



AQA Complaints and Feedback Policy

Overview

The Complaints and Feedback policy provides people with a framework to submit feedback and resolve concerns, disputes or complaints arising from their dealings with AQA Victoria Ltd (AQA) services and representatives.

AQA values feedback as it provides an opportunity to improve the way that services are developed and delivered, and the way relationships are managed.

Scope

This policy applies to all people who have dealings with AQA, including but not limited to AQA's employees, clients, members, volunteers and members of the community with whom our organisation engages.

Policy

AQA encourages people to submit feedback, raise issues, concerns or complaints and seek a suitable resolution. AQA will respond to complaints and feedback in a timely and impartial manner and no person will be disadvantaged in relation to their dealings with AQA as a result of making a complaint.

All suggestions for improvement will be recorded, considered and reported into our continuous improvement processes.

All clients receiving services from AQA will be made aware of the Complaints and Feedback policy and process when they commence that service.

All employees and volunteers must be aware of the Complaints and Feedback policy and process.

The Complaints and Feedback Policy will be made available on all AQA websites and in hard and soft copy.

Definitions

Complaint: AQA has adopted the Australian Standards definition of complaint being the; 'expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required'.

Principles

AQA operates within the requirements of the Disability Act 2006, and as such will:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person or group is not adversely affected by making a complaint
- handle all complaints received in a timely manner and try to achieve a prompt resolution
- ensure that all information is recorded and reviewed so that it can be utilised as part of a corrective action and continuous improvement process.

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- be accountable to the Disability Services Commissioner for complaints arising out of the provision of a disability service, and submit an annual report about the number of complaints received and the outcome of these complaints

Process for Receiving, Recording and Responding to Complaints

A person who wishes to submit feedback or make a complaint may do so in a number of ways. Where possible people are encouraged to submit their complaint in writing however they can also be made over the phone or in person.

In the first instance people are encouraged to raise their complaint with the service staff with whom they are dealing at the time. This is particularly encouraged where a matter can be resolved at the time and is within the authority of that service staff member to investigate and resolve.

In these instances the staff member receiving the complaint must notify their service coordinator, team leader or Manager that a complaint has been received and resolved so that the details can be used to continually improve service processes.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved at this level it can be referred for internal resolution.

1. The Complaints Officer is the main point to which complaints should be directed; however a complaint can be made to any employee of AQA.
2. The employee who receives the complaint or the person making the complaint will complete a complaint form and forward a soft copy of the completed complaint form to the Complaints Officer.
 - The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
 - AQA strives to investigate and resolve a complaint within 5 working days of acknowledgment of receipt. This process may extend up to 28 working days depending on the nature of the complaint. In such instances the anticipated timeframes are to be communicated to the person making the complaint.
3. The Complaints Officer will log the complaint and determine which Department Manager will coordinate the investigation and actions to resolve the complaint.
4. The Department Manager will use the complaints management form to record the investigation and actions to resolve the complaint.
 - Only the people directly involved in making, investigating or resolving a complaint will have access to information about it. Where the person making the complaint receives a service from AQA, no information will be documented in that person's client file without their consent.
5. The person making a complaint is informed of their right to have a support person or advocate present to assist or represent them during the complaints process.
6. Once the investigation and actions to resolve the complaint are complete and the Department Manager considers the complaint resolved, the completed complaints management form and any supporting documentation will be returned to the Complaints Officer.

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7. The outcome of investigations and actions to resolve the complaint will be communicated in writing to the person making the complaint. Where possible the outcome will also be communicated verbally or in person.
8. Privacy Complaints are submitted to the Privacy Officer as per the AQA Privacy Policy.
9. If the issue remains unresolved the complaint can be escalated to the CEO for consideration and resolution.
10. If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the CEO, the individual may wish to approach an external agency such as:

External Resources	Nature of complaint	Contact number	Website
Disability Services Commissioner		Ph:1800 677 342	www.odsc.vic.gov.au
Transport Accident Commission		Ph: 1300 654 329	www.tac.vic.org.au
Department of Health & Human Services (complaints unit)		Ph: 1300 884 706	www.dhhs.vic.gov.au
Ombudsman Victoria		Ph: (03) 9613 6222	www.ombudsman.gov.au
FairWork Ombudsman		Ph: 13 13 94	www.fairwork.gov.au
Office of the Public Advocate		Ph:1300 309 337	www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au
Health Services Commissioner	Privacy	Ph: 1800 136 066	www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)	Privacy breach	1300 363 992 / (TTY) 1800 620 241	privacy@privacy.gov.au

Monitoring Complaints for Continuous Service & Process Improvement

The Complaints Officer will analyse complaint forms and report on this to the Management Team. The Management Team will consider suggestions for systemic change as part of continuous improvement processes.



Internal Notification and Escalation

Complaints and/or Incidents will be notified to the Board's Risk & Compliance Committee and / or the Board as per this matrix:

Trigger	Response
Issues raised with or identified by operations that are addressed by service staff and provide an opportunity for improvement	Managed in Teams and internal Quality processes
Complaint for internal review requiring a formal response	Included in CEOs Report to Risk & Compliance Committee - for noting
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any complaint / incident involving an external review body 2. Any WorkCover related injury 	Report to next Risk & Compliance Committee and include in next CEO Board report – for noting
Any complaint / incident rated Low and above that is also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to have material effect on Business 	Report direct to Risk Convenor & Chair Include in next CEO Board report
Any complaint / incident rated Low and above that also; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly involves CEO as the subject of the complaint / incident; and /or • Likely to result in adverse findings, media coverage 	Report direct to Risk Convenor & Chair, followed by written report at that time to Full Board and Risk Committee.
The Annual Report of Complaints to Disability Services Commissioner	Tabled at the next Risk Committee and Compliance Committee Meeting and included in the Committee's Report to the subsequent Board meeting

References:

Legislation

- *Disability Act 2006*
- *Privacy Act 1988*

AQA Forms

- *HRF Complaints Form*
- *HRF Complaints Management Form*

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