

COMPLAINT AND APPEAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

The French Beauty Academy is committed to the highest standards of education and professional services and providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential process for resolving academic and non-academic complaints and appeals.

The French Beauty Academy aims to

- foster a culture that welcomes complaints as a valuable opportunity to improve organisational or academic processes or products;
- ensure that complaints are resolved promptly, objectively, fairly, with sensitivity and confidentiality;
- ensure that both corrective and preventative actions are implemented to prevent recurrence of issues

As a member of the Australian Council for Private Education Providers (ACPET), The French Beauty Academy abides by the ACPET Code of Ethics for Members, Feb 2015 which is available to review on request.

This policy applies to complaints about both academic and non-academic matters and the ACPET Code of Ethics from students, potential students and other stakeholders, and includes an informal process, and a three (3) stage formal process including:

- Lodging a formal complaint;
- An internal appeal or review of the issue; and
- Provision for independent review.

Academic matters include issues which relate to student progress, assessment, course content or awards in a VET course of study.

Non-academic matters may include the general performance or decisions of The French Beauty Academy, its staff or partners, in the delivery of products or services, such as, but not limited to financial matters (fees, refunds and payment terms), staff and student behaviour or conduct, marketing and promotion, selection processes, student support, management of personal information, or facilities and resources.

Application

This policy applies to all students and potential students of The French Beauty Academy and other stakeholders.

The French Beauty Academy will investigate (as far as principles of natural justice and procedural fairness allow) anonymous complaints but encourage students or stakeholders to access the informal or formal processes to enable a thorough investigation and resolution process.

The CEO is responsible for the authorisation, publication and implementation of this policy, for ensuring it is communicated to all staff in writing and for ensuring all The French Beauty Academy staff are trained in its application.

Complaint/Appeal Policy

General principles applying to all stages of this procedure which will be adhered to by The French Beauty Academy include:

- Both the complainant and anyone who has allegations made against them will have the opportunity to present their case at each stage of the procedure.
- Any people involved in the complaint will have the option of being accompanied or assisted by a third person (such as a family member, friend or counsellor) at relevant meetings if they so desire. Any costs associated with support will be the individual's own expense
- Neither the complainant nor the respondent will be discriminated against or victimised.
- At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints and appeals will be recorded in writing. Reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure will be provided to the complainant and/or the respondent if requested.
- Records of all complaints and appeals will be kept for a period of five years. These records will be kept strictly confidential. The complainant shall have appropriate access to these records. The French Beauty Academy will maintain a 'complaints register' including details of the complaints or appeals received, decisions, and actions taken to prevent recurrence.

Where The French Beauty Academy considers that more than 60 calendar days maybe be required to process or finalise the formal stages, they will inform the complainant in writing of the reasons why (such as availability of or access to 'evidence' or sources, or specialist expertise) and will regularly update the complainant regarding progress of the process.

Informal complaint or appeal

In the first instance stakeholders (complainants) are encouraged to discuss the matter(s) informally with The French Beauty Academy staff or students involved. Where possible, disputes should be managed and resolved informally, although recorded for future reference (in event of a systemic or recurrent issue).

Stage One (1) - Formal complaint or appeal

If the issues cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally the complainant should submit a formal complaint to The French Beauty Academy Principal.

Whilst a complaint form is available to lodge a formal grievance, formal complaints may also be made via email, website feedback, letter or via an interview or verbal conversation with any The French Beauty Academy staff member who will record necessary details. Complainants are encouraged to supply sufficient information (and supporting evidence if available) about the matter(s) to enable The French Beauty Academy to investigate including (if applicable)

- when the incident(s) took place,
- who was involved or may have witnessed the incident(s),
- whether the matters have previously been discussed with or reported to The French Beauty Academy staff and
- the complainant's desired outcome to resolve the issue(s).

Students lodging an appeal about an assessment outcome must do so within 15 working days of being notified of the initial assessment decision.

The Principal will acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal in writing, and will make contact with the complainant within five (5) working days to discuss and/or seek any additional necessary information to investigate the issue.

The Principal will determine the outcome and advise the complainant in writing of their decision within ten (10) working days (of receipt of the complaint).

The complainant will be advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One.

Stage Two (2) – Internal review

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage One they may lodge an appeal with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). To enable timely resolution, the appeal should be submitted by the complainant within 14 calendar days of notification of the formal complaint decision.

An Appeal Committee, consisting of the CEO (or delegated Senior Officer) and at least one other person* with relevant RTO or training or Industry relevant expertise (as required by the nature of the complaint) will

- consider the nature of the appeal, the decision in question and all other relevant material or information including information supplied by relevant The French Beauty Academy staff;
- meet with the complainant and respondent and Principal if necessary

Immediately on reaching its decision, or with 10 working days of receipt of the Appeal, the committee will communicate their decision to the complainant in writing. The written notification of the final decision must state that if the student is not satisfied with the final decision they have the right to access an external independent appeal process.

*anyone who has been involved in the decision which is subject to appeal cannot be a member of the appeal committee

Stage Three (3) – Independent review

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two they may

- Contact the Commonwealth Government's National Training Complaints Hotline (13 38 73 or via the department's Complaint Template available from www.education.gov.au/email-complaints).
- Request that the matter be referred to an external dispute resolution process agreeable to both parties. (Should the complainant wish to pursue the matter through the external review stage, they should be aware that fees and charges may be payable by the complainant)

Written notice of the decision on review will be provided to each party, including the reasons for the decision.

The French Beauty Academy will abide by the outcome of the external review, and further will ensure due consideration is given to any recommendations arising from the independent review.

Additionally, if the complainant considers the complaint to be in breach of the ACPET Code of Ethics, they may lodge a complaint with ACPET (<http://www.acpet.edu.au/contact/> or acpet@acpet.edu.au)