



COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

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Complaints and Appeals Policy

Purpose

This policy ensures that complaints and appeals are managed fairly, efficiently, and transparently in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025. It supports compliance with Outcome Standards 2.7 and 2.8, and relevant Compliance Requirements, by providing accessible mechanisms for feedback, complaints, and appeals, and by using outcomes to inform continuous improvement.

Scope

This policy applies to all students (current and former), staff, contractors, and third parties engaged with the RTO. It covers complaints about training, assessment, support services, administration, conduct, and appeals against decisions made by the RTO or its representatives.

Principles

The following principles underpin our approach, guiding every stage of the complaints and appeals process.

- **Fairness:** Complaints and appeals are handled impartially, with all parties given equal access. Decisions are made objectively and without bias.
- **Compliance:** All processes strictly follow the Standards for RTOs 2025 and legal requirements, with accurate record-keeping and actions taken to prevent repeat issues.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints and appeals are acknowledged promptly and resolved as quickly as possible, with urgent matters prioritised and interim solutions provided if needed.
- **Confidentiality:** All matters are managed discreetly, with information shared only with those directly involved, ensuring privacy for everyone concerned.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Data from complaints and appeals is analysed to identify trends and drive improvements in training, assessment, and service delivery, with regular process reviews.
- **Transparency:** Clear information is provided on how to lodge complaints and appeals, with open communication about progress, outcomes, and available support.
- **Support and Accessibility:** Guidance and support are available for all, with reasonable adjustments and alternative communication methods to ensure everyone can access the process equally.

Definitions

The following words and expressions have the following specific meaning, as in the Outcome Standards, 2.7.

Third-party means any person who has an arrangement with an NVR RTO to deliver services, but does not include employees of the organisation, experts engaged by the organisation, or government agencies and government-funded agencies that refer VET students to the organisation and do not receive any payment from the organisation for doing so.

Procedures

The procedures outlined in this policy are guided by the following principles: fairness, transparency, timeliness, confidentiality, accessibility, and continuous improvement. These principles ensure that all complaints and appeals are handled impartially, promptly, and with respect for privacy and equity.

1. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, complaints should first be raised informally with the relevant trainer, assessor, or staff member. This promotes fairness and accessibility by allowing early resolution. This may include advice, discussions, and general mediation in relation to the issue. Any staff member could be involved in this informal process to resolve issues but once a student has placed a formal complaint/appeal the following formal procedures must be followed.

2. Formal Complaints Process

Step 1: Lodgement

- Complaints must be submitted using the Complaints and Appeals Form, stating the nature of the complaint and providing as many details as possible. This form can be obtained by contacting PTI Administration at info@pti.edi.au or phoning 1300 65 05 45.
- All formally submitted complaints or appeals are submitted to PTI Management. It is their responsibility to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints are to include the following information:
 - Submission date of complaint
 - Name of complainant;
 - Nature of complaint;
 - Date of the event which lead to the complaint
 - Attachments (if applicable);
- Once a formal complaint is received it is to be entered into the 'Complaints and Appeals Register', which is monitored by the RTO Manager regularly. The information to be contained and updated within the register is as follows:
 - Submission date of complaint
 - Name of complainant;
 - Description of complaint/appeal
 - Determined Resolution; and
 - Date of Resolution.
- A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person regardless of the nature of the complaint throughout the process at all times.
- Students are able to present their case in person
- Once a complaint has been filed and logged in the 'Complaints and Appeals Register' the RTO Manager shall notify the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the complaint and provide any further documentation related to the matter.

Step 2: Acknowledgement and Complaint Handling Timeframe

Written acknowledgement by the RTO no later than 24 hours from the time the complaint is received. This acknowledgement is intended to provide the complainant assurance that the RTO has received the complaint and will review the relevant issues and provide a response as soon as practical. The acknowledgement must inform the person that they will receive a written response.

The handling of a complaint is to commence within seven (7) working days of the lodgement of the complaint and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

- A written response must be provided to the complainant within fourteen (14) working days of the lodgement of the complaint.
- As a benchmark, the RTO will attempt to resolve a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days.
- A complainant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the process of the complaint handling. Updates should be provided to the complainant at a minimum of two (2) weekly intervals.
- Complaints must be resolved to a final outcome within sixty (60) calendar days of the complaint being initially received. Where the Chief Executive Officer considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint, the CEO must inform the complainant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required.

Step 3: Investigation

The RTO Manager and/or appropriate staff not involved in the matter investigates and seeks resolution. All actions and outcomes are recorded in the Complaints Register.

- Complainants must be allowed to formally present their case at no cost. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness must be observed, especially when decisions affect individuals' rights, interests, or legitimate expectations. Key principles include the right to be heard, the right to an unbiased decision-maker, and the right to a reasoned decision.
- CEO Bias: If the Chief Executive Officer perceives bias or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the process, the matter is referred directly to an independent third party.
- Responding to Allegations: When a complaint involves allegations against another person, both sides must be heard before any judgment is made. Anyone affected by a decision has the right to be informed of the allegations and given an adequate opportunity to respond. This includes the right to:
 - Provide mitigating circumstances,
 - Explain or deny allegations,
 - Present evidence,
 - Show cause against proposed actions,
 - Put forward arguments in their favor.
- Referring Matters to Authorities: If an allegation involves potential criminal or illegal activity beyond the RTO's expertise, Perth Training Institute reserves the right to report the matter to law enforcement. All involved parties will be notified in writing if this occurs.
- Third Party Review: If a complainant is not satisfied with how the RTO handles a complaint, they may request an independent third-party review after the internal process is complete. Before this, the RTO must be given the opportunity to fully address the complaint and respond in writing. If the outcome remains unsatisfactory, the complainant can request a review by informing the RTO Manager, who will initiate the process with the Chief Executive Officer.
- Complaints are to be handled in the strictest confidence. No RTO representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of the RTO CEO. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur.

Step 4: Outcome

- Once a decision has been reached the RTO Manager shall be required to inform all parties involved of any decisions or outcomes that are concluded in writing. Within the notification of the outcome of the formal complaint the student shall also be notified that they have the right of appeal. To appeal a decision the RTO must receive, in writing, grounds of the appeal. Students are referred to the appeals procedure.
- The RTO Manager shall ensure that the RTO will act immediately on any substantiated complaint. If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, the registered provider must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required and advise the student of the outcome.
- Copies of all documentation, outcomes and further action required will be placed into the 'complaints and appeals register' by the RTO Manager and on the student file.
- A written response to both the complainant and the person subject to the allegations, including information about the right to seek a third-party review, is provided within 30 calendar days. If more time is needed, all parties will be notified and updated regularly.

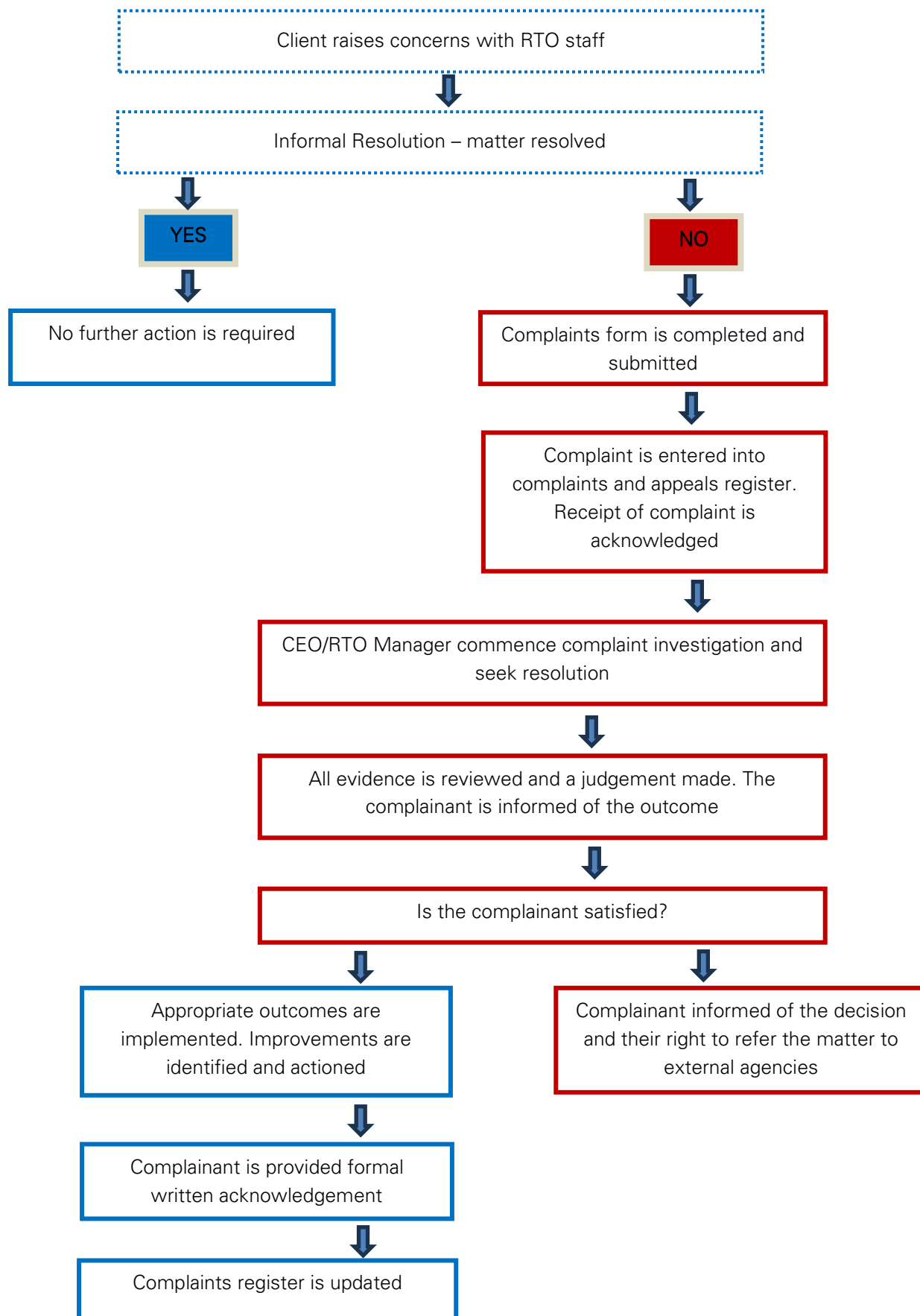
Step 5: Escalation

If the complaint is unresolved or complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint handling procedure, the person is to be advised that they have the right to refer the matter to the RTO CEO or any external authority/agency that may be relevant to their complaint.

The following external agencies are nominated in the first instance as relevant points of referral the person may consider:

- In relation to the delivery of training and assessment services, the person may refer their complaint to the National Training Complaints Service via the following phone number: 13 38 73 or visit the website at <https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH>
- In relation to consumer-related issues, the person may refer their complaint to the Office of Fair Trading.
- In relation to matters relating to privacy, the person may refer their complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner via the following details: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/individuals/how-do-i-make-a-privacy-complaint> or call on 1300 363 992.

Complaints Process Flowchart



3. Appeals Process

Grounds for Appeal

All students have the right to appeal decisions made by the RTO where reasonable grounds can be established. The areas in which a student may appeal a decision made by the RTO may include:

- Assessments conducted
- Deferral, suspension, or cancellation decisions made in relation to the student's enrolment
- Or any other conclusion/decision that is made after a complaint has been dealt with by the RTO in the first instance.

Step 1: Lodgement

- Appeals must be submitted using the Complaints and Appeals Form, stating the nature of the appeal and providing as many details as possible. This form can be obtained by contacting PTI Administration at info@pti.edi.au or phoning 1300 65 05 45.
- An Appeal Form to be submitted within 20 business days of the decision.
- All formally submitted appeals are submitted to PTI Management. It is their responsibility to deal with the appeal in the first instance. Appeals are to include the following information:
 - Submission date of appeal
 - Name of appellant;
 - Nature of appeal;
 - Date of the event which lead to the appeal
 - Attachments (if applicable);
- Once a formal appeal is received it is to be entered into the 'Complaints and Appeals Register', which is monitored by the RTO Manager regularly. The information to be contained and updated within the register is as follows:
 - Submission date of appeal
 - Name of appellant;
 - Description of appeal
 - Determined Resolution; and
 - Date of Resolution.
- A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person regardless of the nature of the appeal throughout the process at all times.
- Students are able to present their case in person
- Once an appeal has been filed and logged in the 'Complaints and Appeals Register' the RTO Manager shall notify the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the appeal and provide any further documentation related to the matter.

Step 2: Acknowledgement and Appeals Handling Timeframe

Written acknowledgement by the RTO no later than 24 hours from the time the appeal is received. This acknowledgement is intended to provide the appellant assurance that the RTO has received the appeal and will review the relevant issues and provide a response as soon as practical. The acknowledgement must inform the person that they will receive a written response.

The handling of an appeal is to commence within seven (7) working days of the lodgement of the appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.

- A written response must be provided to the appellant within fourteen (14) working days of the lodgement of the appeal.
- As a benchmark, the RTO will attempt to resolve an appeal within thirty (30) calendar days.
- An appellant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the process of the appeal handling. Updates should be provided to the appellant at a minimum of two (2) weekly intervals.

- Appeals must be resolved to a final outcome within sixty (60) calendar days of the appeal being initially received. Where the Chief Executive Officer considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the appeal, the CEO must inform the appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required.

Step 3: Investigation

The RTO Manager and/or appropriate staff not involved in the matter investigates and seeks resolution. All actions and outcomes are recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

- Appellants must be allowed to formally present their case at no cost. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness must be observed, especially when decisions affect individuals' rights, interests, or legitimate expectations. Key principles include the right to be heard, the right to an unbiased decision-maker, and the right to a reasoned decision.
- CEO Bias: If the Chief Executive Officer perceives bias or if the appellant is dissatisfied with the process, the matter is referred directly to an independent third party.
- Third Party Review: If an appellant is not satisfied with how the RTO handles an appeal, they may request an independent third-party review after the internal process is complete. Before this, the RTO must be given the opportunity to fully address the appeal and respond in writing. If the outcome remains unsatisfactory, the appellant can request a review by informing the RTO Manager, who will initiate the process with the Chief Executive Officer.
- Appeals are to be handled in the strictest confidence. No RTO representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of the RTO CEO. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur.

General appeals

- Where a student has appealed a decision or outcome of a formal complaint they are required to notify the RTO in writing within 20 working days of the grounds of their appeal. Any supporting documentation should also be attached to the appeal.
- The appeal shall be lodged through client services, and the RTO manager shall ensure the details of the appeal are added to the 'Complaints and Appeals Register'.
- The RTO Manager shall be notified and shall seek details regarding the initial documentation of the appeal and shall make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal.
- The student shall be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decisions, and the 'complaints and appeals register' updated. The student shall also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify the RTO if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

Assessment appeals

- Where a student wishes to appeal an assessment, they are required to notify their assessor in the first instance. Where appropriate the assessor may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable decision is gained. The assessor shall complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why assessment was or was not granted.
- If this is still not to the student's satisfaction the student shall formally lodge an appeal by submitting a complaints and appeals form outlining their reasons for the appeal. They shall lodge this appeal to info@pti.edu.au and the appeal shall be entered into the 'Complaints and Appeals Register'.
- The RTO Manager shall be notified and shall seek details from the assessor involved and any other relevant parties. A decision shall be made regarding the appeal either indicating the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a 'third party'. The third party shall be another assessor appointed by the RTO.
- The student shall be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the 'complaints and appeals register' updated. The student shall also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

The student is required to notify the RTO if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process. Where PTI considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, PTI will:

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

Step 4: Outcome

- Once a decision has been reached the RTO Manager shall be required to inform all parties involved of any decisions or outcomes that are concluded in writing. Within the notification of the outcome of the formal appeal the student shall also be notified that they have the right to refer the matter to any external authority/agency that may be relevant to their appeal.
- The RTO Manager shall ensure that the RTO will act immediately on any substantiated appeal. If the internal or any external appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, the registered provider must immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action that is required and advise the student of the outcome.
- Copies of all documentation, outcomes and further action required will be placed into the 'complaints and appeals register' by the RTO Manager and on the student file.
- A written response to both the appellant is provided within 30 calendar days. If more time is needed, all parties involved will be notified and updated regularly.

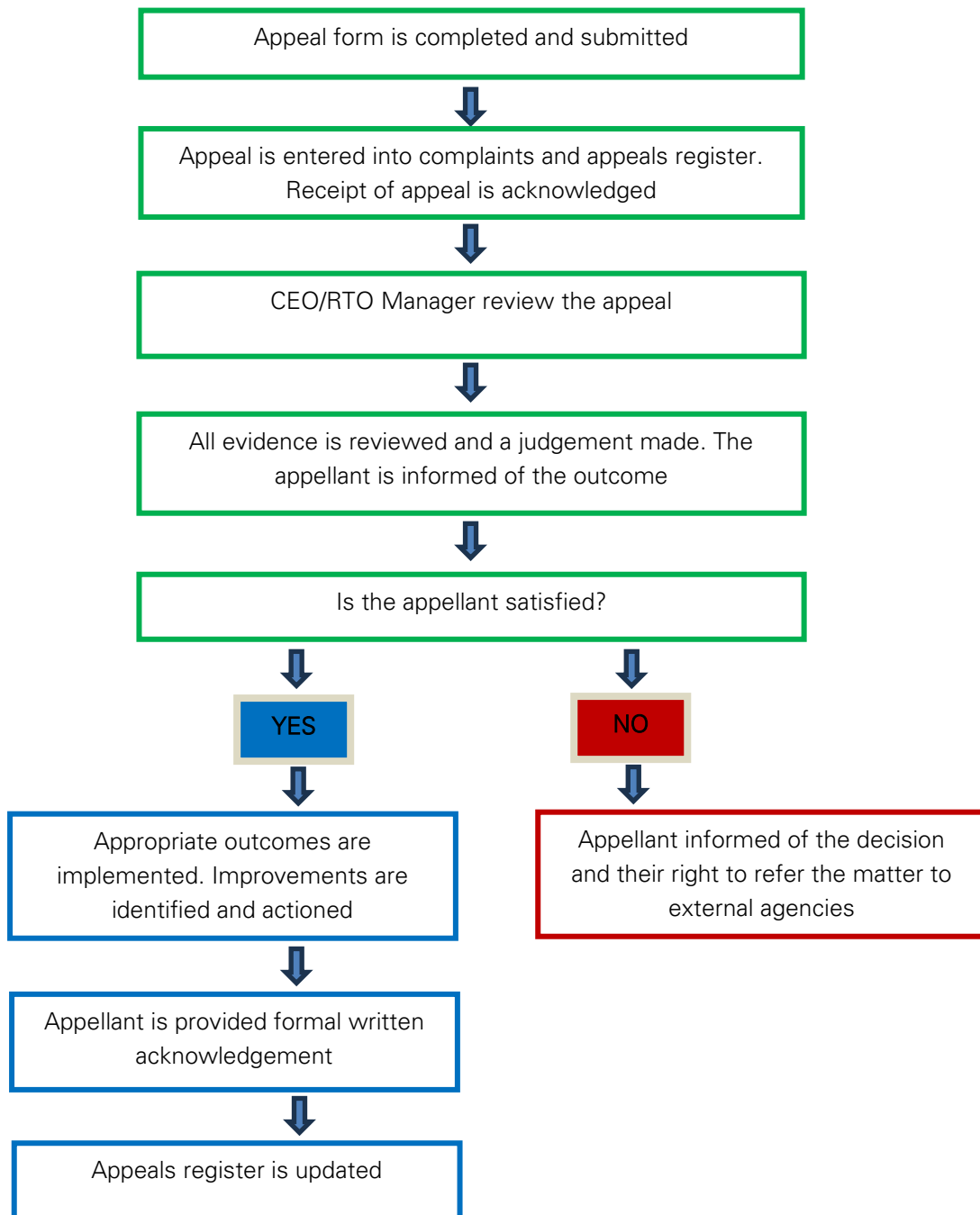
Step 5: Escalation

If the appeal is unresolved or appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeals handling procedure, the person is to be advised that they have the right to refer the matter to the RTO CEO or any external authority/agency that may be relevant to their appeal.

The following external agencies are nominated in the first instance as relevant points of referral the person may consider:

- In relation to the delivery of training and assessment services, the person may refer their appeal to the National Training Complaints Service via the following phone number: 13 38 73 or visit the website at <https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH>
- In relation to consumer-related issues, the person may refer their appeal to the Office of Fair Trading.
- In relation to matters relating to privacy, the person may refer their appeal to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner via the following details: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/individuals/how-do-i-make-a-privacy-complaint> or call on 1300 363 992.

Appeals Process Flowchart



Record Keeping

All complaints and appeals are recorded in the Complaints and Appeals Register and securely stored in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 and the RTO's Privacy Policy.

Access and Promotion

This policy is available on the RTO website, in the Student Handbook, during and upon request from administration.

Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy is reviewed annually or as required. Outcomes from complaints and appeals are analysed to identify trends and inform improvements to training, assessment, and service delivery.

Alignment with Standards for RTOs 2025

This Complaints and Appeals Policy aligns with the following Outcome Standards and Compliance Requirements as set out in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025.

Outcome Standards

Standard 2.7 – Feedback and Complaints:

- Operate a complaints management system that:
 - Accepts feedback and complaints about the organisation, third parties, and staff.
 - Ensures procedural fairness for all parties.
 - Specifies reasonable timeframes for response and resolution.
 - Provides avenues for further action if unresolved.
 - Make information about how to provide feedback and lodge complaints publicly available and easily accessible.
 - Support students in providing feedback and making complaints.
 - Document outcomes and communicate them to all parties.
 - Use feedback and complaints to inform continuous improvement.

Standard 2.8 – Appeals:

- Operate an appeals management system that:
 - Allows students to appeal decisions made by the RTO, third parties, or staff.
 - Ensures procedural fairness for all parties.
 - Specifies reasonable timeframes for actioning appeals.
 - Provides independent review avenues at no or low cost if requested.
 - Make information about how to appeal decisions publicly available and easily accessible.
 - Document outcomes and communicate them to the appellant.
 - Use appeal outcomes to inform continuous improvement.

Compliance Requirements

Clause 15 – Annual Declaration of Compliance:

- The RTO must declare annually that it complies with the Standards, including its complaints and appeals processes.

Clause 16 – Notification of Material Changes:

- The RTO must notify ASQA of any material changes that may affect its ability to comply with the Standards, including changes to complaints and appeals procedures.

Clause 17 – Third Party Arrangements:

- The RTO must ensure that any third-party arrangements include mechanisms for managing complaints and appeals related to services delivered by those third parties.