

POLICY: COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS


Accrete is committed to operating in accordance with the practices defined by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) relating to the issuing, recording and reporting of AQF qualifications, statements of attainment and related certification. Accrete will ensure all Candidates who undertake a program of study with us are issued the correct certification in a timely manner and in accordance with the requirements of the Training Package or VET accredited course.

Ownership	This policy is the responsibility of the CEO.
Scope	Accrete has established this policy to support the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO) 2015. The policy has been developed and implemented by Accrete to support and provide clear instruction and guidance to program Candidates and Accrete personnel on the handling of complaints and appeals from Candidates.
Review and Maintenance	Maintenance and review of the Accrete Complaints and Appeals Policy is the responsibility of the CEO. The CEO will maintain ongoing records of the elements and application of this policy. Accrete may make changes to this policy and procedure from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this Policy may forward their suggestions to the CEO.
Further Assistance	Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should contact the CEO.

Policy Review

Accrete may make changes to this policy and procedure from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this Policy may forward their suggestions to the CEO. Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should contact the CEO.

APPROVAL

Policy applies to	All staff	Approval date	11 September 2017
Approval authority	CEO	Signature	
Date of Last Revision	11 September 2017	Date of Review	2 February 2018

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Contents

Approval.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Our Commitment.....	2
PROCEDURE: ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY	2
General Complaints	2
Appealing a decision	4
Associated Documentation.....	5

OUR COMMITMENT

Accrete is committed to providing Candidates, staff and stakeholders the best possible environment in which to study or work. The organisation understands that on occasion, there may be instances of dissatisfaction and acknowledges that the cause(s) must be addressed and rectified promptly. In such instances Accrete invites feedback from the dissatisfied party so that a resolution can be found and as an opportunity to consolidate the feedback into a review and improvement of Accrete's policies and practices.

Accrete will address any and all complaints in a fair, constructive and timely manner. The complainant has the right for their complaint to be heard and for an impartial decision to be made at no cost to themselves. Complainants have the right to appeal a decision.

This policy and associated procedure supports Accrete to provide a process for complaints and appeals to be heard and actioned. All complaints and appeals received by Accrete will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.

PROCEDURE: ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Accrete acknowledges that occasionally complaints may arise that require a formal resolution. The following procedures provide information on how to have a complaint or appeal resolved and a resolution reached by all parties.

GENERAL COMPLAINTS

Action	Responsibility
<p>Accrete may receive complaints from Candidates, staff or stakeholders and members of the public through a variety of means e.g.: verbally, written documentation or electronically (email).</p> <p>Where possible, all non-formal attempts shall be made to resolve the issue. This may include advice, discussions, and general mediation in relation to the issue. Any staff member can be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but once an individual has placed a formal complaint /appeal the following procedures must be followed.</p>	<p>Accrete Personnel</p> <p>Complainant</p>
<p>Any Candidate, potential Candidate, or third party may submit a formal complaint to Accrete with the reasonable expectation that all complaints will be treated with integrity and privacy. There is no cost for accessing the internal complaints and appeals process.</p> <p>When a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through informal discussion, the complainant is asked to complete a Complaints and Appeals Form, stating their case and providing as much detail as possible, and submit this to the CEO either by email or post. The CEO will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing to the complainant.</p>	<p>Accrete Personnel</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>Complainant</p>

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<p>Complaints are to include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submission date of complaint - Name of complainant - Nature of complaint - Date of the event which lead to the complaint; and - Attachments (if applicable) <p>The Complaints and Appeals Form is available on the website at www.accrete.net.au or can be sent to the complainant on request.</p> <p>Once the Complaints and Appeals Form is received the details are recorded on the Complaints and Appeals Register which is reviewed and maintained by the CEO.</p> <p>Information recorded on the Complaints and Appeals Register includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A specific complaint number - Submission date of the complaint - Name of the complainant - Description of the complaint - Determined resolution (outcome) - Date of outcome <p>A letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent by the CEO to the complainant and, where a complaint refers to an individual, the individual will be informed by the CEO of the complaint and will be invited to respond to the allegation either through discussion, or (written) correspondence.</p> <p>Any discussion held with the CEO must be minuted and these minutes kept on file along with details of the original complaint.</p>	
<p>Complainants have the right to access advice and support from independent external agencies and/or persons at any point of the complaint and appeals process. Use of external services will be at the complainant's costs unless authorised by the CEO.</p>	<p>CEO Complainant</p>
<p>The CEO will investigate all complaints recorded on the Complaints Register and identify a satisfactory resolution to the issue.</p> <p>The proposed resolution will be communicated to all parties involved in the complaint within 10 working days and agreement to the proposed resolution sought. Upon receipt of the agreement, the CEO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide the Complainant with written confirmation of the resolution - Record the action(s) taken to resolve the complaint on the Complaints Register - Where applicable communicate the outcome of the complaint resolution to the relevant Accrete staff member - If applicable, document the need for amendment to Accrete policy and/or procedure documentation in the Continuous Improvement Register and implement the necessary improvement (both the Complaints and Appeals Register and the Continuous Improvement Register are reviewed regularly by management at their meetings) - Within the notification of the outcome of the formal complaint the Complainant shall also be notified that they have the right of appeal. To appeal a decision Accrete must receive, in writing, grounds of the appeal. Complainants are referred to the Appeals Procedure. <p>Where Accrete feels the complaint may take longer than 60 days to resolve, the CEO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and 	<p>CEO Complainant</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide regular updates to the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter. <p>The CEO will act immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the Complainant, Accrete will act immediately to implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required, and advise the Complainant of the outcome.</p>	
<p>Any documentation including written notes of the progress of a complaint, outcomes, actions and resolution, will be kept by Accrete and filed in Complaints and Appeals folder maintained by Accrete.</p>	Accrete personnel CEO
<p>No Candidate, staff member, stakeholder or member of the public will be disenfranchised in any way during the complaint and resolution process.</p> <p>A Candidate's progress through a study program will not be disrupted whilst a complaint is being heard unless the nature of the issue itself means further progress is not possible.</p> <p>Complainants will observe strict confidentiality during all stages of the complaints resolution process. All communications and proceedings arising from the complaints process will remain confidential at the conclusion of the complaints resolution process.</p> <p>Complainants have the right to nominate third party representation (e.g.: a family member or friend, counsellor, professional representation or support person) if they require.</p>	Complainant Accrete personnel
<p>An annual review of the complaints resolution process will be conducted as part of the Accrete auditing process.</p>	CEO

APPEALING A DECISION

Action	Responsibility		
<p>Assessment Appeals Candidates are entitled to formally appeal the outcome of the assessment decision by completing the Complaints and Appeals Form, stating their case and providing as much detail as possible, and submit this to the CPA Australia RTO Manager either by email or post. Candidates are to include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submission date of appeal - Name of appeal; - Nature of appeal; - Supporting documentation regarding their assessment outcome - Attachments (if applicable) <p>The Complaints and Appeals Form is available on the website at www.accrete.net.au or can be sent to the Complainant on request.</p>	Accrete personnel Candidate		
<p>Once the Complaints and Appeals Form is received the details are recorded on the Complaints and Appeals Register which is reviewed and maintained by the General Manager. Information recorded on the Complaints and Appeals Register includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A specific appeal number - Submission date of the appeal - Name of the appellant - Description of the appeal - Determined resolution (outcome) 	Accrete personnel Candidate		
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- Date of outcome	
The CEO will seek details from the Assessor involved and any other relevant parties. A decision will be made regarding the appeal either indicating the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a third party. The third party will be another Assessor appointed by Accrete.	Accrete personnel CEO
The Candidate will be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the 'Complaints and Appeals Register' updated. The Candidate will also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The Candidate is required to notify Accrete if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.	Candidate Accrete personnel
External Appeals If not satisfied with the decision in either the formal complaints or appeals procedures, the Complainant may request that the matter be further reviewed by an external dispute resolution process, by the body appointed by Accrete for that purpose.	Complainant
If a Complainant (Candidate or third party) is still dissatisfied with the decision of Accrete, they may wish to seek legal advice or place a complaint about Accrete to ASQA directly (please be aware that ASQA does not act in a mediation capacity). If, after Accrete's internal complaints and appeals processes have been completed, the Complainant still believes Accrete is breaching or has breached its legal requirements, they can submit a complaint to ASQA by completing the online complaint form: https://rms.asqa.gov.au/registration/newcomplaint.aspx Except in exceptional circumstances, complaints must attach evidence to the complaint form showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- That they have followed Accrete's formal complaints procedure; and- Accrete's response. ASQAs processes require the Complainant to identify themselves to ASQA as "the" Complainant, although a Complainant may request that their identity is kept confidential throughout any investigation that ASQA undertakes. Australian Skills Quality Authority Tel: 1300 701 801 www.asqa.gov.au	CEO

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

- Complaints and Appeals Form
- Complaints and Appeals Register
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Continuous Improvement Register

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