



Client Complaints Policy and Procedure - Under 18s

Purpose and scope

This policy and procedure applies to those clients who are under the age of 18 wishing to provide feedback on the services provided by South Regional TAFE. The college recognises that our clients under the age of 18 provide valued feedback to the college. This policy outlines the way in which the college will manage and respond to complaints by clients under the age of 18 and how the college can support minors who wish to make a complaint, including if they do not feel safe or respected, or feel they are not being treated fairly. A complaint may relate to:

- a) The behaviour of a South Regional TAFE trainer, assessor or other staff towards you or another minor
- b) A third party providing services on South Regional TAFE's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- c) The way you are spoken to or treated by adults in the college
- d) Other student(s) including under 18s at South Regional TAFE or in an activity/setting organised by the college
- e) A college service, product, or training delivery
- f) College equipment or facilities (problems with or lack of)
- g) Something the college has failed to do
- h) The handling of a complaint.

This policy does not relate to:

- Academic Appeals by students (eg student progress, assessment. Refer to the *Academic Appeals policy*).

College staff can themselves raise safety concerns about college settings, practices, other staff conduct or concerns about behaviour between minors through the appropriate methods.

Statement of Commitment

South Regional TAFE prioritises the safety and wellbeing of students under the age of 18 (minors) at the college and recognises the rights of students under 18 to be safe and supported during their time at the college.

South Regional TAFE values and encourages feedback to identify and resolve issues, reduce the likelihood of them occurring again, and to make improvements.

Policy

South Regional TAFE values customer feedback and is committed to resolving issues identified in feedback in a transparent and timely way. The aim of this policy is to ensure that complaints are resolved in a manner that meets both the interests of our clients under the age of 18 and the college, whilst ensuring fairness to both parties.

The college recognises that families/communities play an important role in supporting students under the age of 18 to understand the college's Complaints Policy and processes and in supporting them during the complaints resolution process.

Informal Complaint

Resolving the complaint informally is encouraged before commencing formal action. This does not need to be in writing, for example you may approach a member of staff (eg lecturer/trainer, Student Services, Aboriginal Programs or student counsellor) to discuss a concern. Most concerns are expected to be resolved at this level.

How to make a complaint

There are several ways that you (or your parent/care giver/family member or another person speaking on your behalf) can make a complaint or provide feedback to the college:

- Complaints or Client Feedback forms are available from reception (or from any staff member) and can be placed in our feedback drop box – or place a letter inside the box if preferred
- Our website has a webpage on Complaints and Feedback: <http://www.southregionaltafe.wa.edu.au> where information is provided on the complaints process, a complaint/feedback form can be downloaded, and our feedback email address is provided
- Ask to speak to Student Services, Aboriginal Programs or a student counsellor (at Albany and Bunbury campuses)
- Telephone the college and ask to speak to Student Services, Aboriginal Programs, the student counsellor (at Albany and Bunbury campuses) or a Planning and Business Services Officer
- Email us at feedback_combit@srtafe.wa.edu.au
- The college's Aboriginal Programs staff can assist Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander students to make a complaint/provide feedback in a culturally safe way

Where clients have individual needs, every reasonable effort will be made to provide assistance if requested and to make the complaint lodgement process as flexible as possible.

What to expect once a complaint has been made

Complaints received will be treated as confidential and handled within the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Investigations will be focused on outcomes for the client. The college will not discount the opinions of children/young people if they differ from those of adult(s). At all stages of the process the person making the complaint has the right to be represented and supported by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person). Support in making a complaint can also be provided by our Student Services or Aboriginal Programs team, Planning and Business Services Officer (and student counsellor at some campuses). The person making the complaint may withdraw a complaint at any stage. The resolution process will be documented to provide a clear account of the complaint and the college's response, and will provide fair remedies in response to the complaint.

A complaint will be acknowledged in writing from our Planning and Business Services team within five (5) business days of it being received from the college website, by email, or as a complaint or feedback form. Complaints are directed to the Manager responsible for the area the complaint is about. The Manager handling the complaint will provide a response within ten (10) working days of the first acknowledgment. We aim to resolve any complaint within twenty eight (28) business days. If the college considers more than 60 calendar days are needed to finalise the complaint, the person making the complaint will be informed in writing, including the reasons why more than 60 days are required. Regular updates will also be provided on the progress of the complaint.

If the person wants to make a complaint anonymously, this will be regarded as feedback and included into the college's continuous improvement processes if appropriate.

The complaints process is free of charge.

South Regional TAFE complies with the requirement to securely store and maintain records of all complaints and feedback and their outcomes.

Appealing a complaint decision

If the person who made the complaint feels it has not been resolved by the college and wishes to pursue take the matter further, they may take the complaint to an external agency, eg the Ombudsman Western Australia:

Phone: (08) 9220 7555

Freecall: 1800 117 000 (for calls outside the metropolitan area)

Email: mail@ombudsman.wa.gov.au

Postal: PO Box Z5386, St Georges Terrace, PERTH WA 6831

In person: Level 2, Albert Facey House, 469 Wellington Street, PERTH WA 6000

Further information can be obtained by visiting www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au

Related documents

Policy: Client Complaints Policy and Process (Adults)

Form: Client Complaint

Form: Client Feedback

Policy: Academic Appeals

Policy: Student Access and Equity

Policy: Access and Diversity

Policy: Duty of Care

Relevant legislation and references

Commissioner for Children and Young People - Child Friendly Complaints Guidelines

Commissioner for Children and Young People WA: <https://www.ccp.wa.gov.au/info-for-children-and-young-people/speak-up-and-make-a-complaint/>

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

National Complaints Code

Policy: Academic Appeals

Standards for RTOs 2015

VET Student Loan Rules 2016 (Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision F, Section 88)

VET Student Loan Act 2016 (Part 5, Division 1, Section 48)

Children and Community Services Act 2004

Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse in WA - <https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2023-05/mandatory-reporting-guide-western-australia.pdf>

Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse in WA – Resources - <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/mandatory-reporting-of-child-sexual-abuse-wa-resources>

Version control

Custodian of document	Version	Date of next review
Director Organisational Services	2	3 years from date of issue