



# COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE



RTO 40518

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## 1. Scope

This document covers all persons involved in providing Connect 'n' Grow® (CnG) programs throughout Australia, including those providing our services, any external party involved in providing our services and persons attending our programs.

## 2. Objective

The object of this procedure is to outline all aspects of our complaints and appeals requirements, processes, and responsibilities.

CnG will manage and respond to complaints and appeals from original decisions with respect to allegations involving the conduct of:

- CnG, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- A third party providing services on behalf of CnG, its trainers, assessors, or other staff: or
- A learner of CnG.

CnG shall manage and respond to appeals and requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by CnG or a third party providing services on behalf of CnG.

CnG's Complaints and Appeals procedures shall:

- Ensure natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process;
- Ensure the process for handling complaints and appeals is publicly available;
- Ensure that complaints and appeals are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable; and
- Provides for an independent party outside of CnG to review the outcome of the complaint or appeal if CnG's process fails to resolve the complaint or appeal.

CnG is committed to timely, fair, efficient and effective resolution of complaints and appeals.

## 3. Roles & Responsibilities

The Head of Corporate Services is responsible to oversee or manage complaints.

The Head of Teaching, Learning and Professional Development is responsible to oversee and manage assessment appeals.

## 4. References & Definitions

### Internal

[Connect'n'Grow Website](#)  
[Complaints Form](#)  
[Assessment Appeals Form](#)  
[RTO Complaints Register](#)  
[Student Handbook](#)

CnG/NAT/AD/SOP-02\_Form01  
CnG/NAT/AD/SOP-02\_Form02  
CnG/NAT/AD/SOP-01\_RG01  
CnG/NAT/AD/SOP-05\_HB01

### External

[RTO Standards 2015](#)

ASQA

### Definitions

An **appeal** is an application for a decision to be reviewed and/or reversed.

A **complaint** is generally negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved.

**Dispute** means any type of concern, problem, disagreement, or argument regarding a decision that has been made.

**Feedback** is information provided from any person or party about reactions to our services and our performance.

## 5. Procedure

### 5.1. Complaints

A complaint may be received by CnG at any time and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant or order to be acted upon. Submitting a documented complaint will guarantee the process outlined herein.

Complaints may include, but are not limited to, poor student support services, the quality of a training program, student support and materials, bullying discrimination, sexual or any other form of harassment.

A complaint may be made at any time; however, where the complaint relates to a specific incident (e.g. poor service or behaviour), CnG encourages the complainant to lodge a formal complaint as soon as possible following the occurrence.

Complaints may be made by any person.

A complainant has the right to make a complaint and expect CnG to resolve it in accordance with this procedure and potentially related legislative frameworks without prejudice or fear of reprisal or victimisation. CnG is committed to providing a fair complaints process in which complaints are responded to promptly, with minimum distress and maximum protection to all parties.

Before lodging a documented complaint, the complainant is encouraged to make an informal approach or appointment to discuss the matter with the individual/s involved (e.g. the trainer). Where this is not feasible or preferred, the complainant may request Complaints Form from [admin@connectngrow.edu.au](mailto:admin@connectngrow.edu.au) or download the form from the CnG website.

All documented complaints will be directed to the appropriate manager or heads of department.

The respective manager will ensure that the complaint:

- Is added to the RTO Complaints Register,
- Is acknowledged within 5 working days of receiving the complaint,
- Is reviewed within 10 working days of receiving the complaint to evaluate the details and determine the most appropriate resolution options,
- Is responded to within 15 working days of receiving the complaint to update the complainant of the proposed resolution options or to advise where the process is up to, what resolution steps have been taken and what steps are still in progress:
  - For complex complaints requiring extensive resolution time (e.g. requiring investigation), a weekly update will be communicated to the complainant until such time as a proposed resolution has been made.

#### 5.1.1. Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness

CnG is committed to a fair, unbiased, equitable and efficient process. All parties will be informed of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond. Ideally, the complaint will be resolved through discussion and conciliation.

Where a complaint is unable to be resolved in this manner, CnG may appoint an appropriate external and independent mediator.

Where a complaint is of a criminal nature, appropriate authorities will be notified and follow the subsequent legal processes.

#### 5.1.2. Independent Review

Where an external and independent mediator is required to be appointed, details of the current process will be provided for review. Additionally, the mediator will give each party an opportunity to formally present their case directly.

After all information has been presented, the mediator will evaluate all the information provided and rule the most appropriate determination to resolve the matter. The decision of an independent mediator will be considered final and not eligible for further appeal.

Outcomes of the compliant process will be documented and signed by all those involved. The RTO complaints register is also to be updated with any additional information forthcoming from the determination.

## 5.2. Appeals

This document outlines the application process of a student for the reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during training and/or assessment.

An appeal can be made by a student when a disputable matter has not been able to be resolved with the trainer/assessor. The appeal must be formally submitted within 14 calendar days of the date the mark for assessment task was notified to the student, or the final result was published.

A student has the right to raise an appeal and expect every effort to be made to resolve it in accordance with this procedure, without prejudice or fear of reprisal or victimisation.

Appeals are submitted to the Head of Teaching, Learning and Professional Development.

Before lodging a formal appeal, the student should make an informal approach or appointment to discuss the matter with their trainer. In all cases, the persons involved should attempt to resolve issues or disputes that arise during training and assessment at the time they occur.

Where this attempt is unsuccessfully resolved, the student may request an Assessment Appeal Form from [admin@connectngrow.edu.au](mailto:admin@connectngrow.edu.au) or download the form from our CnG website.

All formal appeals will be directed to the Head of Teaching, Learning and Professional Development. CnG will manage all appeals through a fair, unbiased, equitable and efficient process. The appeal will be reviewed within 10 working days to determine the merit of the assessment mark received. A response will be made to the appellant within one week of this review, confirming the original decision or providing an independent assessment determination.

If the review decision is accepted by all parties, the matter will be deemed resolved. However, if the matter remains unresolved, CnG may engage an appropriate external and independent industry representative. After reviewing and evaluating each party's case, the appointed representative will provide a final decision to either:

- Confirm the original decision; or
- Appoint a different assessor to conduct a new review; or
- Substitute an alternative assessment / assessment method.

The decision of an appointed representative will be considered the final decision.

Outcomes of the appeal process will be documented and signed by all those involved and added to the student's file.

## 5.3. Secure Storage of Records

All documentation relating to appeals will be electronically stored (scanned and saved where required) for audit purposes.

## 5.4. Relationship to Continuous Improvement

The handling of complaints may highlight a need for continuous improvement within the organisation. Any substantiated complaint will also be further investigated to determine potential corrective and/or preventative actions to remedy standard practices and processes.

### 5.5. Internal Awareness

Students are made aware during the Student Induction that they can make a complaint or an appeal via the CnG Hub (which directs them to the appropriate form on the Connect 'n' Grow® website). This is also outlined in the Student Handbook: *Complaints & Appeals*.

### 5.6. Disputes Handling and Resolution Process

A dispute can be lodged at any time. However, where the dispute relates to a specific incident, CnG encourages that the dispute is lodged as soon as possible following the occurrence.

In circumstances where an attempt at resolving the dispute at this initial local level has not been successful, the person lodging the dispute may request a meeting with the CnG General Manager and is entitled to bring with them a representative of their choosing, as well as the other party involved in the dispute.

CnG is committed to a fair, unbiased, equitable and efficient process. All parties will be informed of the circumstances of the dispute and give an opportunity to respond. Ideally, the dispute will be resolved through discussion and conciliation.

### 5.7. Availability of this Procedure

This procedure is available to external parties via our website.

Internal parties have access to this procedure via SharePoint and it is part of the CnG induction process.

### 5.8. Feedback

There are two types of feedback.

Firstly, feedback provided by CnG to students, their family or another external stakeholder.

Secondly, feedback provided by students, their family or another external stakeholder on CnG performance, processes, systems, practices or decisions made by us.

Compliments, complaints and feedback can be provided verbally or in writing to any CnG worker or by completing a Feedback form or Complaint Form available on our website under resources.

### 5.9. Reporting and Responding to General Complaints or Feedback

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensure that children, young people, students, their families, and other stakeholders feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service.

Children, young people, students and their families are informed that they can provide feedback or make a complaint as part of their student induction, and it is also noted in their student handbook.

CnG will deal with any complaints and feedback received from children, young people or their families, students, or other external stakeholder, promptly, sensitively and fairly.

CnG will:

- Listen to complaint/feedback;
- The person receiving the complaint will make a record of it if received verbally;
- Advise of the time expected for an outcome;
- If a worker receives a complaint, they must forward it to management as soon as possible;
- Management will respond to the complainant with an outcome within 10 business days;
- Make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the child, young person, student or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact:

- CnG Contact Officer: Matt Rattray, Head of Teaching, Learning and Professional Development, Mobile: 0405 248 128
- SA – Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (08) 8226 8666, or Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency 1300 419 495;
- Australian Human Right Commission Online: [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au) Phone: 1300 656 419
- SA – Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relation to discrimination) Online: [www.eoc.sa.gov.au](http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au)

Whilst attending a CnG teaching location, students have the right to raise any concern or complaint with the CnG Health Trainer or representative if they are feeling unsafe. If they are comfortable doing so, or if their complaint is about a direct CnG Employee, they can do so by filling out the complaint for on our website or contacting our CnG General Manager.

If a student is attending a CnG Program within a Partner School teaching location, concerns (including any in relation to the CnG Trainer) are to be raised with their direct School teacher.

Information about all concerns and complaints, including breaches of relevant policies, procedures, or the above Code of Conduct, are recorded and analysed by CnG, including in relation to processes, timeframes and record keeping practices. Systemic issues are identified and mitigated through the process.

Timely feedback is provided to children, young people, students, families, staff and other stakeholders who raise concerns and complaints. This includes reporting back on incidents, concerns and complaints. CnG Management review all complaints to identify any potential areas for improvement in our child safe practices. This is done during Executive Meetings.



## 6. Details of Review and Versions

In developing this procedure, we have consulted with internal stakeholders to establish a holistic and accurate view of our needs to effectively manage any risks and improve our procedure.

New versions are communicated to all stakeholders.

Version Number	Date	Author	Rational
1.00	05 APR 21	R. Knight	Initial procedure
2.00	26 APR 24	C Grant	Complaints and Appeals, and Disputes combined into one procedure.
2.01	19 August 2024	Sue Lawman	New Template/Formatting



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A WORLD WHERE HEALTH PATHWAYS HAPPEN THROUGH QUALITY EDUCATION

RTO 40518

## Support

Connect 'n' Grow® has a friendly team of staff who are always there to assist you if you need anything, please contact them on:

1300 283 662

[admin@connectngrow.edu.au](mailto:admin@connectngrow.edu.au)