sort. SIDE RTO will abide by any decision made by the regulator of a breach against the Standards.

Learners can be directed to the following agency if they are not satisfied with the RTO's finding:

<https://www.employment.gov.au/national-training-complaints-hotline>

Where SIDE RTO cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant will be further advised they can forward a written complaint to the Director General of the Department of Education and Training.

What this really means: *If you are not happy with the result, you can take it further to the Regulator or you can write a complaint to the Director General of the Department of Education. SIDE RTO will work with the Regulator and give them all the paperwork so they can make an informed decision.*

7. How will this be prevented in the future

Upon completion of the investigation by the RTO of any complaint put to them, SIDE RTO will convey to the relevant personal to look at the processes, procedures or practise which brought about the complaint. This process is intended to discover ways to prevent this occurring again.

The findings of the review will be recorded as continuous improvement on the Continuous Improvement Register and actions taken as deemed necessary, which may or may not include an audit of the trainer, school partner or RTO processes.

What this really means: *SIDE RTO will use the result of any complaint to improve and find solutions, to prevent or at least minimise a recurrence of the situation.*

Version Control			
Version	Date	By who	Brief description
V1	18/09/2019	Glenn Bird	Initial release
V1.1	02/12/2019	Glenn Bird	Amended Complaints and Appeals
V1.2	06/03/2020	Natalie Pyzik	Separated Complaints from Appeals
V1.3	27/03/2020	Jo Gooden	Added generic meanings to content
V1.4	27/10/2020	Claire Hearn	Update to 6.2 to bring into line with process, per J Gooden instructions
V1.4	20/09/2021	Jo Gooden	Changed review to bi-annual