

# Policy and Procedure No. 17

## Complaints and Appeals

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### 1. Policy Objective

The objective of the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for St John Ambulance Western Australia Ltd Registered Training Organisation No. 0392 (St John RTO) is to ensure that St John RTO provides a complaints and appeals avenue to course participants and customers, and to meet the Standards for RTOs 2015.

This Policy and Procedure supports the following Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015:

- ▶ Standard 2.2;
- ▶ Standard 5.2;
- ▶ Standard 6.1;
- ▶ Standard 6.2;
- ▶ Standard 6.3;
- ▶ Standard 6.4;
- ▶ Standard 6.5; and
- ▶ Standard 6.6.

This St John RTO Policy is consistent with the St John Organisational Policy.

### 2. Policy

1. This Policy and Procedure version is effective as of 19 November 2021.
2. For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure “St John RTO Stakeholders” refers to the First Aid Training Services Administration team, the Customer Experience team, the Marketing Programs team, other relevant departments in St John Ambulance as well as third party providers.
3. This Policy and Procedure relates to the management of complaints and appeals involving the conduct of:
  - ▶ St John RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff
  - ▶ A third party provider, its trainers, assessors or other staff, or
  - ▶ A St John RTO student.
4. St John RTO Stakeholders will inform their staff of the requirements of this RTO Policy and Procedure.
5. St John RTO Stakeholders will adhere to this Policy and Procedure at all times.
6. St John RTO Stakeholders will carry out the tasks attributed to their respective roles in this Policy and Procedure.
7. St John RTO will make this Policy and Procedure publicly available.

8. St John RTO will inform all course participants that they have the right to seek redress if they believe that they have been treated unfairly or if they are not satisfied with any of the training or assessment outcomes and the procedure that they must follow.
9. St John RTO participants and clients have the right to lodge a complaint or appeal within three(3) months of completing a course.
10. St John RTO will treat all complaints and appeals fairly.
11. St John RTO will ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaints and appeals process. These principles encompass the right to be heard, the evidence rule and the rule against bias. These will be met at every stage of the complaints and appeals process by:
  - ▶ Informing those involved of the allegations made
  - ▶ Providing those involved with an opportunity to present their side of the matter
  - ▶ Adopting an evidence-based process that relies on the facts and matters pertaining to the specific allegation
  - ▶ Ensuring that the process is fair and without bias or conflict of interest in the making of decisions
  - ▶ According those involved with privacy and confidentiality.
12. Complaints and feedback to St John RTO can be submitted on the feedback and complaints page on the St John Ambulance website: <https://stjohnwa.com.au/about-us/contact-us/feedback-complaints>

These complaints are received by St John RTO and processed through the [Workflow](#) system.
13. There are 2 types of appeals identified in this Policy and Procedure:
  - ▶ 1. Complaint Outcome Appeals - these will be assigned to a different manager and investigator as the original complaint (see 4. Appeals Procedure – Complaint Outcome Appeals)
  - ▶ 2. Assessment Decision Appeals – these will be managed via the Learning Management System (see 5. Appeals Procedure – Assessment Decision Appeals)
14. St John RTO will process all its complaints and appeals as soon as practicable and finalise them in no longer than thirty (30) calendar days.
15. In the event that St John RTO requires more than thirty (30) calendar days to finalise a complaint or appeal, it will inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than thirty (30) calendar days are required to process and finalise their complaint or appeal. St John RTO will ensure that the complainant or appellant is regularly updated on the progress of the matter.
16. St John RTO will inform the complainant about the [National Training Complaints Hotline](#) if the complaint or appeal is unresolved.
17. In the event that a resolution is not reached via the St John RTO complaints and appeals process, an independent arbitrator will be appointed to review the complaint or appeal decision provided:
  - ▶ This is at the request of the complainant or appellant
  - ▶ The person or organisation appointed is independent of both St John RTO and the complainant or appellant
  - ▶ Both St John RTO and the complainant or appellant agree on the selection of the independent arbitrator.
18. St John RTO Stakeholders must retain records of all communications with the complainant or appellant including the following:

- ▶ Documentation of receipt of complaint or appeal;
- ▶ Acknowledgement of complaint or appeal;
- ▶ Initial assessment of the complaint or appeal;
- ▶ Investigation of complaint or appeal;
- ▶ Response to complaint or appeal;
- ▶ Communication of the investigation decision; and
- ▶ Finalisation of the complaint or appeal.

The investigation process must be documented, and both the communications and details of the investigation must be attached to the relevant complaint in Workflow.

**19.** This Policy and Procedure is to be read in conjunction with:

- ▶ St John RTO Policy and Procedure No. 22 Records Management; and
- ▶ St John RTO Policy and Procedure No. 29 Continuous Improvement.
- ▶ First Aid – Customer Complaints Procedure

**20.** St John RTO Stakeholders may have written Workplace Instructions in place to supplement this Policy and Procedure.

### 3. Complaints Procedure

STEP	WHO?	WHAT?
<b>1. Complaint lodged</b>		
1.1	<b>Course Participants or Customer</b>	<p>Course participants or customers can lodge a complaint either by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Submitting a written complaint via the St John Ambulance WA website: <a href="http://www.stjohnambulance.com.au/st-john/about-us/contact-us/feedback-complaints">http://www.stjohnambulance.com.au/st-john/about-us/contact-us/feedback-complaints</a> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Business Support Services receives the complaint and logs it on Workflow</li> <li>ii. Complaint is assigned to First Aid department</li> <li>iii. Customer Experience Manager receives automatic notification of complaint via Workflow</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Complaining directly to a member of St John Ambulance staff           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Staff member refers the complaint to their line manager</li> <li>ii. Line manager either logs the complaint on Workflow which will automatically notify Customer Experience Manager, OR</li> <li>iii. Emails details of complaint to Customer Experience Manager who logs it on Workflow</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>2. Acknowledgement of complaint</b>		
2.1	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Sends an acknowledgement to the complainant stating the issue will be investigated and the outcome will be advised in writing.

<b>3. Investigation</b>		
3.1	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Assigns an investigator to the case. The investigator will receive an automatic notification of assignment with a link to the case in Workflow via email.
3.2	<b>Investigator</b>	Commences an initial assessment of the complaint.
3.3	<b>Investigator</b>	Conducts further investigation of the complaint involving discussions with all parties involved.
3.4	<b>Investigator</b>	Documents all details of the investigation process.
3.5	<b>Investigator</b>	Attaches all communications with complainant, details of investigation process and relevant documentation to the case in Workflow.
3.6	<b>Investigator</b>	Finalises the complaint within 30 calendar days of lodgment of complaint.
NOTE	<b>Investigator</b>	Where more than 30 calendar days are required to investigate the complaint, the investigator must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Inform the complainant</li> <li>ii. Provide the complainant with regular updates of investigation progress at 15 working day intervals</li> <li>iii. Inform the Customer Experience Manager, including details of further actions that are to be taken</li> </ul>
<b>4. Communication of outcome</b>		
4.1	<b>Investigator</b>	Advises the complainant of the outcome within 30 calendar days of lodgment of complaint
<b>5. Complaint closure</b>		
5.1	<b>Investigator</b>	Closes off actions on Workflow. Workflow will send an automatic notification of completion of investigation to the Customer Experience Manager.
5.2	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Reviews investigation details in Workflow:. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. If the investigation is deemed satisfactory, the complaint is closed on the same business day.</li> <li>ii. If the investigation is deemed unsatisfactory, the complaint is reassigned back to the investigator for further work until such time as the investigation is deemed satisfactory at further review(s).</li> </ul>
<b>6. Dissatisfaction with outcome</b>		
6.1	<b>Complainant</b>	In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation outcome, they can appeal by communicating this to the Customer Experience Manager.
6.2	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Logs appeal on Workflow. See “4. Appeals Procedure – Complaint Outcome Appeals”.

#### 4. Appeals Procedure – Complaint Outcome Appeals

STEP	WHO?	WHAT?
1. Appeal lodged		
1.1	<b>Appellant</b>	Appellants can lodge an appeal by contacting the Customer Experience Manager or investigator that they are not satisfied with the complaint outcome.
2. Acknowledgement of appeal		
2.1	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Sends an acknowledgement to the appellant stating the complaint will be re-investigated and the outcome will be advised in writing.
3. Re-investigation		
3.1	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Assigns a different investigator from the complaint to consider the appeal. The appeal investigator will receive an automatic notification of assignment with a link to the case in Workflow via email.
3.2	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Conducts a re-investigation of the initial complaint.
3.4	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Documents all details of the investigation process.
3.5	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Attaches all communications with appellant, details of investigation process and relevant documentation to the case in Workflow.
3.6	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Finalises the complaint within 30 calendar days of lodgment of appeal.
<b>NOTE</b>	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Where more than 30 calendar days are required to investigate the appeal, the appeal investigator must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Inform the appellant</li> <li>ii. Provide the appellant with regular updates of investigation progress at 15 working day intervals</li> <li>iii. Inform the Customer Experience Manager, including details of further actions that are to be taken</li> </ul>
4. Communication of outcome		
4.1	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Advises the appellant of the outcome within 30 calendar days of lodgment of complaint.
5. Appeal closure		
5.1	<b>Appeal Investigator</b>	Closes off actions on Workflow.

		Workflow will send an automatic notification of completion of investigation to the Customer Experience Manager.
5.2	Customer Experience Manager	Reviews investigation details in Workflow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. If the investigation is deemed satisfactory, the appeal is closed on the same business day.</li> <li>ii. If the investigation is deemed unsatisfactory, the appeal is reassigned back to the appeal investigator for further work until such time as the investigation is deemed satisfactory at further review(s).</li> </ul>
<b>6. No resolution reached</b>		
6.1	Complainant / Appellant	In the event that a resolution is not reached via the St John RTO complaints and appeals process, the complainant/ appellant may request that an independent arbitrator be appointed to review the complaint or appeal decision provided. This should be provided in writing to the Customer Experience Manager.
6.2	Customer Experience Manager	Appoints and hands over investigation to an independent arbitrator.

## 5. Appeals Procedure – Assessment Decision Appeals

STEP	WHO?	WHAT?
<b>1. Issue Discussed with Trainer and Assessor</b>		
1.1	Course Participant / Appellant	Appeals the assessment decision.
1.2	Trainer and Assessor	Acknowledges the course participant's grievance and discusses it with them in a professional and fair manner.
1.3	Trainer and Assessor	If satisfactory resolution is not reached, the trainer and assessor is to direct the course participant to submit formal appeal in writing to their line manager.
1.4	Trainer and Assessor	Informs their line manager of appeal details and provides assessment evidence and notes.
<b>2. Assessment decision appeal lodged</b>		
2.1	Line Manager	Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Logs the assessment decision appeal on Workflow which will automatically notify Customer Experience Manager</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Emails details of assessment decision appeal to Customer Experience Manager who logs it on Workflow.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Acknowledgement of appeal</b>		

3.1	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Sends an acknowledgement to the appellant within 5 business days stating the issue will be investigated and the outcome will be advised in writing.
<b>4. Investigation</b>		
4.1	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Assigns an investigator to the case. The investigator will receive an automatic notification of assignment with a link to the case in Workflow via email.
4.2	<b>Investigator</b>	Commences an initial assessment of the appeal.
4.3	<b>Investigator</b>	Conducts further investigation of the appeal involving discussions with all parties involved.
4.4	<b>Investigator</b>	Refers the appeal to Head of First Aid Quality.
4.5	<b>Head of First Aid Quality</b>	Reviews assessment decision and arranges a re-assessment by a different trainer and assessor, if necessary.
4.4	<b>Investigator</b>	If appeal involves VET training product issues, discuss with the appropriate FAST/regional manager and Head of First Aid Quality.
4.5	<b>Head of First Aid Quality</b>	Addresses the appeal and sends respond in writing to the investigator.
4.6	<b>Investigator</b>	Documents all details of the investigation process.
4.7	<b>Investigator</b>	Attaches all communications with appellant, details of investigation process and relevant documentation to the case in Workflow.
4.8	<b>Investigator</b>	Finalises the complaint within 30 calendar days of lodgment of appeal.
<b>NOTE</b>	<b>Investigator</b>	Where more than 30 calendar days are required to investigate the appeal, the investigator must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Inform the appellant</li> <li>ii. Provide the appellant with regular updates of investigation progress at 15 working day intervals</li> <li>iii. Inform the Customer Experience Manager, including details of further actions to be taken</li> </ul>
<b>5. Communication of outcome</b>		
5.1	<b>Investigator</b>	Advises the appellant of the outcome within 30 calendar days of lodgment of appeal.
<b>6. Assessment decision appeal closure</b>		
6.1	<b>Investigator</b>	Closes off actions on Workflow. Workflow will send an automatic notification of completion of investigation to the Customer Experience Manager.
	<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	Reviews investigation details in Workflow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. If the investigation is deemed satisfactory, the appeal is closed on the same business day.</li> </ul>



		ii. If the investigation is deemed unsatisfactory, the appeal is reassigned back to the appeal investigator for further work until such time as the investigation is deemed satisfactory at further review(s).
7. No resolution reached		
7.1	<b>Investigator</b>	Informs the appellant that if the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, they may contact the National Training Complaints Hotline by calling number 13 38 73 or filling up the National Training and Complaints Hotline <a href="#">complaint form</a>

Policy Administration		
<b>Directorate:</b>		<b>Responsible Manager:</b>
Communications & Brand		Head of First Aid Quality
<b>Risk Rating:</b>	<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Review Next Due:</b>
High	Annual	November 2022
<b>Compliance References:</b>		
<b>Statutory:</b>	Standards for RTOs 2015	
<b>Industry</b>	Vocational Education and Training	
<b>St John Ambulance:</b>	RTO	
<b>Quality Management System:</b>		
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<b>Version:</b>	<b>Decision Reference:</b>	<b>Synopsis:</b>
1	Document Created	VET Reform and Standards for RTOs 2015
2	Minor Changes	St John RTO Stakeholder Feedback provided on 30/6/2015
3	Updated Spelling/Formatting	Following Review of Compliance Documentation
4	Annual review by RTO Stakeholders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New format</li> <li>2. Simplified procedure</li> <li>3. Section 5 reduced</li> <li>4. Section 6 added</li> <li>5. Effective as of 1.11.2017</li> </ol>
4.1	Review	Updated Complaints Procedure and NHTC email address
5	Review and update	Reviewed and updated to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Independent arbitration</li> <li>2. Appeals on complaint outcomes</li> </ol>