

# Mater Education Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Policy

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# 1. Purpose

Mater Education Limited (MEL) is committed to delivering high quality education and understands the value and benefit of effectively receiving and managing feedback from our various stakeholders including students, staff, employers and others.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a complaints and appeals management system that ensures procedural fairness, transparent and timely resolution of complaints and appeals.

# 2. Scope

This policy applies to feedback, complaints and appeals in relation to MEL service delivery as well as any decisions made by MEL in relation to its services, systems, facilities, or processes. Complaints can be informal (generally verbal) or formal (provided in writing). Formal complaints can occur where an informal complaint outcome does not meet complainant expectations.

# 3. Principles

MEL provides an open, transparent and publicly available system to ensure complaints and appeals are managed fairly, efficiently and effectively in a timely manner.

The Mater Education complaints management system has various procedures and processes in place, dependant on the nature of the issue. All complaints management procedures adhere to the following principles:

## 3.1 Respect

- All matters will be addressed objectively, equitably, and impartially.
- Matters will be managed in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
- Mater Education will be responsive to matters raised and comply with timeframes set out in legislation.
- Mater Education requires all staff to treat complainants with courtesy and respect and ensure no detriment for making a complaint.
- Mater Education will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties to a complaint or appeal.

## 3.2 Transparency

- Our complaints management system provides transparency about complaints processes, expected timeframes for resolution of complaints and appeals and any opportunities for review of complaints and appeals outcomes.
- Real or perceived conflicts of interest will be declared and managed.
- We will keep appropriate records of the complaint or appeal and its resolution.



- Where a complaint or appeal review is successful, MEL will provide for implementation of decisions made in the internal stages of the process and provide for due consideration of recommendations arising from the external stage.
- All matters will be handled by an unbiased person.

### 3.3 Accessibility

- Mater Education provides multiple mechanisms for providing feedback and lodging complaints and appeals.
- Mater Education makes this policy publicly available and easily accessible.
- Where barriers may impact a person's ability to raise a matter, Mater Education staff will provide assistance. This include advising on the appropriate procedure that should apply.
- There will be no additional fees associated with the resolution of a complaint or appeal.
- MEL complaints management will be integrated into standard operations.

### 3.4 Communication

- Parties to a complaint or appeals submission will be informed on what to expect during the process and provided with opportunity to participate.
- Mater people delegated the responsibility of management of a matter will keep the complainant regularly informed in writing on progress toward resolution.
- All parties to an internal review of a complaint or appeal will be notified of the outcome in writing.

### 3.5 Timeliness

- Mater Education will adhere to the timeframes specified in the relevant procedure for any given matter. In circumstances where this is not possible, a timeframe will be communicated to you as soon as practicable.
- Mater Education Leadership will monitor resolution progress to ensure matters are resolved as rapidly as possible.

## 4. Responsibilities and delegations

Mater Education's Complaints and Appeals Procedure is intended to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of MEL's staff and MEL students. This procedure also manages requests for review of decisions made by MEL in relation to outcomes of complaints and appeals.

Academic Appeals relates to MEL's decisions regarding student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards.

Non-Academic Appeals relates to MEL's decisions regarding administrative or non-academic aspects e.g. non-payment of fees, or refunds, breach of personal information, negative enrolment decisions.



The responsibilities for the various roles involved in the complaints management process are as follows:

### **Complainants / Appellants**

- Complainants / appellants will treat MEL team members with respect at all stages of the complaints and appeals process and act in good faith.
- Complaints or appeals should be submitted as soon as possible to the event to ensure timely resolution.
- Provision of sufficient detail on the matter to ensure the matter can be investigated fully.

### **All staff**

- Acknowledgement that effective complaints and appeal management is an important part of how MEL works.
- Treating all complainants / appellants with respect and sensitivity.
- Where a barrier to making a complaint is observed, provide assistance and guide complainants / appellants to the correct policy or procedures for their particular issue, including how they can make a complaint or lodge an appeal.
- Declaration of conflicts of interest that may impact the resolution of a matter.

### **Delegates responsible for Management of a matter**

- Maintaining complaint resolution skills through participation in any training opportunities provided by MEL.
- Management of a matter without personal bias and declaring any perceived conflicts of interest.
- Ensuring there is no detriment to people who complain or appeal.
- Ensuring resolution is achieved efficiently and within relevant timeframes.
- Communicating effectively during the process for escalation in the event the complainant or appellant does not agree with the decision.
- Use feedback, complaints and appeals to inform continuous improvement
- Document and communicate outcomes to relevant parties

### **Leadership**

- Making it easy and accessible for people to provide feedback and make complaints
- Monitoring the timeliness of complaint resolution and ensuring compliance with timeframes set in relevant legislation and standards or timeframes set by MEL.
- Fostering a receptive, blame-free culture that is open to feedback and improvement

### **Quality and Compliance**

- Ensuring accurate records are kept for all matters dealt with under this policy and removed past the required records retention period.
- Monitoring, review and assurance of the complaints management system.
- Assisting Mater Education leadership to monitor progression of complaints and appeals against required timeframes.



## 5. Assurance

### 5.1 Related legislation

- (a) National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- (b) VET Student Loans Rules 2016
- (c) Disability Standards for Education 2005

### 5.2 Standards

- (a) Standards for RTOs
- (b) EN Accreditation Standards

## 6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Complaint	the expression of dissatisfaction
Appeal	a process in which a decision is studied and accepted or rejected
Academic appeal	an expression of dissatisfaction with academic progress, assessment, curriculum, the quality of course delivery and issuing of awards.
Non-Academic appeal	an expression of dissatisfaction with administrative aspects of MEL's services
Internal stage	a process for the lodging and hearing of a formal complaint or appeal
External stage	a process for having a decision on appeal reviewed by an external and independent person or body with appropriate expertise
Good faith	Honest, sincere, without malice or ill intent



## 7. Related documents

### Mater documents

- MPPL-00772 Mater Education Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- MPPL-07812 Mater Education Academic Complaint and Appeals Procedure

### External documents

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- Ombudsman Act 2001
- AS ISO 10002:2022 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ)
- VET Student Loan Act 2016
- VET Student Loans Rules 2016
- Skills Assure Supplier Policy
- VET Student Loans Manual for Providers

## 8. Document information

### 8.1 Earlier revisions

Revision #	Published date	Comment
1	01 Apr 2025	Initial Version (Document ID: PY-MEL-040021)

### 8.2 Key contacts

Author	Manager of Quality & Compliance
Owner	Executive Director Mater Education
Subject area	Complaints and Appeals
Committee	n/a

#### Affirmation

This governance document is consistent with [Mater's Mission](#).  
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