# REIT STUDENT COMPLAINTS/Appeals PROCESS

On occasion, an individual or group may feel the need to make a formal complaint. All complaints will be treated confidentially and administered in accordance with the relevant legislative guidelines and policies and procedures.

Complaints may be in relation, but not limited to:

* enrolment process
* administrative errors
* access and equity
* assessment process quality and outcomes
* learners
* course content quality, accessibility and usability
* the quality of course delivery
* teaching facilities and learning resources,
* Trainers & assessors
* REIT Staff,
* Academic and behavioral misconduct
* Privacy
* Workplace Health & Safety including safety, bullying, discrimination; harassment.

We have a document procedure which explains how complaints are handled by REIT.

All complaints and appeals are taken seriously and their findings incorporated into procedures as appropriate.

Should a student have a complaint or appeal, the following steps are to be followed:

1. Student should discuss the issue / complaint with the person involved to try and resolve it verbally.
2. If no resolution is reached, the student should discuss the issue / complaint with his / her trainer to see if it can be resolved.
3. If still no resolution the student should put the following information relating to the complaint or appeal in writing. There is a template form in the appendix of this document designed to be used for this purpose.

Include:
- description of the complaint or appeal

- state whether you wish to formally present your case

- steps you have taken to deal with the it
- what you would like to happen to fix the problem and prevent it from happening again.

1. The student brings the complaint or appeal to the attention of the trainer within seven (7) days of the issue taking place.
2. If the complaint or appeal is not dealt with to the student’s satisfaction within the seven (7) day period, s/he may bring it to the attention of the Head of Training. The Head of Training will either deal with the issue personally or arrange for it to be dealt with by a management representative. This process must commence within 48 hours from the time the Head of Training receives written notification from the student about their dissatisfaction to the response received from their trainer and a response / resolution must be presented within 7 days.
3. Should the issue still not be resolved to the student’s satisfaction, The Real Estate Institute of Tasmania will make arrangements for an independent external person to resolve the issue. The student will be given the opportunity to formally present his or her case. The time frame for this process may vary but should take no longer then 14 days.
4. All parties involved will receive a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision within the 14 day period.
5. If the student is still not happy with external mediation, he / she may take his / her complaint to the Australian Skills Quality Authority.
6. All documentation relating to complaints or appeals should be archived for audit purposes.
7. In the event that the complaint involves the Head of Training, the complainant may address their complaint directly to the Executive Officer.

The Real Estate Institute of Tasmania Head of Training will be person responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy.

**Procedural Fairness & Natural Justice**

The REIT applies the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice throughout the handling process:

* Any person subject to a decision by the REIT, or anyone who has allegations made against them, has the opportunity to tell their side of the story before a decision is made.
* Complainants, or anyone who has allegations made against them, will be provided with an opportunity to formally present their case.
* The decision maker will be independent of the complaint/decision being reviewed
* Decisions made by the REIT will be done so in an unbiased and fair manner based on facts provided or determined through investigation of a compliant.
* The REIT will address each complaint in a confidential, effective and timely manner.

A Grievance/Complaints register will be used to record complaint numbers and outcomes.

## Assessment Appeal Process

A student having any concerns or issues about the assessment process or in particular, disagreeing with an assessment should first approach the trainer/ assessor to discuss them. If the student is still dissatisfied after this, the student should be offered the formal appeal process as follows:

* Request and complete an “Appeal Application Form” (Annexure D) (*/Policies & Procedures/Appeal Application Form)* and submit it no later than 14 days after the discussions with the trainer / assessor.
* The REIT will then appoint another appropriately qualified assessor to review the assessment or otherwise resolve the issue.
* Recommendations from this third party should be made available in writing to the student within 3 weeks of receiving the application.
* The student will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of the appeal, including reasons for the decision
* The fee for submission of a formal appeal is documented in the REIT Fees and Charges Policy, if the appeal is in the favour of the student this fee will be refunded

Note:

1. Participants may use an advocate or support person during the appeal. It is the participant’s responsibility to arrange and coordinate this process.
2. All information relevant to the appeal will remain confidential.

## Access & Equity Policy for Staff and Students

Access and Equity policies are incorporated into operational procedures Code of Practice.

REIT is committed to providing access and equity in all aspects of training. REIT will not discriminate unlawfully against any person in the processes of skill development opportunities. At REIT we understand that some students have different needs, and as a result we may be able to offer a range of different study options to cater for these various needs and extenuating circumstances.

Any access and equity issues should be referred to the CEO or the Head of Training.

REIT undertakes to:

* Promote access to training for all people regardless of gender, socio economic background, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age or race
* Ensure training services are delivered in a non discriminatory, open and respectful manner
* Train all staff members so that they are appropriately skilled in access and equity issues
* Conduct student selection in a manner that includes and reflects the diverse student population
* Actively encourage the participation of students from traditionally disadvantaged groups
* Provide varied and flexible teaching methods to cater for people with different learning needs within a group

**Reasonable Adjustment, Access and Equity**

Reasonable adjustment is conducted case by case; ensuring learners with special needs have equitable access to all aspects of the learning situation.

During Training:

* Provide learners with learning resources before class, allowing the learner to become familiar with the resources
* Flexibility – allowing the learner to complete learning at own pace within an agreed timeframe
* Advise the trainer of the learner’s special needs and provide direction for the trainer

During Assessment:

* Provide the learner with a hard copy of the assessment tasks if they don’t have electronic access
* Provide learner with access to trainer for assistance with practical tasks
* Substitution a written assessment task with an oral assessment task
* Flexibility allowing the learner to complete assessment at own pace within an agreed timeframe

The focus of adjusted assessment is on enabling the learner to demonstrate that they have understood and shown capacity to achieve the unit learning outcomes.

Any specific adjustment made to learning and assessment based on an individual’s requirements must be approved by the Head of Training and recorded in the learner ’s electronic file on the secure and backed up F: Drive and on the learner’s profile in the learner management system. Relevant trainers and assessors will be advised of the adjustment by the Head of Training.

**Anti Discrimination, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity**

REIT takes great care to ensure that all students and staff members are treated fairly and equitably and that everyone on REITs premises complies with the Anti Discrimination Act. Discrimination means treating someone unfairly because they belong in a particular group of people. Harassment is unwelcome, unsolicited and non reciprocated behaviour and it is based on an inappropriate assumption of power. Harassment may be intentional or unintentional and it may take many forms, such as verbal, written or physical.

As in any area of human interaction, the boundaries of what constitutes harassment victimisation and bullying may vary from person to person. Employees and students of REIT will recognise and respect the boundaries set by others.

If you believe you are experiencing harassment or discrimination refer the matter to the CEO.

All people associated with REIT may expect the same rights:

* The right to learn, teach or carry out their duties
* The right to be treated fairly and with respect
* The right to be safe in the workplace
* The right to have all reports of harassment to be treated seriously, impartially and sensitively. Harassment and discrimination, including victimisation and bullying, is unwelcome, uninvited and unacceptable behaviour that will not be tolerated
* The right to inform management of any harassment and management has the responsibility to take immediate and appropriate action to address it

Students have the responsibility to:

* Allow others to learn
* Make REIT a safe place to study by not threatening, bullying, or hurting others in any way
* Make the classroom safe by obeying instructions; and
* Not steal, damage or destroy the belongings of others

It is expected that all staff will:

* When acting in the course of their employment, comply with all applicable Australian laws
* Maintain appropriate confidentiality
* Disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest in connection with their employment
* Not use status, power or authority, in order to gain, or seek to gain a benefit or advantage for the employee or for any other person.

Victimisation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. No person making a complaint or assisting in the investigation of a complaint will be victimised.

Harassment should not be confused with legitimate comment and advice which may include feedback given appropriately by management or trainers and assessors.

**Discrimination**

Discrimination is broadly defined as treating one person unfairly over another based on factors that are unrelated to their ability or potential. State and Federal legislation protects people at work and in education from discrimination on the basis of certain attributes and from being treated unfairly because they have complained about discrimination.

Under the Fair Work Act 2009, discrimination is disadvantaging someone in the workplace or education because of their:

* race and/or colour
* sex
* sexual preference
* age
* physical or mental disability
* marital status
* family or carer’s responsibilities
* pregnancy
* religion
* political opinion

**Language, Literacy and Numeracy**

REIT is committed to supporting learners with English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN).

If an LLN concern is advised on the enrolment form by the learner or independently identified through an REIT Training team member, the learner will be referred to the Head of Training who will undertake an LLN consultation with the learner.

Early identification and consultation allow REIT to clarify:

* the level of the learner’s capability in line with the required level of learning
* the appropriate support required
* ability to provide suitable support
* a plan of action

Learners are required to undertake the REIT language, literacy and numeracy assessment quiz via the Training Hub prior to commencing nationally recognised training through the REIT.

Learners are given 3 attempts and are required to achieve a pass mark of at least 80%.

If a learner fails after 3 attempts an REIT Training Team will contact the learner to discuss the results and support through external providers. Should there be a fee applicable for support services outside of the REIT capacity, it will be at the learner’s expense.

Skills Tasmania trainees will be referred to TasTAFE Literacy and Numeracy team.

Learners with individual needs or requirements

Learners with individual needs or requirements for support services are encouraged to advise REIT upon enrolment.

Where potential issues for a learner are identified during the consultation between REIT and the learner, modification of learning and assessment methods may apply, including extensions to accommodate their needs and assistance with assessment by REIT trainers and assessors. The pathway to be taken will be developed case by case.

Learners, who experience difficulty during class, are advised through the learner handbook to immediately speak to their trainer. Upon advising REIT the steps outlined above will be taken to clarify the individual’s situation.

REIT is not a specialist in areas of language, literacy and numeracy, disability or mental health issues and as such can only offer limited support in these areas. In these instances, REIT reserves the right not to process a learner’s enrolment if unable to provide the required support for a learner.

In the event that REIT is unable to provide the appropriate support required, REIT will provide information to the learner on alternative learning options.

REIT seeks to assist learners achieve the required unit learning outcomes where it is possible within its ability. Where a learner requires specialist assistance REIT will suggest learners contact appropriate organisations, where they have the capability of assisting learners with special requirements.

Students are encouraged to inform the REIT of any additional services they require. The REIT enrolment form identifies the following student needs:

Disability

Language, Literacy, Numeracy

Previous Work Experience

Education History

Cultural differences

Any student requiring any other support, welfare or guidance services should be referred to the Head of Training, where a service need is identified, a suitable solution will developed and adopted in accordance with access and equity principals.

Should there be a fee applicable for support services outside of the REIT capacity, it will be at the learner’s expense.

**Sexual Harassment**

The Real Estate Institute of Tasmania views sexual harassment as a type of discrimination. It is also unlawful under Equal Opportunity legislation. Sexual harassment can consist of the following:

* + - Unwelcome comments about a person's sex life or physical appearance
		- Suggestive behaviour such as leering or ogling
		- Unnecessary familiarity such as deliberately brushing up against a person
		- Sexual jokes. offensive telephone calls, photographs, reading matter or objects
		- Sexual propositions or continual requests for a date
		- Physical contact such as touching or fondling

The RTOs’ view on sexual harassment of any type is specific. Any member of the RTO found conducting him / herself in an unprofessional manner towards a student member, or for that matter vice versa, shall be immediately dismissed from the RTO with no further notice.

**Discrimination and Sexual harassment**

It is important for the trainer to consider what strategies to use in the event of discrimination or sexual harassment.

At times this may present a challenge; however, the trainer might take the following recommendations into consideration:

* + - be aware of the way you address individuals
		- be conscious of the hidden messages conveyed by classroom language
		- distribute tasks equitably, not by any other particular stereotype
		- At all times be conscious of your own attitude
		- be open to discussion of equal opportunities issues
		- be specifically aware of the negative attitudes of certain visual images e.g. posters
		- communicate to students and others involved with the course the RTO's policy regarding discrimination and sexual harassment
		- Actively discourage unproductive "battles of the sexes" in class
		- promote respect for all students and other staff on the basis of their personal worth.

**Disability Access Requirements**

Should any person with a physical disability who requires wheel chair access to training facilities register in a Hobart based course, then the course will take place in a venue which has disability access and, in particular, has toilet facilities suitable for a person who is confined to a wheelchair.

## Access to Records

An individual participant has the right of access to his or her personal records only. The request should be submitted in writing to the Training Department of the REIT, which will arrange a suitable time and place for the records to be viewed while accompanied by a Training Department staff member.

Inquiries by phone as to participation in and outcomes of courses may be answered by Training Department staff provided it is directly to the participant.

An employer may have access to records of enrolment, attendance, assessment and outcomes for participants in their employ. These records will be available to the principal of the agency, and, in the case of trainees, the nominated supervisor of the trainee.

Any person having concerns about access by any of these people to their records of enrolment, attendance, assessment and outcomes should contact the Head of Training.

## Other Client Services

Any client identifying that assistance is needed with any support services, including language, numeracy and literacy problems, welfare and guidance or trainee disciplinary procedures should contact the Head of Training.

## australia skills quality authority

Current and past learners may be required to complete gap training. Gap training may be required if non compliances are identified by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) at audit. Students are required to participate; those students that do not wish to participate it will potentially result in their qualification being deemed invalid. The REIT will continue strive to deliver high quality training and assessments to avoid such an event occurring.

## Guarantee

The Real Estate Institute of Tasmania undertakes to honour all guarantees made to trainees, all guarantees made as a registered training provider, and all guarantees made as part of the Code of Practice for Training.

APPENDIX – Complaints And Appeals Form

REIT Complaints And Appeals Form

SECTION ONE – INSTRUCTION

This form is used to register a formal Complaint or Appeal, whereby:

* A **Complaint** is the formal acknowledgement of dissatisfaction regarding a product, service or conduct by the REIT, its staff, contractors, students or any applicable third parties. A Complaint can relate to the enrolment process, marketing information and permissions, quality of training and assessment, student progress, student support or the behaviour or actions of the REIT’s staff, contractors, students or any applicable third parties.
* An **Appeal** is a formal request for an alternative decision to be made by the REIT regarding a previous lodged Complaint.

For a **Complaint**: Please populate Section 2, 3, 4 and 6 of this form.

For an **Appeal**: Please populate Section 2, 3, 5 and 6 of this form.

Once completed, please compile and attach any supporting documentation and either send electronically to reit@reit.com.au or print and post to GPO Box 868, Hobart, TAS, 7001.

SECTION TWO – CONTACT INFORMATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2.1 | Please select the options that best identifies your relationship with the REIT: |
| ☐ Student | ☐ Parent/Guardian | ☐ Employer | ☐ REIT staff member | ☐ Other (please specify):Click or tap here to enter text. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2.2 | Please provide your contact details. These contact details will be used by the REIT to correspond with you regarding this matter: |
| Title | ☐ Mr  | ☐ Mrs | ☐ Ms / Miss | ☐ Other |
| Family name | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Given names | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email address | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Postal address (including postcode) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Student number (if applicable) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Contact details | Home Phone Number: Click or tap here to enter text.Mobile Phone Number: Click or tap here to enter text.Work Phone Number: Click or tap here to enter text. |

SECTION THREE – UTILISATION OF THIS FORM

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 | Please tick the appropriate option:  | ☐ Complaint | ☐ AppealPlease provide the RTO’s Complaint Reference No (#): Click or tap here to enter text. |

SECTION FOUR – COMPLAINT DETAILS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 4.1 | What is your complaint? Please include any background information including specific dates, names and other details that will help our investigation. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 4.2 | Do you have any evidence to support your complaint? Please list any witnesses who can support your statement and attach copies of relevant documents. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 4.3 | Have you tried to resolve the matter informally? If so, what did you do, who did you ask for help and what was the result? If you have not attempted to resolve the matter informally, please explain why. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 4.4 | What effect has this matter had on you? And what outcome for resolution are you seeking? | Click or tap here to enter text. |

SECTION FIVE – APPEAL DETAILS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.1 | Why do you not agree with the resolution of the complaint? | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 5.2 | Do you have any new evidence to support your appeal? Please attach copies of any relevant documents. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 5.3 | What outcome for resolution are you seeking? | Click or tap here to enter text. |

SECTION SIX – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Through submission of this form, I confirm that all information provided here to the best of my knowledge is true, correct, and accurate. I understand that formal investigation of my complaint requires that the details of my complaint or appeal (including my identity) may be shared with any the persons involved in of the complaint or appeal, so they can respond. These details may also be shared with potential witnesses. I also confirm that I have read and understood the *Complaints and Appeals Policy* will provide any supporting documentation (if required) to support this matter.

By reading this disclosure, I also confirm that understand that the REIT will treat sensitive information received or exchanged during investigation of the Complaint or Appeal in accordance with the *Corporate Governance Policy* (which can be found in the Student Handbook):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 4.2 | Name | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 4.3 | Signature  |  |
| 4.4 | Date  | Click or tap here to enter text. |