**[Insert organisation name/logo]**

**FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**Version:** **[Year/No]**

**Document status:** **[Draft or Final]**

**Date issued:** **[date]**

**Approved by:** **[insert organisation name] Board of Directors on [date]**

**Date for review:** **[date]**

**Record of policy development:**

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| **Version number** | **Date of issue** | **Lead author/ reviewer** | **Consultative panel** | **Significant changes on previous version** |
| [Yr/No.] | [Date] | [Name/role] | [Name/role/ organisation] | [For example, incorporate changes to new legislation] |
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***Note\****

*This policy template has been developed to meet the needs of a diverse range of services and includes items for consideration in policy and procedure.* ***Not all content will be relevant to your service.******Organisations are encouraged to edit, add and delete content to ensure relevancy.***

*All material provided by the Network of Alcohol and other Drugs (NADA) is for guidance purposes only. The information should be reviewed in relation to your organisation’s individual circumstances and policies. NADA does not provide legal advice. You should seek your own advice in relation to any matters provided for in this policy or if you have any specific questions or concerns.*

*All notes (like this one) should also be considered and deleted before finalising the policy. The contents list should be updated as changes are made, and when content is finalised.*

*\*Please delete note before finalising this policy.*

***Note\*****To update the contents list when all content has been finalised, right click on the contents list and select ‘update field’, an option box will appear; select ‘Update entire table’ and ‘Ok’.*
*To use the contents list to skip to relevant text, use* ***Ctrl and click*** *to select the relevant page number.*

*\*Please delete note before finalising this policy.*

**contents**

[**SECTION 1: POLICY FRAMEWORK 3**](#_Toc205468129)

[**1.1 Policy Statement 3**](#_Toc205468130)

[**1.2 Purpose and Scope 3**](#_Toc205468131)

[**1.3 Definitions 3**](#_Toc205468132)

[**1.4 Principles 4**](#_Toc205468133)

[**1.5 Roles and Responsibilities 4**](#_Toc205468134)

[**1.6 Outcomes 5**](#_Toc205468135)

[**1.7 Policy implementation 6**](#_Toc205468136)

[**1.8 Risk Management 6**](#_Toc205468137)

[**SECTION 2: REFERENCES 7**](#_Toc205468138)

[**2.1 Supporting documents 7**](#_Toc205468139)

[**2.2 Related policies 7**](#_Toc205468140)

[**2.3 Legislation 7**](#_Toc205468141)

[**2.4 Other resources 7**](#_Toc205468142)

## SECTION 1: POLICY FRAMEWORK

### 1.1 Policy Statement

**[Insert organisation name]** is committed to facilitating transparent and effective feedback and complaints management processes for clients and stakeholders, to improve the quality of its services.

### 1.2 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to **[insert organisation name]** staff, Board members, students, contractors and volunteers in receiving, collating, resolving and responding to feedback, complaints and compliments about the organisation’s staff, services and operations.

This section does not provide guidance on:

* Employee performance and complaints management – refer to the Human resources policy
* Internal grievances and complaints management – refer to the [Grievance management policy](file:///P%3A/Policies/Grievance%20Policy/Policy%20in%20use/Grievance%20Management%20Policy%202015%20Vs%201.2.docx)
* Grievances between Board members – refer to Governance policy
* Project and event feedback– refer to the Organisational development or Project management policies

### 1.3 Definitions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Complaint**  | An expression of dissatisfaction made to the organisation about its staff, service(s), or operations where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| **Compliment**  | An expression of satisfaction made to the organisation about its staff, service(s) or operations.  |
| **Feedback** | Comments provided to the organisation about its staff or services through formal (e.g. survey, feedback forms) or informal (e.g. phone or email conversations) means. Feedback can be positive or negative, including compliments and complaints. |

### 1.4 **Principles**

**The organisation:**

* Recognises that clients, contractors and stakeholders need avenues to give feedback, and/or raise complaints or give a compliment to the organisation and are entitled to have their concerns addressed in ways that ensure access and equity, timeliness, accountability and transparency.
* Acknowledges that any person or organisation accessing services and programs provided by the organisation, or those affected by its operations, has the right to provide feedback and/or to make a complaint and/or to give a compliment.
* Commits to people not being targeted or disadvantaged for providing feedback or making a complaint.
* Understands that complaint information may be sensitive in nature, respects the complainant’s right to confidentiality, and will handle complaints in a fair, equitable and timely manner.
* Conveys the process for communicating feedback, complaints, and compliments to all staff, Board members, students, volunteers, clients and stakeholders.
* Has mechanisms in place to respond to feedback as part of a continuous quality improvement process
* The resolution of the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant is a goal of the **[Insert organisation name]**’s complaints handling process.

### 1.5 Roles and Responsibilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Board of Directors** | * Endorse and ensure compliance with this Feedback, complaints policy.
* Comply with the organisation’s Feedback and complaints procedure
* Respond to complaints relating to the CEO/Manager, Board members and to high level or escalated complaints from clients, staff or stakeholders as required.
* Be familiar with the organisation’s legislative requirements regarding communication, privacy and the collection, storage and use of personal information.
 |
| **Business services/****management** | * Comply with the Feedback and complaints policy
* Receive feedback, complaints, and compliments and direct these to relevant staff or to the Board for handling when required.

**CEO/Manager** * Manage feedback and complaints processes, including the identification of appropriate staff as complaint handlers.
* Act as the primary contact to communicate between the service and the Board.

**Management*** Manage complaints as determined by the CEO/Manager or direct supervisor.
* Record feedback when relevant and notify relevant staff of feedback with the approval of the CEO/Manager
* Ensure systems are in place across the organisation to communicate appropriately and adequately protect the privacy of personal information of clients, staff members and stakeholders.
* Have a working knowledge of the organisation’s legislative requirements regarding: communication, privacy, and the collection, storage and use of personal information.
 |
| **Program services/clinical** | * Comply with the Feedback and complaints policy
* Receive feedback and complaints and report to the CEO/Manager or direct supervisor.
* Record feedback when relevant.
* Be familiar with the organisation’s legislative requirements regarding communication, privacy and the collection, storage and use of personal information.
* Act in accordance with legislation and organisational systems in place to protect privacy and personal information.
 |

### 1.6 Outcomes

* Feedback, including complaints and compliments, is an important part of **[insert organisation name]**’s operational planning and as part of its quality improvement work
* Responses to complaints and other feedback are delivered in a consistent and timely manner
* All staff and Board members can receive complaints or other feedback

### 1.7 Policy implementation

This policy is developed in consultation with staff and is approved by the Board of directors.

This policy is part of orientation processes, and all Board members, staff, volunteers, and students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the Feedback and complaints policy.

Specific monitoring and support activities undertaken include:

* New staff and board members are provided with an induction and orientation to **[insert organisation name]** including information on the feedback and complaints management policy and processes.
* Staff identified to investigate and manage complaints are skilled and/or trained in complaints management handling and dispute resolution.
* Annual review of the **[insert organisation name]** Complaints register and the **[insert organisation name]** Feedback register as part of risk management and quality improvement process for reviewing program service delivery.
* Formal feedback provided to **[insert organisation name]** is communicated to stakeholders through project, program, and activity feedback reports; project and activity evaluation processes; the **[insert organisation name]** Annual Report and the **[insert organisation name]** Annual General Meeting where appropriate.
* Client and other stakeholder feedback is a standing item on the **[insert organisation name]** staff meeting agenda. Complaints or actions taken to resolve a complaint may be raised at staff meetings or Board meetings as appropriate.
* All feedback data is considered in operational planning, implementation and review activities.

### 1.8 **Risk Management**

This policy complies with relevant legislation, including the [*Privacy and professional information act 1998*](https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1998-133)*.*.

All staff, volunteers, students and Board members are provided with ongoing support to assist them to effectively use internal and external communication systems to receive or lodge a complaint or provide feedback.

Specific risks associated with feedback and complaints management are monitored using the organisational Risk register.

## SECTION 2: REFERENCES

### 2.1 Supporting documents

* [Complaint form](https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/5.Com_FC-Complaints-form.docx)
* [Complaints record form](https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/6.Com_FC-Complaints-record-form.docx)
* [Feedback form](https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2.Com_FC-Feedback-form.docx)
* [Feedback record form](https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/3.Com_FC-Feedback-record-form.docx)
* [Feedback and complaints register](https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/4.Com_FC-Feedback-register.xlsx)
* [Feedback and complaints information sheet](https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/1.Com_FC-Information-Sheet.docx)
* **[Insert organisation name]** Code of Conduct
* **[Insert organisation name]** website- complaints page
* **[Insert organisation name]** website- feedback page

###  Related policies

* [Grievance management policy](file:///P%3A/Policies/Grievance%20Policy/Policy%20in%20use/Grievance%20Management%20Policy%202015%20Vs%201.2.docx)
* Safer spaces policy
* Privacy policy
* Service and program operations policy
* Client clinical management policy
* [Human resources policy](file:///P%3A/Policies/Human%20Resources%20Policy/Policy%20in%20use/Human%20Resources%20Policy%202015%20Vs%201.1.docx)
* [Risk management policy](file:///P%3A/Policies/Risk%20Management%20%20Policy/Policy%20in%20use/Risk%20Management%20Policy%20January%20%20Vs%201.2%20%202015.doc)
* Organisational development policy

### 2.3 Legislation

[*Privacy and professional information act 1998*](https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1998-133)

###  Other resources

* [The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)](https://www.achs.org.au/) Note: Membership is required to access [Equip7](https://www.achs.org.au/login?ReturnUrl=%2Fachs-assessors%2Fassessor-resources%2Fequip7-assessor-resources)
* [Better practice complaint handling guide](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/290365/Better-Practice-Complaint-Handling-Guide-2023.pdf)
* [Department of Health NSW, complaints management policy](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2020_013) directive
* [Health Care Complaints Commission](https://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/health-providers)
* [NSW Ombudsman](https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/)
* [Commonwealth Ombudsman](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)
1. *Adapted from* [*The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)*](https://www.achs.org.au/)*. Membership is required to access* [Equip7](https://www.achs.org.au/login?ReturnUrl=%2Fachs-assessors%2Fassessor-resources%2Fequip7-assessor-resources) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)