Complaints

During course activities, students may have some concerns with the processes they are being exposed to or they may be unhappy with a particular aspect of the program. Ascet Tech undertakes to provide a mechanism allowing allows for the fair and equitable resolution of any issues.

Ascet Tech complaints process is available to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of:

- Ascet Tech, its trainers, assessors or other personnel; or
- AN Ascet Tech contracted third party providing services of Ascet Tech, including the third party representatives trainers, assessors or other personnel; or
- A student of Ascet Tech.

Allowing students to easily engage with the personnel of Ascet Tech about any concerns they have can stop minor issues becoming larger. There is no fee or charge levied for any complaint processed.

Ascet Tech’s complaints process is publicly available on the Ascet Tech website, and is provided to all prospective clients via the relevant handbook for each stakeholder group prior to enrolment. Where Ascet Tech uses third parties to deliver services, complaints information is also made available to prospective clients of these third party representatives.

Ascet Tech’s complaints process follow the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness by allowing anyone subject to a decision by Ascet Tech, or anyone who has allegations made against them, to tell their side of the story before a decision is made.

1.1. Complaint & Grievance Procedure

The following problem resolution framework has therefore been implemented for all stakeholders raising a complaint or issue, with a desire to resolve matters as positive adults. This procedure applies to all complaints about:

- Academic matters from students;
- Non-academic matters from students; and
- Non-academic matters from persons seeking to enrol with the Ascet Tech in a VET course or unit of study.

1. In the first instance a student should discuss the matter with the personnel member or responsible person concerned. Where this is not considered appropriate then the complainant is encouraged to discuss the matter with Ascet Tech management.

If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the discussion, it would mean that the matter is resolved.

2. Any client may submit a formal complaint to Ascet Tech in writing. 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; and
   - Any other relevant information or attachments (if applicable).

3. The Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within five working days and arrange a suitable time if needed to discuss the complaint.

4. The Chief Executive Officer will investigate the complaint, or refer the matter to appropriate Ascet Tech personnel to investigate. In either case, the investigation will be resolved and decisions made on the complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being received in writing.

   In all cases, each party may be accompanied and assisted by a third party at any relevant meeting.
5. The complainant will be informed of any decisions or outcomes concluded in writing, with reasons provided for the decisions or outcomes. With this notification, all complainants will receive information on how they can progress their complaint if still unhappy.

6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the complaint in writing to the Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer.

7. Escalated complaints are to include the following information:
   - Submission date of complaint;
   - Name of complainant;
   - Nature of complaint;
   - Reasons why the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the original complaint; and
   - Any other relevant information or attachments (if applicable).

8. The Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge receipt of the escalated complaint in writing within five working days and arrange a suitable time if needed to discuss the complaint.

9. The Chief Executive Officer will investigate the complaint, or refer the matter to an external dispute resolution process by a body appointed for this purpose by Ascet Tech. The default external body available is:
   Resolution Institute
   1800 651 650
   www.resolution.institute
   In either case, the investigation will be resolved and decisions made on the escalated complaint within twenty working days of the complaint being received in writing.

10. The complainant will be informed of any decisions or outcomes concluded in writing, with reasons provided for the decisions or outcomes. With this notification, all complainants will receive information on how they can progress their complaint if still unhappy.

11. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, and the complaint is yet to be mediated by an external dispute resolution process, they may escalate the complaint in writing to the Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer. In this situation, the Chief Executive Officer will:
   - Acknowledge receipt of the escalated complaint in writing within five working days; and
   - Refer the matter to an external dispute resolution process by a body appointed for this purpose by Ascet Tech.
   - Ascet Tech will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within ten working days of the receipt of the recommendations.
   - The investigation will be resolved and decisions made on the complaint within thirty working days of the escalated complaint being received in writing.

12. The complainant will be informed of any decisions or outcomes concluded in writing, with reasons provided for the decisions or outcomes. With this notification, all complainants will receive information on how they can progress their complaint if still unhappy.

All stages of the complaints process are documented and notes provided to all parties involved, including the outcomes of the complaint at each stage and reasons for the decisions made. Each complaint and its outcome is recorded in writing and stored on the Complaints Register. This register is located on the Ascet Tech Policies and Instructions Server Drive.

If the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, Ascet Tech immediately implements any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advises the student of the outcome.
At all times records of complaints and grievances are maintained confidentially. Ascet Tech retains records of all complaints and grievances for a period of at least five years, allowing parties to the complaint or grievance appropriate access to these records.

1.2. Complaints Key Contacts

If the student is still not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, they are directed to seek further assistance from the following additional parties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Education &amp; Training Programs</td>
<td>1300 701 801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia Skills &amp; Quality Authority (ASQA)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:enquiries@asqa.gov.au">enquiries@asqa.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Department of Education &amp; Communities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.det.act.gov.au">www.det.act.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Department of Education &amp; Training</td>
<td><a href="http://www.training.nsw.gov.au">www.training.nsw.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Department of Education and Training</td>
<td><a href="http://www.det.nt.gov.au">www.det.nt.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD Department of Education, Training &amp; Employment</td>
<td><a href="http://www.training.qld.gov.au">www.training.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology</td>
<td><a href="http://www.training.sa.gov.au">www.training.sa.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.skills.tas.gov.au">www.skills.tas.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian Department of Education &amp; Training</td>
<td><a href="http://www.skills.vic.gov.au">www.skills.vic.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA Department of Training and Workforce Development</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au">www.dtwd.wa.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3. Improvement Actions

Ascet Tech confirms its commitment to investigate and act on any complaint raised, and also to take appropriate action in any case where complaints are substantiated. In cases where a complaint is upheld, Ascet Tech endeavours to identify the cause of the complaint and implement steps to prevent the situation happening again.

All improvement actions arising from complaints are raised via an Improvement Record. Ascet Tech maintains a Continuous Improvement Register for recording the receipt and management of improvement records.

Once improvement records are raised, activities review complaints and their causes, evaluate corrective actions to resolve the issue and prevent reoccurrence, implement appropriate actions, record results of actions undertaken and review these actions to ensure effectiveness after implementation.

The Continuous Improvement Register and Improvement Records are located on the Ascet Tech Policies and Instructions Server Drive.
Assessment Appeals

Ascet Tech provides all students with a formal appeals process, which draws on a commitment to all parties understanding their rights and responsibilities in the assessment process. Other grievances or issues not pertaining to assessments should be referred to Ascet Tech’s complaints processes.

Ascet Tech’s appeals process facilitates requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by Ascet Tech or a third party representative providing services on Ascet Tech’s behalf.

Ascet Tech’s appeals process follows the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness by allowing anyone subject to a decision by Ascet Tech, or anyone who has allegations made against them, to tell their side of the story before a decision is made. There is no fee or charge levied for any appeal processed.

Ascet Tech’s process ensures that the decision-maker is independent of the decision being reviewed (for example, an assessor does not consider or decide an appeal against an assessment decision they made).

If a student objects to actions taken or decisions made by Ascet Tech personnel in conducting Recognition of Prior Learning and assessment services, they have the right to lodge an appeal.

Students also have the right to lodge an appeal against competency decisions made if:

- They believe the outcome is invalid; or
- They feel the process was invalid, inappropriate or unfair.

1.4. Appeals Process

Ascet Tech’s appeals process is publicly available on the Ascet Tech’s website.

1. Before making a formal appeal, students are required to discuss the matter with the relevant Ascet Tech personnel in an effort to reach an agreement. Ascet Tech personnel will undertake to reassess the decision that has been made.

2. If a student is still unhappy, they must lodge a formal appeal in writing to Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer.

3. Upon receiving a formal appeal, Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer will:
   - Acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing within five working days; and
   - Appoint an independent member of personnel as a third party to try to resolve the issue. Any decision recommended by the third party is not binding to either party.

The independent member will review the information provided by all parties and either reject or uphold the appeal. The student will be advised of the outcome of the appeal in writing within 10 working days of lodging the appeal, including reasons for the decision made, and any additional appeal or complaint options available to them.

4. If a student, on receiving written advice on the initial appeal, is still unhappy they may lodge a second appeal to the Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer. The Ascet Tech Chief Executive Officer will:
   - Acknowledge receipt of the further appeal in writing within five working days; and
   - Appoint another Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to review the appeal, at no additional cost to the student. This second registered training organisation will:
     - Uphold the appeal;
     - Reject the appeal; or
     - Recommend further evidence gathering by either party.

The student will be advised of the outcome of the appeal in writing within 20 working days of lodging the further appeal, including reasons for the decision made, and any additional appeal or complaint options available to them.

5. If a student, on receiving written advice on the further appeal, is still unhappy they have a right of appeal to:
• Their relevant State Training Authority (STA) in each state and territory if an apprenticeship/traineeship based course; or
• Alternatively to the Australian Skills & Quality Authority (ASQA) via the appropriate process.  

All stages of the appeals process are documented and notes provided to all parties involved, including the outcomes of the appeal and reasons for the decisions made. Each appeal and its outcome is recorded in writing and stored on the Appeals Register. This register is located on the Ascet Tech Policies and Instructions Server Drive.

### 1.5. Improvement Actions

Ascet Tech confirms its commitment to investigate and act on any appeal raised, and also to take appropriate action in any case where appeals are substantiated. In cases where an appeal is upheld, Ascet Tech endeavours to identify the cause of the appeal and implement steps to prevent the situation happening again.

All improvement actions arising from appeals are raised via an Improvement Record. Ascet Tech maintains a Continuous Improvement Register for recording the receipt and management of improvement records.

Once improvement records are raised, activities review appeals and their causes, evaluate corrective actions to resolve the issue and prevent reoccurrence, implement appropriate actions, record results of actions undertaken and review these actions to ensure effectiveness after implementation.

The Continuous Improvement Register and Improvement Records are located on the Ascet Tech Policies and Instructions Server Drive.