

Australasian Leadership Academy (ALA) Complaints, Feedback and Appeals

Policy brief & purpose

Australasian Leadership Academy Pty Ltd (ALA) is committed to ensure quality client outcomes. (ALA) encourages and seeks feedback from participants, client organisations, staff and the community to ensure relevant and effective services.

Australasian Leadership Academy (ALA) responds effectively and efficiently to customer complaints and any feedback in a timely manner to minimise the impact on the complainant and the organisation. This includes appeals against decisions made by the RTO. A 'customer' may be defined as a participant, a client organisation, a member of the community or a staff member. It is your right to have the opportunity to lodge a complaint in areas of misconduct, assessment procedures and outcomes and any other matters arising during your relationship with us.

ALA has a fair and equitable grievance process. Grievances and appeals are managed in an effective and efficient process and conducted in a timely manner. The complaint handling process is responsive and target timeframes are monitored. Confidentiality is maintained and anonymity preserved where requested. All staff and contractors are made aware of the complaints and appeal process.

The Complaints Feedback and Appeals Policy is able to be downloaded from ALA's website.

Scope

This policy includes complaints and appeals relating to allegations involving the conduct of:

- ALA RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff.
- A third-party providing services on ALA's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- A learner of ALA

Policy elements

ALA's complaints and appeals policy adopts the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness by:

- ensuring procedural fairness and natural justice are followed at every stage of the complaint and appeal process by allowing anyone subject to a decision by ALA, or anyone who has allegations made against them, to a right of reply before a decision is made
- informing those involved of the allegations
- providing those involved an opportunity to present their side of the matter
- operating in a fair and unbiased way
- being publicly available (via ALA's website) in accordance with SRT0 6.3
- includes a procedure for submitting a complaint or appeal
- ensures complaints and appeals are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable; and
- provides for review by an appropriate party independent of ALA and the complainant or appellant, at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal, if the processes fail to resolve the complaint or appeal.
- All clients and participants are provided with a copy of the complaint process in the Participant Handbook. This will be reiterated at the commencement of training or assessment.

ALA undertakes to apply the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- An electronic record of all complaints and appeals is securely kept by ALA, including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. This information is documented on ALA's Training Organisation Management System (TOMS) - Complaints / Appeals Register, including discussions and any decisions reached
- A complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each complainant or person lodging an appeal may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The handling of a complaint or appeal is to commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided with a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.

- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to have the opportunity for a person or a body that is independent of ALA to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal ALA complaint or appeals process. It is noted that a review of findings by an independent person or body will generally only relate to the appeals process and is less likely to be required in complaints handling.
- ALA shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant or person lodging an appeal during the complaint or appeals process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeals process that find in the favour of the participant shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints and appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No ALA representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of ALA's Managing Director. A decision to release information to third parties can only to be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur. This permission should be given using the Disclosure of Information Form.
- Complaints and appeals are to be considered on the basis of procedural fairness and lead to opportunities for improvement as a Continuous Improvement Report.
- If you are not satisfied with the complete complaint handling, the Managing Director of ALA will convene a panel of independent assessors to attend the hearing to ensure that an unbiased decision is made.

Where ALA considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, ALA will:

- inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required: and
- regularly update the complainant or appellant in writing on the progress of the matter.

ALA will:

- securely maintain records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes; and
- identify potential causes of complaints and appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

ALA considers that it would be extremely unlikely that complaints and appeals are not able to be resolved quickly within ALA's internal structures.

Responsibilities

All parties involved in a complaint or appeal have the responsibility to ensure they abide by the following:

Students, Employees, Stakeholders:

- be familiar with the Complaints and Appeals Policy
- only make genuine and accurate complaints or appeals
- provide formal complaints in writing via email: info@australasianleadership.com

ALA staff:

- ensure confidentiality
- act within the constraints of legal obligations to disclose any information
- ensure as much as practicable that no victimisation of complainants, witnesses, or any other parties involved in the complaints and appeals process

ALA Management (in addition to staff):

- ensure accessibility of the complaint resolution policy and procedure to all staff, students and stakeholders
- to treat all complaints seriously and investigate as required
- to follow the principles of natural justice
- to ensure feedback mechanisms are available to all
- handle complaints in a respectful manner, staying objective, collect facts and ensure confidentiality of all parties
- refer the complaint to the CEO if the complaint cannot be resolved at this level

CEO:

- provide staff with the opportunities for necessary training in regard to handling complaints and appeals within organisational processes
- respond to any complaint that cannot be handled by ALA management
- refer complainants to relevant governing bodies and third parties as required

Complaints and Appeals Process - Informal

It is expected that prior to initiating a formal complaint and appeal process, the parties involved will attempt to resolve concerns directly wherever possible. It is expected that all parties will participate in good faith in resolving concerns so that ALA maintains a respectful workplace and learning environment.

- Students, employees, third-party partners and stakeholders are encouraged to raise concerns directly with their trainer, or team leader, particularly where the concerns are adversely affecting the learning environment.
- RTO clients – raise the matter by talking to your trainer in the first instance or the appropriate administration staff member
- External Stakeholders – raise the matter by talking to appropriate ALA staff member
- Finance/ Accounts – raise the matter by talking to the team leader, finance

If the complaint is directed towards a third-party partner of ALA, we encourage our clients to lodge a complaint through ALAs complaint procedure. General feedback about ALA can be sent via email to lynne@australasianleadership.com

Appeals related to training and assessments are required to be lodged within 4 weeks of completion of last contact/activity of the unit. If the appeal relates to the RPL process, grievances must be within 1 week of notification of unsuccessful recognition process. Appeals must be in writing to the RTO Manager, Australasian Leadership Academy. Each appeal will be heard by an independent person or panel. The complainant will receive a written statement of the appeal outcomes, including reasons for the outcome.

ALA will contact the complainant within 2 working days of the appeal being received. The RTO Manager will seek to resolve the issue within 48 hours from initial contact. The RTO Manager must ensure the complainant has opportunity to present their case and will involve the client in discussions. If the issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the RTO Manager will contact the Managing Director and seek their involvement in the resolution of the appeal. Where warranted, the complainant may be given opportunity for re-assessment. This may be conducted by the initial assessor or an alternate assessor, depending on the circumstances.

If the appeal is still not resolved within 5 working days, ALA will suggest the complainant contact a suitable organisation or persons to assist in resolution.

The RTO Manager will record all conversations, documentation and outcome on the TOMS student management system and ensure the decision and the reason for decision is evident. The complainant will receive a written statement of the appeal outcomes, including reasons for the outcome.

Complaints and Appeals Process - Formal

Stage 1 – Lodging a formal complaint or appeal

Where the parties involved are unable to successfully resolve the concern directly, then a formal complaint or appeal may be lodged with ALA.

ALA records all details in their Training Organisation Management System (TOMS) portal and includes the following information:

- complainant's full name, address, phone/email address
- details of the concern raised by the complainant
- reasons outlining the escalation to a formal process
- if the complaint relates to another party, that party's full name and position

Stage 2 – Investigation of formal complaint or appeal

The complaint will be investigated thoroughly, and the complainant may be contacted for further information if required. ALA will endeavour to seek information from all parties listed in the complaint in a timely manner. If a complaint cannot be investigated by ALA (for whatever reason), ALA will inform the complainant at this point and refer them to the most appropriate body.

Stage 3 – Determination of outcome

Where ALA determines it has the capacity to decide in the complaint, ALA will inform the complainant of the outcome in writing within 60 days. Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeals process that resolve the complaint or appeal and find in the favour of the party are implemented immediately and are recorded in the complaints and appeals register. Where ALA is unable to decide or the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, the complainant can appeal and request a review of the decision from a third party. Appeals or requests for review of decisions are to be lodged in writing within 28 days of the decision or outcome.

Stage 4 – Independent Third-Party Review of Determination

Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review they can appeal and request a review of the decision from an independent external third party and must be lodged within 28 days. Requests for appeal or review of decisions are referred to an independent third party or external mediator, determined by the Chief Executive Officer. ALA will acknowledge receipt of the request for independent third-party review in writing, outlining the anticipated review period and the independent review officer. At this stage, ALA will disclose all costs associated with the third-party review, as all parties may be liable for costs. This is not a free service. The independent review officer will decide

and inform ALA who will advise the complainant in writing. Decisions or outcomes of the appeal or review process that find in the favour of the appellant are implemented immediately and are recorded in the complaints and appeals register. At this stage, there is no further basis for a complaint or appeal to be heard. ASQA is not able to act as the independent third party for reviewing complaints.

Supporting Organisations

The following organisations may be able to assist you further in your complaint if you are not satisfied by ALAs final determination.

<p>WorkReady Ph: 1800 506 266 Web: http://www.skills.sa.gov.au/ Email: dsdworkready@sa.gov.au</p>	<p>The Office of the Training Advocate Ph: 1800 006 488 Web: http://www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au/ Email: trainingadvocate@sa.gov.au</p>
<p>Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Ph: 1300 701 801 Web: https://www.asqa.gov.au/</p>	<p>National Training Complaints Hotline Ph: 13 38 73 Web: https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH Email: NTCH@education.gov.au</p>
<p>Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services (TAS) Ph: 1800 673 097 Web: http://www.skills.sa.gov.au/contact-us/regulation-and-contract-management Email: dsd.tas@sa.gov.au</p>	<p>Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OIAIC) Ph: 1300 363 992 Web: https://www.oaic.gov.au/ Email: enquiries@oaic.gov.au</p>