



Upskilled Complaints and Appeals Policy and Process

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A. Complaints and Appeals Policy

1. Background

Upskilled acknowledges that Students may have complaints and encourages them to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue by contacting the relevant person in the organisation such as Trainers, Education Consultants and/or Student Support Officers.

Upskilled also acknowledges that formal complaints and appeals are integral components for our continued and effective improvement as an RTO. We are committed to ensuring any formal complaints regarding the RTO is acknowledged, recorded, investigated, reviewed, and appropriate resolution strategies (i.e. outcomes) are provided and actioned in a fair and timely manner. We are also committed to ensuring any appeals are reviewed and considered before any outcomes are delivered.

Upskilled will also take all steps to ensure Students feel empowered to lodge a formal complaint and appeal if required without fear of detriment or victimisation.

2. Scope

This Policy covers Upskilled's procedure for handling formal complaints and appeals regarding the services provided by Upskilled. It also covers formal complaints and appeals submitted by any authorised third parties. It also outlines the steps a Student or authorised third parties can take to ensure their complaints or appeals are actioned in a fair and timely manner and provide additional supporting documents, as necessary.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. Appeal: A Complainant submits a request in writing to Upskilled for a review of the provided outcome of a formal complaint using the [Appeal Form](#) and providing additional supporting evidence and the preferred outcome.
- 3.2. CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management system, which is our secure student records management system. In addition to storing all student records, this system stores all formal complaints, appeals, and the provided outcomes.
- 3.3. Complainant: Student who has submitted formal complaint using the [Complaint Form](#) after exhausting the informal complaint process.
- 3.4. Review Committee: An Internal committee that reviews formal complaints and appeals in a fair and timely manner and decides the appropriate resolution strategies and outcomes for validated formal complaints and appeals.
- 3.5. Case Register: A register of all formal complaints and appeals, managed by the Review Committee.
- 3.6. Informal Complaint: informal discussion between a complainant and Upskilled staff.
- 3.7. Formal Complaint: A written statement from complainant lodged with Upskilled

4. Principles

- 4.1. All disputes, complaints and appeals will be handled professionally, equitably, confidentially and promptly to achieve satisfactory resolution.
- 4.2. All parties will have a clear understanding of the steps involved in the Complaints and Appeals process before carrying out the procedure
- 4.3. There is no cost for a student to lodge an internal complaint or an appeal.
- 4.4. At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the complainant/appellant.
- 4.5. All decisions will be made based on but not limited to current Government Legislation, Standards for RTOs 2015, Upskilled Policies and Procedures and, where applicable, The Rules of Evidence and The Principles of Assessment.

5. Timeframes

- 5.1. Variables such as complexity of the issue, availability of evidence and the resources required to investigate the issue adequately can affect our response time; it is not possible to give a definitive timeframe for providing outcomes for validated Formal Complaints or appeals. However, Upskilled will follow the guidelines below to ensure that the issue is dealt with promptly.
- 5.2. Upskilled will endeavour to provide a written acknowledgement within five (5) business days of receiving the Formal Complaint or appeal along with the supporting documents.
- 5.3. Upskilled will endeavour to investigate, review, and provide a determination or resolution in writing within ten (10) business days of receiving the Formal Complaint or appeal from the date that the Student Relations Specialist acknowledges it.
- 5.4. Should the Formal Complaint or appeal require more than ten (10) business days to investigate, review and finalise, Upskilled will inform the Complainant in writing and provide a regular update on the issue's progress.
- 5.5. Upskilled will maintain the Student's enrolment while the Formal Complaints or appeal handling process is ongoing.

6. Recording of Complaints or Appeals

- 6.1. Upskilled will record all Formal Complaints and appeals in the CRM and the Case Register and where appropriate will lead to continuous improvement activities.
- 6.2. Upskilled will be proactive in identifying potential causes of validated Formal Complaints and appeals and will take action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of a reoccurrence.
- 6.3. Upskilled will maintain the confidentiality of any Formal Complaints and appeals.

B. Complaints and Appeals Process

1. Process

- 1.1. The first step in any complaint is to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue by contacting the relevant staff member such as the Trainers, Student Support Officers or Education Consultant through an Informal Complaint process.

- 1.2. Formal complaint: If the Student has raised an Informal complaint and the matter has not been resolved or is no longer appropriate to discuss the issues with the staff member involved, the Student can make a Formal Complaint.
- 1.3. The Student must submit the Formal Complaints in writing by emailing the [Complaint Form](#) to studentsupport@upskilled.edu.au. The Complaint Form requires filling out details of the complaint and the proposed outcome.
- 1.4. Once the completed Complaint Form is received along with supporting documents, the Student Relations Specialist will acknowledge in writing the receipt of Formal Complaint within five (5) business days of receiving the completed Complaint Form along with supporting documents.
- 1.5. The Student Relations Specialist will conduct the necessary investigation and enter the information in the Case Register for tracking and records purposes. In this process, the Student may be requested to provide additional information.
- 1.6. The Review Committee will review Formal Complaints fairly and timely and deliver the outcomes for validated ones. Upskilled will communicate the stated outcomes in writing to the Complainant within ten (10) business days.
- 1.7. If more than ten (10) calendar days are required to process and finalize the complaint, the student will be informed in writing of the reasons and will keep the Complainant updated on the progress of the matter.
- 1.8. If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Formal Complaint, they can appeal within ten (10) business days from the date of written response made by Upskilled.
- 1.9. The Complainant can submit the [Appeal Form](#) by replying to the email received by them as an outcome of the Complaint.
- 1.10. The Student Relations Specialist may interview the Student before finalizing the Student's request to appeal.
- 1.11. Upskilled reserves the right to reject the appeal if no evidence or documents are provided in addition to those provided with Complaint Form or if any appeal is submitted after ten (10) business days.
- 1.12. If the Appeal Form is accepted, Upskilled will endeavour to review and provide an outcome within ten (10) business days from the date of acceptance of the Appeal Form.
- 1.13. Upskilled will discuss the accepted appeal in the Review Committee, and an outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing to the Complainant.
- 1.14. Students wishing to appeal an assessment decision must submit their appeal in a period no longer than ten (10) days following the competency decision.
- 1.15. If the Complainant believes that the Upskilled did not adequately resolve the appeal, they can lodge an external appeal with an independent person or a panel or refer the matter to the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73. Such intention must be made known to Upskilled within ten (10) business days upon receiving the appeal outcome from Upskilled.
- 1.16. The suitable independent person or panel will need to be agreed upon by both parties, and the Student will bear the cost. The suitable independent person or panel could include independent commercial mediators such as Leadr. The Student can request Leadr charges and contact information via their website: <http://www.resolution.institute>
- 1.17. Engagement with any external assistance will be the responsibility of the Review Committee.
- 1.18. The procedures set out in this Policy do not limit individuals' rights to act under Australia's Consumer Protection laws or pursue other legal remedies.

2. Changes to this Policy

We may amend this Policy from time to time. The current version of this Policy will be posted on our website.

Document Name	Version	Approved	Policy Owner	Effective	Review
Complaints and Appeals Policy and Process	5.1	COO	Head of Compliance & Risk (Education)	01.07.2023	01.07.2024
RTO	RTO 40734 Upskilled Pty. Ltd ABN 14 125 906 676				
Version History	V1 – Original Policy implemented 16.10.2017 V2 – Rebranding of Complaints and Appeals Policy 19.09.2018 V3 – Significant changes to reflect current statutory requirements 01.11.2019 V4 – Simplified process for appeal, set up Review Committee and formal process V5- added Clause 1.7 (section B) and few minor changes V5.1 Review with no change				