Student Complaints and Appeals

Policy number: POL-D.024

Responsible officer: Johan Pienaar (Director/CEO)

Date of approval: July 2014

Scheduled review: Biennially

Review expiry date: 31 July 2028

Cross references: *2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations; VET Student Loans Act (2016)*; *Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000; Commonwealth Ombudsman VSL Code of Practice.*

Flight Training Adelaide (FTA) is committed to providing an efficient and effective complaints handling process for all students, ensuring that matters are resolved confidentially in a fair and timely manner. The complaints and appeals processes and procedures include the management of all allegations involving assessment decisions and the conduct of:

- FTA, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- A third-party providing services on the FTA's behalf
- A student of FTA.

The processes and procedures ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process, including that:

- Information and electronic links are publicly available to students.
- Published documents set out the procedure for making a complaint or requesting an appeal.
- Complaints and appeals are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable.
- Complaints may be reviewed by an independent third party if matters remain unresolved.
- FTA's complaint system and its effectiveness are reviewed regularly.
- FTA has appointed a senior manager with overall responsibility for managing complaints and communicating their value to the organisation.

Definitions

Complaint: An implied or express statement of dissatisfaction where a response is sought, reasonable to expect or legally required.

Students are encouraged to make a complaint if they honestly belief that:

- Academic matters or decisions made within FTA affected them because it is unfair or unreasonable, including matters relating to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards for an approved course.
- Non-academic matters or decisions made within FTA affected them because it is unfair or unreasonable, including matters relating to enrolment in a course and personal information held by the provider.

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- The conduct of another person adversely affected them because it is unfair, unreasonable, offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening.

Appeal refers to the review of decisions made by FTA, including assessment decisions and termination of a training contract due to misconduct or failure to progress with flight or ground theory training at a reasonable and/or safe rate.

Note: suspension or termination decisions relating to a student's airline sponsorship or alignment cannot be appealed to FTA, instead must be directed to the appropriate airline or industry customer.

Complaints and appeals process

FTA acknowledges that making a complaint or appeal requires courage from the individual and confidence in the person to whom the complaint is entrusted, specifically if it is of a sensitive nature. To support students making complaints we have the following structures in place:

- There is no cost to the student to make a complaint or an appeal against a decision in either the internal or external stage of the process.
- The male and female staff members below are identified for the purpose of being relatable to students. They are appropriately trained and made known to students during induction. Students are encouraged to talk to, phone or email any of these individuals, or anyone else they feel they can trust if they have a problem:

FTA Parafield	FTA Queensland
• Gerard Flanagan (Student Welfare), 0149867060 or gflanagan@flyfta.com • Tan Hoffmann (Student Welfare), 0433881942 or thoffmann@flyfta.com	• Tim Berry (Standards Manager) on tberry@flyfta.com • Ellen Parkinson (Student Support Manager) eparkinson@flyfta.com • Ivan Benko (Manager Residential Services and Maintenance) ibenko@flyfta.com

- Students are encouraged to ask a friend or someone they can trust to accompany them during any stage of the complaints/grievance or appeals process.
- Students are encouraged to use FTA's electronic complaints system to lodge a complaint (anonymous or in name) when they do not get prompt, adequate assistance after raising a complaint with someone in person.
- The link to FTA's electronic complaints/appeals management system is publicly available to students on the Student Intraweb.
- FTA will protect information disclosed during complaints and appeals processes according to FTA's privacy policy.
- Students are expected to continue their training while a complaint/appeals process is underway, if practical.
- Students are provided with FTA's policies and procedures, and any information about their rights and obligations as students as per the Student Handbook via OneDrive and FTA's website. When information is updated students receive notification via email.

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- Students are provided with information about the free services of an external mediator, which can offer independent advice if they continue to feel dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaints or appeals process. See contact details below under the heading 'The external complaints/grievance/appeals procedures are as follows:'

The internal complaints procedure is as follows:

a. Students discuss problems informally with appropriate staff, for example a flying or ground instructor or training manager. Both parties should do their best to reach a workable solution in the best interest of the student.

   (Information of a sensitive nature or high risk to the wellbeing of the student or the company **shall** be brought to the attention of the COO on the same day it was raised.)

b. If dissatisfied with the outcome of informal discussion(s), students should lodge a formal complaint.

c. FTA will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by email, if the complaint was not anonymous.

d. The complaint will be investigated over 2–5 working days, and information gathered.

e. Every complaint or appeal will be recorded in Centrik/Meetings, with minutes of discussion points and decisions made.

f. The COO will respond to the complaint in writing within 28 days of after the complaint was received.

g. Documented evidence of the complaint/appeal and decisions and actions to address the issue will be kept in a confidential location on Centrik. Stakeholders will have access to the records.

h. FTA will implement decisions made in the complaints/appeals procedures as soon as practical, evidenced via Centrik.

The internal appeals process is as follows:

a. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint, or with how the complaint was handled, they can request a review of the complaint via the student appeals electronic link. The review will be handled by a senior manager other than the COO, e.g. CFO.

b. Students who are dissatisfied with decisions about suspension/termination of enrolment can lodge an appeal against the decision, by submitting an appeal electronically.

c. FTA will acknowledge the formal appeal as soon as practical via email.

d. A panel of appropriate staff will meet to reconsider every part of the decision made during the suspension/termination or complaints processes, as well as additional information presented by the appellant. Decisions will be recorded in meeting minutes.

e. Each party concerned at any stage of the internal complaints/appeals procedure may be accompanied or assisted by another person, at that party's cost.

f. The COO will respond to the appeal in writing within 28 days of after the appeal was received, including the reasons for decisions and advice about how to have the decisions reviewed.

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Appeal against termination of training of a sponsored/aligned airline student

The training of students, who are selected for training by an FTA industry customer or in partnership with an industry customer, is reviewed by FTA in collaboration with the student's future employer. A final decision to cease (terminate) training, sponsorship or alignment is made by the industry customer. Airline students must direct any appeal against termination of sponsorship or alignment to the relevant airline or industry customer. Airline students do have a right to appeal a decision to terminate **training** to FTA; however, FTA will not review any decision by an airline to suspend or terminate an airline's **sponsorship or alignment**. The appeal will be assessed based on continuation of training for the former airline student as a private student.

The external complaints/grievance/appeals procedures are as follows:

a. If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint/appeal, FTA will make arrangements with an external and independent third party with appropriate expertise to review the matter.

b. FTA will enable each party of the review to be accompanied or assisted by another person at the review, at the party's cost.

c. FTA will give a written notice of the decision on the review to each party, including reasons for the decision.

d. FTA will implement decisions made by an external independent mediator and keep a record of the entire process on the student's electronic file for at least five years for each use of the complaints/grievance/appeals procedures.

e. The following independent statutory authorities will be used as advocacy to address appeals:

   Cost: free service

FTA Parafield	FTA Queensland
Commonwealth Ombudsman Office hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am–5.00pm Phone: 1300 362 072 Online: http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/making-a-complaint Visit: Level 11, 25 Grenfell St, Adelaide SA 5000	**Queensland Training Ombudsman** Office hours: Mon to Fri 8.30am–4.45pm Phone:1800 773 048 Email: info@trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au Post: PO Box 15090, City East Qld 4002

External Complaints

All external complaints or request from the Ombudsman will be handled by the CEO. The process is as follow:

a. The CEO will collect all relevant information and correspondence about the matter and carry out an independent investigation to determine the cause of the external complaint.

b. The CEO will provide the Ombudsman with all documented evidence requested as well as a decision on how the matter would be resolved.

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Privacy

FTA is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle personal information relating to complaints and appeals for the purpose of investigating, responding and recordkeeping.

FTA will only use your information in accordance with relevant privacy and other laws. For us to provide services to you effectively and efficiently, we may need to share your personal information with individuals that deal with the matters identified in your feedback.

If you choose to remain anonymous, FTA will implement any relevant improvements we can identify but may be unable to deliver the full range of services you require.

If you wish to contact MQC, who is responsible for overseeing the student complaints system and the personal information that you provide to FTA, please call (08) 8209 4300 or email at lpienaar@flyfta.com

You also have the right to access your information and seek its correction under the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

For information about making a Freedom of Information request, refer to: https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/faqs-for-individuals/how-do-i-make-a-freedom-of-information-request

Document Control

Version no.	Issue date	Amendment description
1.0	22-Apr-14	Initial issue
1.1	18-May-14	Amendment
1.2	14-Jul-14	Amendment
1.3	15-Mar-15	Amendment
1.4	01-Dec-15	Amendment
1.5	02-Apr-17	Amendment
1.6	02-Apr-19	Amendment
1.7	03-Sep-19	Inclusion of FTA Queensland operations and the new organisational structure
1.8	18-Dec-19	Amendment
1.9	23-Jul-20	Adding document control history
2.0	30-Jul-21	Removed the term ‘grievance’; updates in relation to Commonwealth Ombudsman VSL ‘Code of Practice’.
2.1	31-Jul-22	Updated reference to staff contacts
2.2	31-Jul-23	Updated reference to staff contacts and clarification around close of enrolment of airline students.
2.3	25-Mar-24	Simplified wording where possible; process for handling external complaints.
2.4	31-Jul-24	Updated contacts. Review date extended to 2 years
2.5	31-Jul-25	Updated contact detail of Wellcamp staff with whom to discuss personal issues.
2.6	31-Jul-26	Updated contact detail of Wellcamp staff with whom to discuss personal issues and minor wording.

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Review

The policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years, or more often due to legislation or circumstantial change.



Johan Pienaar
(Chief Executive Officer/Director

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