

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## POLICY:

### 1. Purpose

Success Resources International Pty Ltd (SRI) is committed to providing quality training and assessment in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs 2015). As such, SRI is required to have a policy and processes in place to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of staff, learners and third party training and assessment providers who provide services on behalf of SRI.

This policy is based on providing and maintaining training and assessment services that are fair and reasonable and afford a forum where issues or inadequacies can be raised and resolved. This process provides opportunity for complaints to be recorded, acknowledged and dealt with in a fair, efficient and effective manner.

The object of this policy is to ensure that SRI staff act in a professional manner at all times. This policy provides clients with a clear process to register a complaint. It ensures all parties involved are kept informed of the resulting actions and outcomes.

### 2. Policy Statement

SRI acknowledges the clients' right to lodge a complaint when they are dissatisfied with the training and /or assessment services and experiences that they have been provided by SRI.

SRI will ensure that clients have access to a fair and equitable process for expressing complaints, and that SRI will manage the complaint with fairness and equity.

In doing so, SRI:

- a) has written procedures in place for collecting and managing complaints in a constructive and timely manner;
- b) ensures that these procedures are communicated to all staff, third party partners and clients;
- c) ensures that all necessary documentation and resources are in place to enable clients to submit a complaint;
- d) ensures that each complaint and its outcome is recorded in writing; and
- e) ensures that customer complaints and their outcomes are fed into continuous improvement initiatives.

### 3. Definitions

#### **3.1 The following words and expressions have the following specific meaning, as in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.**

**Third party** means any party that provides services on behalf of the RTO but does not include a contract of employment between an RTO and its employee.

## 4. Policy Principles

### 4.1 Principles

In managing complaints, SRI will ensure that:

- a) The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint process.
- b) The complaints policy is publicly available.
- c) There is a procedure for making a complaint.
- d) Complaints are treated seriously and dealt with promptly, impartially, sensitively and confidentially.
- e) Complaints will be resolved on an individual case basis, as they arise.
- f) All clients have the right to express a concern or problem and/or lodge a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the training and assessment services that they have been provided (including through a third party) or the behavioural conduct of another learner.
- g) All complaints are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable.
- h) The complaint resolution procedure is based on the understanding that no action will be taken without consulting the complainant and respondent, using a process of discussion, cooperation and conciliation.
- i) The rights of the complainant and respondent will be acknowledged and protected throughout the complaint resolution process, including the conduct of separate interviews initially.
- j) In the interest of confidentiality, the number of people involved in the resolution process will be kept to a minimum.
- k) Final decisions will be made by the Director SRI or an independent party to the complaint.
- l) The complaint resolution procedure emphasises mediation and education while acknowledging that in some instances formal procedures and disciplinary action may be required.
- m) If the complaints process fails to resolve the complaint or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint the matter will be referred to an independent third party for review, at the request of the complainant. All costs incurred for the third party review will be advised to the complainant.
- n) If the complaint will take in excess of 60 calendar days to finalise SRI will inform the complainant in writing providing the reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. The complainant will also be provided with regular updates on the progress of the complaint.
- o) Victimisation of complainants, respondents or anyone one else involved in the complaint resolution process will not be tolerated.
- p) All complaints will be handled as Staff-In-Confidence and will not affect or bias the progress of the client in any current or future training.

## **4.2 Types of Complaints**

A complaint may include allegations involving the conduct of:

- a) SRI , its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- b) A third party providing services on behalf of SRI , its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- c) A learner of SRI .

## **5. SRI Responsibilities**

The Directors of SRI are the Complaints Resolution Officer. The Director may delegate responsibility for the resolution of the complaint if necessary.

Details concerning the scope of the Complaints Policy are to be clearly displayed throughout the organisation and contained within the Staff Induction Process, Student Handbook and SRI website.

## **6. Process**

### **6.1 Complaints**

If a client has a complaint, they are encouraged to speak immediately with the trainer/assessor to resolve the issue. If the complainant is not satisfied that the issue has been resolved they will be asked to complete a Complaints Form, to lodge a formal complaint. SRI will then investigate the complaint and advise the complainant of the outcome.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome they may write to the Director, setting out in detail the issue of concern. This may lead to occasions where an industry-training representative may be invited to act as an objective party in order to negotiate a satisfactory resolution.

### **6.2 Complaints Process**

All complaints shall follow the below process:

- a) Complaints are to be made in writing within 7 calendar days of the incident using the Complaints Form.
- b) A submitted complaint form will constitute a formal complaint from the client. Further detail of the complaint can be provided by the client verbally.
- c) The Director SRI must be informed of receipt of all complaints immediately.
- d) The Director SRI may delegate responsibility for the resolution of the complaint.
- e) In the case of a complaint, the Director SRI will initiate a transparent, participative investigation to identify the issues.
- f) Complaints will be processed in accordance with the Complaints flowchart - Annex A.
- g) Complaints, where possible, are to be resolved within 14 calendar days of the initial application.
- h) In all cases the final conclusion will be assessed by the Director SRI .
- i) The Client will be advised in writing of the outcome of their complaint, within seven (7) days of resolution.
- j) If the outcome is not to the satisfaction of the Client, they may seek an appointment with the Director SRI .

- k) If the client is not satisfied with the decision they have the option to seek outside assistance to pursue the complaint.

## **7. Access & Equity**

The SRI's Access & Equity Policy applies. (See Access & Equity Policy)

## **8. Records Management**

Records of all complaints and their outcomes are maintained securely.

Records of complaints include:

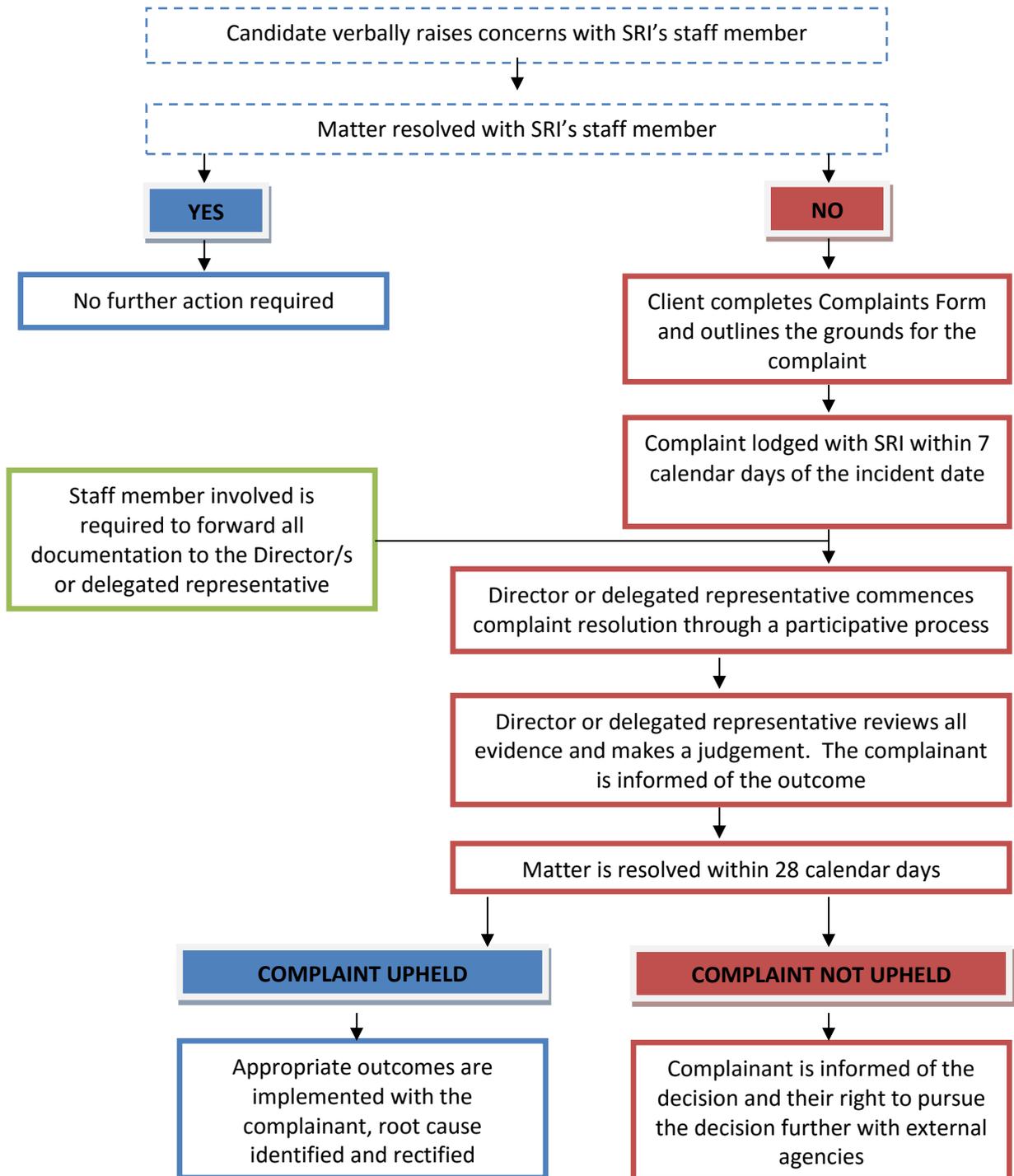
- a) How the complaint was dealt with;
- b) The outcome of the complaint;
- c) The timeframes for resolution of the complaint;
- d) The potential causes of the complaint; and
- e) The steps taken to resolve the complaint.

All documentation from Refund processes are maintained in accordance with Records Management Policy. (See Records Management Policy)

## **9. Monitoring and Improvement**

All complaints practices are monitored by the Directors of SRI and will be discussed at Management Review Meetings with areas for improvement identified and acted upon. (See Continuous Improvement Policy)

**ANNEX A: Complaints Process**



## Procedure

### Step 1: Initial review of complaint

<b>Client</b>	1.1	Raises the concern with SRI staff.
<b>Staff</b>	1.2	Attempt to resolve the complaint immediately.
<b>Staff</b>	1.3	If the matter is successfully resolved, complete the “ <b>Complaints Lodgement Form</b> ” and submit to Admin for processing.  If the matter is not resolved, advise client of their right to make a formal complaint referring them to the Complaints policy.  Provide client with access to the “ <b>Complaints Lodgement Form</b> ”.
<b>SRI Admin</b>	1.4	Enter details of Complaint into Student Management system (SMS) Enter details of Complaint into <b>Complaints Register</b> . Note actions on “ <b>Complaints Lodgement Form</b> ”. Notify Director of the resolved Complaint. File “ <b>Complaints Lodgement Form</b> ” (if appeal resolved) onto Client file.

### Step 2: Lodgement of complaint

<b>Client</b>	2.1	Lodges a complaint in writing using the “ <b>Complaints Lodgement form</b> ”.  Submits within seven (7) days of the date of the issue.
<b>SRI Admin</b>	2.2	Enter details of complaint into Student Management system (SMS) Enter details of complaint into <b>Complaints Register</b> . Note actions on “ <b>Complaints Lodgement Form</b> ”. Print and commence “ <b>Complaints Progress Form</b> ”. Copy to student file Provide all documentation to Director for action.
<b>Director</b>	2.3	On receipt of the complaint documentation, acknowledge receipt of the claim, in writing, to the complainant within two (2) working days, this may be via email or letter.  Keep all documentation in a Complaints file, which will remain in place until the complaint is resolved. After which time all complaints documentation will be placed on the Client file.

### Step 3: Processing the complaint

<b>Director</b>	3.1	Implement appropriate resolution techniques to resolve the issue promptly to the mutual satisfaction of all parties.  Inform any respondent(s) (if applicable) by letter or email that a complaint has been received. This letter/email will be forwarded within 2 (two) working days of receipt of the original formal complaint.
<b>Director</b>	3.2	Review, investigate and mediate to resolve the complaint within seven (7) days. Actions which may be taken include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discussing the facts of the complaint with the complainant.</li> <li>➤ Where appropriate and applicable, discuss the complaint with the respondent giving details of the complaint and complainant, giving cause to procedural fairness.</li> <li>➤ Where appropriate and applicable, encourage and facilitate the disputants to engage in mediation on an informal level.</li> <li>➤ Interview all parties individually, including any witnesses.</li> <li>➤ Conduct interviews privately and confidentially</li> <li>➤ Where applicable, report the outcome of the meeting with the respondent to the complainant.</li> <li>➤ Seek preferred outcome from each of the parties.</li> </ul>

<b>Director</b>	3.3	Determine a resolution to resolve the complaint, within SRI'S policies. Advise all parties of the outcome of the complaint in writing, within five (5) working days.
<b>Director</b>	3.4	Confirm all parties are satisfied with the outcome of the complaint. If client is dissatisfied with outcome, advise the client of their right to further progress the appeal through the External Arbitrator. (See to Step 5) Note actions on " <b>Complaints Progress Form</b> ".

#### Step 4: Finalising the complaint

<b>Director</b>	4.1	Complete all necessary documentation including the " <b>Complaints Progress form</b> ", noting actions and outcomes of the complaints resolution process. Place all documentation in the client's complaints file and provide to admin for completion. Implement agreed actions and /or administrative arrangements. Monitor the learning environment to ensure that the behaviour/incident does not re-occur.
<b>SRI Admin</b>	4.2	Enter details of complaint outcome into Student Management system (SMS) Enter details of complaint outcome into <b>Complaints Register</b> . Note actions on and complete the " <b>Complaints Progress Form</b> ". Place all documentation from complaint file onto Client file.
<b>Director</b>	4.3	Ensure that the issue, policy and procedures relating to any substantiated complaint is reviewed and progressed through continuous improvement processes, as appropriate

#### Step 5: Finalising the complaint

<b>Director or Client</b>	5.1	Contact and engage the External Arbitrator for a review of the complaint, providing all relevant documentation. Cooperate with External Arbitrator for a review of the complaint.
<b>External Arbitrator</b>	5.2	Review, investigate and mediate the complaint with all relevant parties and make a ruling. Prepare a formal written report on the investigation, providing a copy to both SRI Director and complainant. SRI will abide by any resolutions as recommended by the External Arbitrator.
<b>Director</b>	5.3	If the complaint is upheld, go to Step 4.1.
<b>Director</b>	5.4	If the complaint is rejected notify the complainant in writing that the original decision is to stand. Go to Step 4.1.