

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Pinnacle Training is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaint handling and appeals process.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services or people which has not been resolved locally.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to and may involve issues concerning the conduct of:

- Pinnacle Training as an organisation, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- Third party's services provided on the behalf of Pinnacle Training, its trainers, assessors or other staff; or
- a learner of Pinnacle Training.

This is an important point to note in understanding that this policy has a broad application and is not simply relevant to complaints that may be made by learners. A complaint may be made by an employer about Pinnacle Training or by the trainer about the conduct of the learner. Throughout this policy we refer to the person making a complaint as simply the complainant.

Early resolution of complaints

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved. It is often the case that complaints can be avoided by proper communication and respect between persons involved.

Making a complaint

A complaint may be received by Pinnacle Training in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person.

To make a complaint, the person is recommended to complete the Pinnacle Training - Complaint Form. This form can be obtained from the Pinnacle Training office or can be requested via email.

The completed complaint form is to be submitted to the Office Manager either in hard copy or electronically via the following contact details:

Postal address: 451 East Deep Creek Road, Gympie, Qld, 4570.

Email: leanne@pinnacle-training.com.au

If a complainant has any difficulty accessing the required form or submitting the complaint to Pinnacle Training, they are advised to contact the Chief Executive Officer immediately at the following phone number: 07 5481 2228.

Complaint handling procedure

Pinnacle Training will apply the following procedure to its complaints handling:

- A complaint may be received in any form (written, verbal) although persons seeking to make a complaint are recommended to complete the complaint form. There is no time limitation on a person who is seeking to make a complaint. A person who makes a complaint must be **provided a written acknowledgement** as soon as possible and **not later than 24 hours** from the time the complaint is received. This acknowledgement is intended to provide the complainant assurance that Pinnacle Training had received the complaint and will review the relevant issues and provide a response as soon as practicable. The acknowledgement must inform the person that they will receive a written response within 14 days and explain the complaint handling process and the person's rights and obligations.

- A written record of all complaints is to be kept by Pinnacle Training including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. The complaints register within the student management system is to be used to record the details of the complaint and to maintain a chronological journal of events during the complaint handling process. Records relating to complaint handling must be stored securely to prevent access to unauthorised personnel.
- A complainant is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each complainant may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- Where a complaint is made about or involves allegations about another person, Pinnacle Training is obliged to inform this person about this complaint or allegation and provide them the opportunity to respond and present information in response to the issues raised. This may be achieved through direct meetings or meeting via an electronic means. Pinnacle Training must maintain a detailed record of these meetings in the form of a record of conversation. At all times information must be handled sensitively and treated in confidence. Persons involved in a dispute or complaint should be reminded to treat each other with respect and conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner.
- Where a complaint is received by Pinnacle Training which involve allegations about alleged criminal conduct, Pinnacle Training are to recommend the person making the complaint refer the matter to the relevant State or Territory Police Service.
- The complaints policy must be publicly available. This means that the complaints policy and procedure must be published on the Pinnacle Training website.
- 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.

- The complainant is to be provided a written response to the complaint, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response must be provided to the complainant within **fourteen (14) working days** of the lodgement of the complaint.
- Complaints must be resolved to a final outcome within **sixty (60) calendar days** of the complaint being initially received. Where Pinnacle Training 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. As a benchmark, Pinnacle Training should attempt to resolve complaints as soon as possible. A timeframe to resolve a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days is considered acceptable and in the best interests of Pinnacle Training and the complainant. A complainant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the progress of the complaint handling. Updates should be provided to the complainant at a minimum of **two (2) weekly intervals**.
- Pinnacle Training shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant during the complaint handling process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint handling process that find in the favour of the learner shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Pinnacle Training representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of Pinnacle Training Chief Executive Officer. 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 Information Release Form.
- Complaints are to be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the complaint handling process. This means that the complainant is entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The complainant is entitled to have their complaint heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally, the decision must be made based on logical evidence and

the decision-maker must take account of relevant considerations, must act for a proper purpose and must not take into account irrelevant considerations.

- Complaint handling procedures should conclude with an analysis of the circumstances to identify any opportunities for improvement.

What is an appeal?

An appeal is an application by a learner for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during their time with Pinnacle Training. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within **twenty-eight (28) working days** of the decision or finding being informed to the learner.

It is important to note that a learner may appeal any decision made by Pinnacle Training or a third party providing services on Pinnacle Training's behalf. Contrary to the popular belief that appeal relates only to assessment decisions, appeals can relate to administrative decisions that Pinnacle Training may make. Examples of this include an appeal of a decision to deny a refund or to deny an application for credit transfer. As the process for handling an assessment appeal compared with an appeal of an administrative decision is slightly different, this difference has been catered for within this policy with adjusted processes for both situations.

Early resolution of appeals

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved. It can often be the case that a learner's decision to make an appeal can be avoided by proper communication and consultation with learners at the time a decision is made.

Making an appeal

An appeal must be received by Pinnacle Training in writing using the specified form within **twenty-eight (28) working days** of the decision or finding being informed to the person.

To appeal a decision, the person is required to complete the Pinnacle Training - Request for Appeal of a Decision. This form is available via our website. The completed Request for Appeal form is to be submitted to the Office Manager either in hard copy or electronically via the following contact details:

Postal address: 451 East Deep Creek Road, Gympie, Qld, 4570.

Email: leanne@pinnacle-training.com.au

If a person seeking an appeal has any difficulty accessing the required form or submitting the appeal to Pinnacle Training, they are advised to contact Pinnacle Training immediately at the following phone number: 07 5481 2228.

Appeal handling procedure

Pinnacle Training will apply the following procedure to its appeals handling:

- Appeals must be lodged within **twenty-eight (28) working days** of the decision or finding being informed to the person. An appeal must be submitted using the Pinnacle Training - Request for Appeal of a Decision.
- A person who submits an appeal must be **provided a written acknowledgement** as soon as possible and **not later than 24 hours** from the time the appeal is received. This acknowledgement is intended to provide the person making an appeal assurance that Pinnacle Training had received the appeal and will review the relevant issues and provide a response. This acknowledgement is intended to provide the person making an appeal assurance that Pinnacle Training has received the appeal and will review the relevant issues and provide a response as soon as practicable. The acknowledgement must inform the person making an appeal that they will receive a written response within 14 days and explain the appeal handling process and the person's rights and obligations.
- A written record of all appeals is to be kept by Pinnacle Training including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. The appeals register within the student management system is to be used to record the details of the appeal and to maintain a chronological journal of events during the appeal handling process.

Records relating to appeal handling must be stored securely to prevent access to unauthorised personnel.

- An appellant is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each appellant may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The appeals policy must be publicly available. This means that the appeals policy and procedure must be published on the Pinnacle Training website.
- The handling of an appeal is to commence within **seven (7) working days** of the lodgement of the appeal and all reasonable measures are to be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The appellant is to be provided a written response to the appeal, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response must be provided to the appellant within **fourteen (14) working days** of the lodgement of the appeal.
- Appeals must be resolved to a final outcome within **sixty (60) calendar days** of the appeal being initially received. Where Pinnacle Training's 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. As a benchmark, Pinnacle Training should attempt to resolve appeals as soon as possible. A timeframe to resolve an appeal within thirty (30) calendar days is considered acceptable and in the best interests of Pinnacle Training and the appellant. An appellant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the progress of the appeal handling. Updates should be provided to the appellant at a minimum of **two (2) weekly intervals**.
- Pinnacle Training shall maintain the enrolment of the appellant during the appeal handling process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the appeal handling process that find in the favour of the appellant shall be implemented immediately.

- Appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Pinnacle Training representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of Pinnacle Training's Chief Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the appellant has given permission for this release to occur. This permission should be given using the Information Release Form.
- Appeals are to be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the appeal handling process. This means that the appellant is entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The appellant is entitled to have their appeal heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally the decision must be made based on logical evidence and the decision-maker must take account of relevant considerations, must act for a proper purpose and must not take into account irrelevant considerations. Further guidance on principles of natural justice and procedural fairness can be accessed at the following link: [Principles of Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness](#)
- Appeals handling procedures should conclude with an analysis of the circumstances to identify any opportunities for improvement.