



# Practice Guide

## Feedback, complaints and appeals

(Standards 2.7, 2.8)

Ver 1.0  
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Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations

Quality Area 2 – VET Student Support

### What are the key concepts?

The following key concepts are covered in this practice guide:

| Standard 2.7                                                                                                                            | Standard 2.8                                                                                      |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback and complaint management systems</li> <li>Recording and documenting outcomes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appeals management</li> <li>Independent parties</li> </ul> |

### Achieving these Standards in practice

The following table lists examples of activities that may demonstrate compliance with the Standards, as well as risks to mitigate or control. These examples are not a complete list of every activity or risk, nor do all the activities listed need to be completed to achieve compliance. Rather, they are a guide and should be considered within the context, size, scale and student cohorts of your RTO's operations.

| Standard 2.7: Feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement of the NVR registered training organisation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Performance indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Example activities and other considerations for compliance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p>An <b>NVR registered training organisation</b> demonstrates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it operates a complaints management system that:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allows feedback and complaints about the organisation, any <b>third parties</b>, and any person employed or contracted by the organisation;</li> <li>ensures all parties are afforded procedural fairness;</li> <li>identifies reasonable timeframes for responding to and resolving complaints; and</li> <li>provides avenues for further action where complaints are not resolved;</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have information publicly available on how to provide feedback and complaints about your RTO's <b>services</b>, including those delivered by third parties This includes information about the timeframes for acknowledging, resolving and communicating the outcomes of complaints.</li> <li>You can demonstrate the mechanisms and channels you have in place to receive and action feedback and complaints from various stakeholders including students, employers, staff and third parties.</li> <li>You can show how the staff responsible for processing feedback and complaints ensure that matters are investigated promptly and impartially, uphold the principles of natural justice and ensure procedural fairness.</li> </ul> |

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| <p>b. information about how to provide feedback and make complaints through the complaints management system is publicly available and easily accessible by <b>VET students</b>;</p> <p>c. VET students are supported to provide feedback and make complaints;</p> <p>d. outcomes of complaints are documented and communicated to all parties of the complaint; and</p> <p>e. feedback and complaints are used by the organisation to inform continuous improvement.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have systems to document and communicate the outcomes of complaints, and store complaint documentation securely.</li> <li>You can demonstrate the approach you take to understand the root cause of a complaint and how this informs actions, including policies and processes (or amendments to these), leading to continuous improvement of the services you provide – for example, identifying trends from complaints received and addressing this across all areas of operations.</li> <li>You provide opportunities for complaints to be escalated and complaint outcomes to be reviewed. Where a complaint is not able to be satisfactorily resolved, you have documented systems for providing the complainant with avenues for further review.</li> </ul> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Known risks to quality outcomes</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failing to recognise complaints as opportunities to improve training and assessment services.</li> <li>Not ensuring that your third parties are obligated to escalate complaints to you that they receive about services they deliver on your behalf</li> <li>Failing to capture complaints and feedback received in informal settings, such as when students are having verbal conversations with trainers and assessors.</li> <li>Failing to allow all parties involved in a complaint the opportunity to respond.</li> <li>Not identifying and acting on trends from the complaints received.</li> <li>Not considering the root cause or potential impact of a complaint and how it may be relevant across other areas of your operations.</li> </ul>              |

| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Standard 2.8: Effective appeal processes are available to VET students where decisions of the NVR registered training organisation or a third party adversely affect the student.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Performance indicators</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Example activities and other considerations for compliance</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p>An NVR registered training organisation demonstrates:</p> <p>a. it operates an appeals management system that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. allows VET students to appeal decisions of the organisation, any third parties, and any person employed or contracted by the organisation where those decisions adversely affect the student;</li> <li>ii. ensures all parties to the appeal are afforded procedural fairness;</li> <li>iii. specifies reasonable timeframes for actioning appeals; and</li> <li>iv. provides avenues for review by an independent party, if requested by the appellant (at no or low cost to the appellant);</li> </ul> <p>b. information about how to appeal an adverse</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can demonstrate that students are informed about, and understand, their appeal rights. This includes information about the timeframes for acknowledging, resolving and communicating the outcomes of appeals.</li> <li>You have multiple mechanisms/channels available to students to lodge appeals about decisions (such as <b>assessment judgements</b>) including in-person via your trainers and other staff, via telephone and via email.</li> <li>You can demonstrate that your appeals management system facilitates transparent handling of matters, including which decisions are subject to appeal and to independent review.</li> <li>You can show how you ensure that your staff responsible for processing appeals are objective, impartial and adequately trained. This includes adequately documenting and communicating the outcomes of appeals and storing appeal documentation securely.</li> </ul> |

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| <p>decision through the appeals management system is publicly available and easily accessible by VET students;</p> <p>c. outcomes of appeals are documented by the organisation and communicated to the appellant; and</p> <p>d. the outcomes of appeals are used by the organisation to inform continuous improvement.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can demonstrate how students are made aware of the additional avenues they can take to have their appeal reviewed by an independent party, including ensuring they are provided with information on the costs that may be associated with using these avenues.</li> <li>You can demonstrate how you use appeal matters to identify opportunities for continuous improvement in the services you provide.</li> </ul>                                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Known risks to quality outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not informing students of their rights to appeal a decision.</li> <li>Failing to inform students of all avenues for seeking independent review.</li> <li>Failing to recognise appeals as opportunities to improve training and assessment services.</li> <li>Not identifying trends from the appeals received or failing to act where causal links are identified.</li> </ul> |

## Self-assurance questions

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| 1 | How do you ensure that you operate an outcomes-focused complaints and feedback management process that makes it easy for VET students and stakeholders to provide feedback or make complaints, works to resolve those complaints, and then actively uses those complaints and feedback to continuously improve your organisation's service offerings? |
| 2 | How do you ensure your complaints and appeals management systems are procedurally fair, timely and objective?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3 | How are the outcomes of complaints and appeals used to continuously improve your services?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |