

COMPLAINTS & APPEALS POLICY

Training & Personnel Australia (RTO 41096)

Maritime and General Programs – Career Start, Career Boost & Fee-for-Service

Version	Date	Description	Author	Approved By
3.0	12/2025	Full policy rewrite – merged Complaints & Appeals Policy; updated to align with SAS 2025–28, ASQA Standards and organisational procedures	Jamie Whittle	Director
3.1	12/2025	Logo placement adjustment	Jamie Whittle	Director

1. Purpose

Training & Personnel Australia (TPA) is committed to providing high-quality training and assessment services in accordance with the **Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015**, the **Skills Assure Supplier (SAS) Agreement 2025–2028**, and principles of **natural justice and procedural fairness**.

This policy outlines how TPA manages:

- **Complaints** about training, assessment, staff, students, facilities, administrative processes, or third parties; and
- **Appeals** against decisions made by TPA, including assessment decisions.

This policy ensures all complaints and appeals are handled promptly, fairly, confidentially, and without disadvantage to the learner.

2. Scope

This policy outlines how TPA manages:

- **Complaints** about training, assessment, staff, students, facilities, administrative processes, or third parties; and
- **Appeals** against decisions made by TPA, including assessment decisions.

This policy ensures all complaints and appeals are handled promptly, fairly, confidentially, and without disadvantage to the learner.

3. Definitions

Complaint - Any expression of dissatisfaction with TPA services, staff conduct, assessment processes, another learner, facilities, safety, or administrative processes.

Appeal - A request to review a decision made by TPA, including assessment outcomes.

Assessment Appeal - A request to review an assessment decision where the learner believes the result is incorrect or unfair.

Natural Justice / Procedural Fairness - Fair, transparent, unbiased decision-making that gives all parties an opportunity to be heard.

Third Party - Any organisation providing training/assessment services on behalf of TPA (even if not currently used).

4. Principles

Training & Personnel Australia ensures that:

- All learners have the **right** to lodge a complaint or appeal.
- No learner is disadvantaged for raising a concern.
- Complaints and appeals are managed **confidentially**, fairly, and promptly.
- A support person or advocate may attend any meeting.
- Learners are informed of their rights, responsibilities, and external escalation options.
- Anonymous complaints are accepted and investigated where possible.
- Complaints/appeals are acknowledged within **2 business days**.
- Complaints/appeals are finalised within **14 calendar days**, unless otherwise advised.
- If resolution requires more than 14 days, the learner is informed in writing with updates.
- All decisions are made by an impartial person and reviewed by the **CEO**.

5. Types of Complaints Accepted

Complaints may relate to:

- Trainer, assessor, or staff behaviour
- Other learners
- Admin processes, communication, or service delivery
- Training and assessment quality
- Assessment conditions or instructions
- Safety, facilities, equipment, or environment
- Fees, charges, or refunds
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying
- Breaches of policy
- Third parties acting on behalf of TPA
- Any action or inaction that negatively affects the learner

6. Complaints Process

Step 1 — Early Resolution (Informal)

Learners are encouraged to raise concerns **immediately** with their:

- Trainer/Assessor →
- Admin/Compliance team

Most issues are resolved at this stage.

If unresolved, the learner may lodge a **formal complaint**.

Step 2 — Formal Complaint

To lodge a formal complaint, the learner:

1. Submits a complaint **in writing** (email or Complaints Form).
2. Receives **acknowledgement within 2 business days**.
3. The complaint is logged, investigated, and reviewed by Admin/Compliance.
4. The CEO is informed of all complaints.

Timeframe:

TPA will finalise complaints **within 14 calendar days**.

If more time is required, the learner is informed with reasons and updates.

Step 3 — Decision

The learner receives a **written outcome**, including:

- Findings
- Reasons for the decision
- Any actions taken
- Their right to escalate to an external agency

Step 4 — External Referral (if unresolved)

Learners may escalate to:

Training Ombudsman Queensland

(For subsidised training disputes or fairness concerns)

ASQA

(For issues relating to training quality, assessment, trainer competency, or RTO conduct)

AMSA

(For maritime licensing concerns, not training delivery decisions)

No fees are charged by TPA for complaints.

7. Appeals Process

Learners may appeal decisions relating to:

- Assessment outcomes
- Application of policies
- Administrative decisions
- Enrolment or progression decisions

Appeals must be lodged **in writing**.

Step 1 — Acknowledgement

Appeals are acknowledged within **2 business days**.

Step 2 — Assessment Appeal Pathway

If the appeal relates to an **assessment decision**, TPA follows this 3-step model:

Step 1: Trainer Review

The original trainer reviews the evidence and decision with the learner.

Step 2: Independent Assessor Review

If unresolved, an assessor **independent of the original decision** conducts a second review.

Step 3: Director Decision

The CEO reviews all documentation and makes the **final internal decision**.

No fees apply for this process.

Step 3 — Finalisation

Appeals are finalised within **14 calendar days** unless otherwise advised.
The learner receives a **written outcome** with reasons.

Step 4 — External Appeal Options

Learners may escalate unresolved matters to:

- Training Ombudsman Queensland
- ASQA
- AMSA (if related to regulatory/licensing decisions outside TPA control)

8. No Detriment Guarantee

Learners who lodge a complaint or appeal will:

- not face disadvantage
- not be penalised
- continue training without disruption (unless safety is an issue)

9. Support Persons

Learners may bring:

- a support person
- an advocate
- an interpreter (if needed)

To any meeting related to complaints or appeals.

10. Recordkeeping

Training & Personnel Australia will maintain secure records of:

- All complaints and appeals
- How they were handled
- Timeframes and outcomes
- Causes identified
- Actions taken to prevent recurrence

Records are stored in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

11. Continuous Improvement

Data from complaints and appeals is reviewed at management meetings to:

- identify trends
- reduce recurrence
- improve the learner experience
- strengthen training and assessment systems