

## **COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY**

### **Making a Complaint or Appeal**

The Hammond Institute is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaints and appeals process that includes access to an independent external body if necessary.

#### **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by the Hammond Institute in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by students and/or employers. We do have a formal Complaints and Appeals Form to track any possible complaints made.

#### **What is an appeal?**

An appeal is an application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during training and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be submitted to the Hammond Institute within 28 days of the student being informed of the assessment decision or finding. For licencing courses appeals can be made directly to the Regulator.

### **Early resolution of complaints & appeals**

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time, as they occur between the persons involved, where possible. Sometimes, it will not be possible and in these cases you are encouraged to come forward and inform us of your concerns with the confidence that you will be treated fairly. Your trainers/assessors have been instructed to bring all complaints to the attention of Management.

### **Complaint and appeals handling**

THE Hammond Institute applies the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- A written record of all complaints is to be kept by the Hammond Institute including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. The Hammond Institute will maintain a complaints register to be used to record the details of the complaint and the complaint handling process. Records relating to complaint handling are stored securely to prevent access to unauthorised personnel.
- A complainant is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- It is important to identify in your complaint in the Complaints and Appeals Form whether your concerns are related to:
  - The RTO
  - The Trainer/Assessor
  - Another student
  - Any other third party provider

- Each complainant may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The handling of a complaint is to commence within two (2) working days of the lodgement of the complaint and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The complainant is to be provided a written response to the complaint, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response must be provided to the complainant within fourteen (14) days of the lodgement of the complaint.
- Complaints must be resolved to a final outcome within sixty (60) days of the complaint being initially received. Where the Hammond Institute Chief Executive Officer considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint, the CEO must inform the complainant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. As a benchmark, the Hammond Institute will attempt to resolve complaints as soon as possible. A timeframe to resolve a complaint within thirty (30) days is considered acceptable and in the best interest of the Hammond Institute and the complainant. A complainant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the progress of the complaint handling. Updates should be provided to the complainant at a minimum of four (4) weekly intervals.
- The Hammond Institute shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant during the complaint handling process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint handling process that find in the favour of the student shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Hammond Institute representative will disclose information to any person without the permission of The Hammond Institute Chief Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only to be made after the complainant has given written permission for this to occur.
- Complaints are to be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the complaint handling process. This means that the complainant is entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The complainant is entitled to have their complaint heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally the decision must be made based on logical evidence and the decision-maker must take account of relevant considerations, must act for a proper purpose and must not take into account irrelevant considerations.

### **Review by an independent person**

The Hammond Institute provides the opportunity for persons making a complaint or an appeal who are not satisfied with the outcomes of the complaints and appeals handling process to seek a review by an independent person.

### **Review by external agency**

- Where the complainant or person lodging an appeal is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by the Hammond Institute Pty Ltd, they are to have the opportunity for a body that is

independent of the Hammond Institute to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal completion of complaint or appeals process.

- Students who are not satisfied with the process applied by the Hammond Institute may refer their grievance to the following external agencies:
- **Unresolved Appeals** in relation to consumer related issues may be referred to the Office of Fair Trading
- **National Training Complaints Hotline** also provides an opportunity for students to lodge their grievance with an external agency who will follow up and investigate their complaint. This service can be accessed via the following phone number: 13 38 73.

### **Supporting Documents**

- Complaints Form
- Appeals Form
- Complaints & Appeals Register