



Bendigo Kangan Institute

Feedback (Compliments and Complaints) Policy

1.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the process by which the Bendigo Kangan Institute (BKI) manages feedback, including compliments and complaints, from students, staff, and stakeholders. The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the collection, addressing, analysis, and reporting of feedback to support accountability and ongoing improvement.

2.0 Scope

The policy applies to anyone who wants to provide feedback or make a complaint to BKI about any matter. Feedback can be provided to BKI by anyone, whether they are a student, a parent, carer or employer of a student, a member of the public, employee, contractor or supplier.

Feedback or complaints can be made in a variety of ways, including via telephone, email, online (including BKI managed social media channels) or by post.

Where BKI staff are providing feedback or lodging a complaint, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Resolution of Grievance Procedure, which specifically addresses internal workplace concerns. Where a grievance results in a formal complaint or is submitted via the Feedback and Report Form, it should be managed under this policy.

Some elements of the grievance process may refer to this policy and its linked procedure, especially where shared reporting tools are required (i.e. [Online Feedback Form](#)).

This policy does not apply to:

- Allegations of suspected improper conduct or corruption (see BKI's *Improper Conduct Policy*).
- Assessment appeals (See Assessment Appeals and Training and Assessment policies and procedures).
- VETASSESS customers (See VETASSESS Managing and Reviewing Customer Feedback (including Complaints) Policy)

Allegations of child abuse and neglect incidents, disclosures or suspicions must be made and responded to confidentially using the processes outlined in the BKI's Child Safety Policy and Procedure.

3.0 Legislative Context

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Wildlife and Small Institutions Animal Committee Procedures for complaints 2019, section 5.1
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992(Cth)
- TAFE VET Funding Contract
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000

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Doc Custodian: Manager, Governance and Integrity

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- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Standards for RTOs 2025
- *Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration*
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic); Child Safe Standard
- Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals For Scientific Purposes 8th Edition 2013 (Updated 2021)
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022

4.0 Policy Statement

BKI is committed to fostering a culture that values feedback and encourages the reporting of concerns. Our policy ensures that staff are adequately trained and supported to manage, consider, and respond to feedback and concerns effectively. BKI is dedicated to responding promptly, providing appropriate resolution, and implementing improvements based on received feedback.

Feedback can come in the form of a compliment or a complaint. Both aim to drive improvements or a remedy in how BKI provides its services.

A complaint, also known as a grievance, is an expression of dissatisfaction by anyone with:

- the quality of an action taken, decision made, or service provided by BKI, anyone under BKI's oversight or a BKI contractor; or
- a delay or failure in providing a service, taking an action, or making a decision by BKI or a BKI contractor.

Complaints which relate to a child under 18 or to someone who is pregnant may require BKI to also consider its child safety obligations under the Child Safety standards. Any investigation, action or review or appeal process taken in relation to BKI's child safety obligations will be in accordance with the BKI Child Safety Policy and Procedure.

4.1 Policy Principles

BKI's feedback process observes the following principles:

Organisational Commitment:

BKI is committed to resolving feedback with discretion, integrity, in a timely manner and advising the expected timeframe for a response.

Support:

BKI is committed to ensuring that individuals engaging with the feedback process feel safe, respected, and supported throughout. BKI will actively uphold wellbeing and psychological safety by providing access to support services, including a support person, and we will take reasonable steps to ensure

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the process does not cause harm or distress.

Accessibility:

Information about how to provide feedback and make complaints is publicly available and clearly accessible via the BKI websites

Transparency:

BKI handles all complaints in a transparent manner. Individuals providing feedback will be informed about how their complaint will be managed, including the steps involved and available avenues if they are not satisfied with the outcome. Where an investigation is required, it will be conducted openly and in accordance with applicable legal and procedural requirements.

Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness:

BKI is committed to ensuring that its feedback process upholds the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Individuals affected by a decision or action of BKI, or someone acting on its behalf, will be given a fair opportunity to present their views before a decision is made. All feedback and complaints are assessed impartially, based on merit and evidence, and all parties are treated with respect and courtesy throughout the process.

Confidentiality:

BKI's Privacy and Freedom of Information Policy protects the personal information of people making a complaint and staff are informed only on a 'need to know' basis. BKI will always consider feedback, even if it is provided by a person who chooses to remain anonymous. Generally, BKI will only share information about the outcome of feedback to and deal directly with the person impacted by the feedback

Accountability:

BKI is accountable for its decision-making and complaint-handling performance. BKI will provide reasons for decisions and ensure that our decisions are subject to appropriate review processes.

Continuous improvement:

BKI will analyse complaint data to find ways to improve how we operate and deliver our services and to help prevent recurrence.

4.2 Providing and Receiving Feedback

BKI encourages feedback to be provided using BKI's *Feedback / Complaints* form, available on its websites. If you provide feedback and do not use the *Feedback / Complaints* online form, BKI staff member dealing with your feedback will initiate the consideration of your feedback by completing the online form.

Most feedback is responded within 10 business days, unless safety concerns are identified whereby a response is required on the same day or as soon as is practicable. BKI may require additional time to

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resolve feedback (beyond 10 days) due to feedback complexity and/or the feedback is subject to investigation. During the process, BKI will inform you of progress at reasonable intervals (at least every ten days). If feedback response is expected beyond 60 days, BKI will clearly explain the reasons why.

You will be informed of any decisions or outcomes following a complaint reported. You will receive a written record with confirmation of:

- The decision or outcome and the reasons for the decision or outcome
- How you can request an internal review of a decision or outcome
- Your rights to access external review of a complaint.

Should a remote/in person interview or meeting occur as part of complaint resolution, all parties should be provided with the opportunity to have a support person present, informed and involved throughout the process. People under the age of 18 or who are vulnerable, i.e., disability, mental illness, in crisis, must have an appropriate parent, carer, legal guardian or other support as discussed with the person concerned. This ensures they can act in the best interests of young or vulnerable people by supporting, advocating for, and protecting them.

4.3 Equity and Inclusion in Feedback

BKI recognises that individuals from marginalised or underrepresented communities may face barriers to providing feedback or making complaints, including feelings of disempowerment or lack of trust in institutional processes. To address this, BKI is committed to creating safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive pathways for feedback, and actively works to reduce these barriers by offering support, clear information, and accessible options tailored to diverse needs. In addition, where possible, BKI will take these factors into account when assessing feedback, making decisions, and providing outcomes.

4.4 The Four Tier Approach

BKI's feedback process follows a 'Four Tier' Approach to considering feedback, addressed below.



Level 1 - Frontline Resolution

Frontline staff are delegated the authority to resolve complaints wherever possible. Frontline resolution

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is generally used where the concerns represented are simple, non-contentious, and/or do not require BKI to prove or disprove an allegation that relates to the reputation of a person or BKI. Most complaints about the administrative application of policies, procedures or service delivery are appropriate for frontline resolution.

Level 2 - Investigation

An internal investigation may be required where feedback presents complex or sensitive issues.

Investigations are reserved for more serious types of complaints, such as those that relate to the health, safety and wellbeing of people or the conduct and reputation of individuals. Case by case assessments are conducted to decide if an investigation is needed, and whether the matter falls into a code of conduct or other policy breaches.

Whilst the investigator will endeavour to preserve the confidentiality of the complainant and the person complained of, it may be necessary to speak with other workers or individuals involved to determine what happened and to maintain the integrity of the investigation process.

Level 3 - Internal Review

Internal Review refers to the process of independent review over the way an issue has been handled, including the way a complaint has been assessed and responded to. This process is generally available after feedback has been considered and responded to or where there is a delay in addressing feedback.

Requests for internal review can be made by contacting the Office of the Chief Executive Office or expressing this request to a BKI staff member. A person requesting an internal review should:

- make clear why they consider the person who considered their feedback has made the wrong decision, such as:
 - BKI policies and procedures were not followed, and this resulted in a genuine disadvantage to a person subject to a decision;
 - The decision is clearly wrong, or the outcome is disproportionate; or
 - There was a bias or a conflict of interest on part of the original decision maker.
- provide information in support of their request, and tell BKI about any applicable deadlines or reasons for the complaint to be determined in a particular timeframe.

When BKI responds to feedback, it provides the person who provided the feedback with information about their rights of appeal and/or review by external authorities including the Victorian Ombudsman and Australian Skills Qualification Authority (ASQA).

4.5 Dispute Resolutions

Other dispute resolution options may be available, such as mediation and conciliation, or engaging a different external body. Either party can request a conciliation process via the Dispute Settlement

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Centre. On a case-by-case basis BKI will consider engaging an accredited arbitrator or mediator, to which all parties to the complaint must agree to use. Each party bears their own costs associated with bringing an optional support person to any alternative dispute resolution process.

4.6 Corrective Actions and Continuous Improvement

BKI considers feedback and complaint themes and analytics which is reported monthly. Additionally, BKI seeks to analyse potential causes of complaints and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of a reoccurrence. BKI are committed to support the implementation of corrective actions and improvements to prevent recurrence and enhance experience.

4.7 Records and Confidentiality

When a complaint is made, BKI makes records of all parties involved, including the outcomes of a complaint and reasons for decisions made at the end of the process. All records relating to complaints are confidential and are subject to BKI's *Privacy and FOI Procedure*, which includes information about how to request access. BKI retains records of all complaints for a period of at least seven years.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Allocated Officer	<p>Assess and respond to the Feedback in consultation with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Communicate with the person who provided the feedback throughout the process</p>
Head of Governance Risk and Compliance	<p>In conjunction with their team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the implementation of the policy. Triage the feedback to Allocated Officer and allocates internal reviews and investigations. Provides guidance and support on complaint resolution and process. Develops business tools to support compliant resolution and continuous improvement. Facilitates thematic reporting and insights. <p>Engages independent external reviewer and activates alternative dispute resolution processes, as relevant.</p>

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Role	Responsibilities
Head of Student Services	Coordinates and manages student complaints that require student support or impacts student wellbeing.
HR Business Partner Manager	Coordinates and manages complaints that relate to a BKI staff member's performance or behavior.
Head of Brand and Marketing	Ensure policy is available through publication in both the Student Handbook and on BKI's websites.
Senior Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the consideration and resolution of escalated or complex complaints. Drive feedback culture throughout BKI.

6.0 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Allocated Officer	The BKI staff member assigned to manage and respond to the feedback.
ASQA	<p>Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector. ASQA accepts complaints and feedback about training providers from students and all members of the community.</p> <p>https://www.asqa.gov.au/students/complaints</p>
Complaint	<p>An expression of dissatisfaction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the quality of an action taken, decision made, or service provided by BKI, anyone under BKI's oversight or a BKI contractor. a delay or failure in providing a service, taking an action, or making a decision by BKI or a BKI contractor.



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Word/Term	Definition
Compliment	An expression of praise or satisfaction with the quality of experience or service provided by BKI.
Feedback	Information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task which is used as the basis for driving improvement. Feedback can come in the form of complaints or compliments
Victorian Ombudsman	The role of the Victorian Ombudsman is to keep government and public organisations accountable. They do this by investigating complaints about government, the conduct of officials, or broad areas of public interest. Their aim is to improve public administration and decision making. https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/complaints/
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority regulate education and training providers, including BKI as a non-senior secondary school provider and BKIs application of the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme policies and processes across all areas and operations. https://www2.vrqa.vic.gov.au/



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Word/Term	Definition
CCYP	<p>The Commission for Children and Young People oversee all child safe organisations in Victoria's compliance to the Child Safe Standards and in particular the Reportable Conduct scheme with strict reporting requirements and timeframes to the CCYP to oversee organisations responses to and investigations relating to reportable conduct and notifying other agencies of established findings or concerns such as VRQA, Victoria Police, and the Working with Children Clearance Unit.</p> <p>https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/</p>

7.0 Supporting Policy Documents and Forms

Document Name
Feedback Procedure (Compliments and Complaints)
Fees Charges and Refunds Policy
Employee Code of Conduct Policy
Prevention of Potentially Harmful Behaviours Policy
Online Feedback Form
Speak Up Policy
Student Code of Conduct Policy
Student Welfare and Accessibility Policy
Child Safety Policy and Procedure
Reportable Conduct Investigations Procedure

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8.0 Version Control and Change History

Ver	Issue Date	Document Custodian	Description of Change	Approval Authority
1.0	02 Jul 2018	Manager Academic	-	CEO
2.0	28 Aug 2019	Manager Academic Governance and Quality	Remove exclusions re corrections students and include process to de-identify records.	Board of Studies
2.1	06 Feb 2020	Chief Academic Officer	Amendments required in order to ensure adherence with VRQA, CRICOS and ASQA Standards.	Board of Studies
3.0	20 Aug 2021	Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance	Aligned to Feedback Framework 2021, simplified.	Chief Governance and Quality Officer
4.0	15 Mar 2021	Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance	Elements of policy transferred to procedure, reference to 'specified criteria added, maintenance of continuous improvement register added.	Chief Governance and Quality Officer
5.0	25 June 2024	Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realigned policy to the current policy template. • Scope expanded to confirm channels of feedback • Policy statement broken up into sections and reorganised. Content also trimmed streamlined and changed to align to current practice. • Added roles and responsibility section 	Chief Operating Officer

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added definition section Added supporting policy documents section 	
5.1	1 March 2025	Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance	<p>Changes were made to align with recommendations following Deloitte's audit of BKI's Child Safety Practices.</p> <p>(a) Update child safety policies and procedures as well as the complaints handling policy, to explicitly reference family and community involvement. Adding parents / carers into processes including reviews.</p> <p>(b) Update the Feedback Policy, to clearly link this document (where appropriate) with the Child Safety Policy. This may include, for example, policy direction on when and how complaints relating to child safety matters should be managed and/or reported to the relevant authorities</p>	Chief Operating Officer

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			such as law enforcement, child protection, and the Child Safety Commissioner.	
5.2	24/09/2025	Manager, Governance and Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated scope to provide linkages between the policy/procedure and the resolution of grievance procedure and relevant child safety policies and procedures Updates procedural principles following feedback from Child Safety and Academic Compliance teams New section 4.3 on Equity and Inclusion in Feedback following feedback from Diversity and Equity team Minor Typographical and updates to linked policies/external 	Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance

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			references throughout	
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9.0 Document Owner and Approval Body

Document Custodian	Approval Authority	Approval Date	Next Scheduled Review Date
Manager, Governance and Integrity	Head of Governance Risk and Compliance	24/09/2025	24/09/2027

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