

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Complaints Process

Lennox Institute views resolution of a constructive and valid complaint as a way of improving our organisation. We will adhere to the National Complaints Code to respond to complaints about vocational education and the organisation itself. This means we take action on all validated complaints. Our complaints investigation process will be:

- well publicised and explained
- accessible so you can lodge complaints by phone, electronically or in writing
- fair and protect your rights
- free so you can lodge a complaint without charge
- handled in a manner that protects your privacy
- transparent, equitable, objective and unbiased
- comprehensive so that it effectively resolves a variety of complaints such as student dissatisfaction, assessment outcomes, poor service, fraud, misconduct etc
- implemented effectively and efficiently to ensure complaints are resolved within an acceptable timeframe
- monitored, recorded and reported to the appropriate people
- an input or trigger point to our continuous improvement process.

Lennox Institute will commence the complaints process within 10 working days of a formal lodgement of the complaint and supporting information. All reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

Where verbal complaints regarding vocational education are received, they can be discussed with the Trainer/Assessor and preferably resolved. Complaints about the organisation can be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

If the complaint is not resolved then the complaint is documented by the complainant onto the "Complaints and Appeals Form". Student complaints are submitted to the Training Co-ordinator who advocates on behalf of the student in resolving this complaint.

The Training Co-ordinator liaises with the Chief Executive Officer who advocates on behalf of the organisation. Regardless of this, any complainant has the right to have their version of events heard in the resolution negotiation and have an independent advocate present.

The Training Co-ordinator records the details of a complaint onto an "Improvement Request form" and advises the Chief Executive Officer of the complaint being resolved.

Complaints are investigated fairly and objectively with details of the investigation provided in writing to the complainant. The details will state the outcomes and reasons for the decisions made.

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the matter may be referred to an independent mediator such as the local Community Justice Centre for review. The independent mediator investigates the process of the complaint fairly and objectively and details the investigation in writing for the complainant. The details will state the outcomes and reasons for the decisions made.

The Chief Executive Officer will close out the improvement request when the complaint has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.

A copy of the documentation, in particular the complaint and the outcome, is placed in the student's file, staff file or Continuous Improvement Register as appropriate.

Where the resolution requires a documented change to policies and procedures, the Training Co-ordinator notifies the Chief Executive Officer of the change to ensure that the procedure for document change as listed in Procedure 1.2: "Document Control" is followed with the appropriate records made.

In the event that a complaint is substantiated, Lennox Institute will take prompt and appropriate action to resolve the circumstances.

Complaints cannot be anonymous because this is considered unfair as ongoing discussion cannot take place to resolve the issue between both parties.

Information submitted to a Trainer/Assessor 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.

If the student chooses to access our complaints and appeals processes, Lennox Institute will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.

Appeals Process

Where a student is not happy with the outcome of a complaint the following "appeal of complaint process" is followed.

Step One:

Discuss the appeal of complaint with the Training Co-ordinator. If this does not resolve the matter, or if the Training Co-ordinator is an active respondent to the appeal of complaint, then put the appeal of complaint in writing using the "Complaints and Appeals Form" (available on the website) and submit to the Chief Executive Officer.

Step Two:

The Chief Executive Officer records the Student's dispute on an Improvement Request Form and in the Register of Continuous Improvement and puts written notification on the student's file.

Step Three:

An appellant may deliver their own version of the appeal of complaint to the Chief Executive Officer and request a support person be present.

The Chief Executive Officer will consider the issues raised and attempt to resolve the appeal of complaint to the satisfaction of the appellant. All appeals of complaints that are found to be proven (ie against Lennox Institute) must be acted upon through the continuous improvement process to make systematic changes to prevent the recurrence of this as a problem again.

Step Four:

If the matter is not resolved, the appeal is referred to an independent mediator. The appellant may deliver their own version of the problem and request a support person be present.

NOTE: The function of an independent mediator such as the Community Justice Centre is to review the process of complaint resolution. All expenses attached to such appointment will be incurred by the student.

Step Five:

The submission and the final outcome of the appeal of complaints is recorded and communicated to all parties in writing. The communication must contain the outcome of the appeal of complaint and the reasons for the decisions made. A copy of the communication is placed in the student file.

No further appeal mechanism exists beyond this point in the process.

Please note the following:

- Where the resolution requires a documented change to policies and procedures, such changes will be made in accordance with the procedure for document change including the appropriate records made
- In the event that a complaint is substantiated, Lennox Institute will take prompt and appropriate action to resolve the circumstances
- At each step of the complaints and appeals process Lennox Institute will allow you to make representation either orally or in writing prior to reaching a decision. We also allow you to employ an independent person or panel to hear the appeal
- If you have complaints that do not directly concern Lennox Institute but may affect your ability to achieve competency, we will refer you to appropriate external support groups for assistance.

Assessment Appeals Process

Lennox Institute maintains a supportive and fair environment, which allows training participants to appeal their assessments or recognition decisions. Ideally appeals will be lodged within one week of being notified of the assessment decision or within 4 weeks of the assessment date, whichever is longer. The appeals process will commence within 10 working days of the formal lodgement of the appeal and supporting information. All reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

Appeals are ideally resolved as amicably as possible using this formal appeal process.

We will adhere to the National Complaints Code to respond to appeals of assessment about vocational education. This means that our appeals process will be:

- well publicised and explained
- accessible so you can lodge complaints by phone, electronically or in writing
- fair and protect your rights
- free so you can lodge a complaint without charge
- handled in a manner that protects your privacy
- transparent, equitable, objective and unbiased
- comprehensive so that it effectively resolves a variety of complaints such as student dissatisfaction, assessment outcomes, poor service, fraud, misconduct etc
- implemented effectively and efficiently to ensure complaints are resolved within an acceptable timeframe
- monitored, recorded and reported to the appropriate people
- an input or trigger point to our continuous improvement process.

Students must in the first instance discuss the assessment outcomes with the relevant Trainer/Assessor.

If this does not resolve the matter, or if the Trainer/Assessor is an active respondent to the appeal, then the appeal is put in writing using “Complaints and Appeals Form” (available on the website) and submitted to the Training Co-ordinator.

The Training Co-ordinator records the Student’s dispute on an Improvement Request Form and the dispute is recorded in the Forms Register by the Training Co-ordinator with written notification included on the student’s file.

The Training Co-ordinator assembles the following information or documents for the appeal:

- past student record
- attendance registers
- assessment tools and assessment data
- any other supporting documents.

The appellant may deliver their own version of the problem to the Training Co-ordinator and request a support person be present.

The Training Co-ordinator should consider the issues raised and attempt to resolve the appeal to the satisfaction of the appellant. All appeals that are found to be proven (ie against Lennox Institute) must be acted upon through the continuous improvement process to make systematic changes to prevent the recurrence of this as a problem again.

If this does not resolve the matter, the appeal may be heard by the Chief Executive Officer. The appellant may deliver their own version of the problem and request a support person be present.

NOTE: If the Chief Executive Officer is deemed unacceptable to the Student, the local Community Justice Centre may be used.

The submission and the final outcome of the appeal is recorded and communicated to all parties in writing. The communication must contain the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for the decisions made. A copy of the communication is placed in the student file.

No further appeal mechanism exists beyond this point in the process.

Community Justice Centre

Community Justice Centres provide mediation services to the community to help people resolve their own disputes. Your local Community Justice centre can be found on the www.cjc.nsw.gov.au website. Their service is free, confidential, voluntary, timely and easy to use.