

Learner Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure

Policy Purpose:

This procedure provides a fair, transparent, and accessible process for learners to raise complaints about services, staff, facilities, learning resources, administrative processes, or other aspects of Nature Care Colleges operations. Nature Care College is committed to resolving complaints promptly, confidentially, and without fear of disadvantage or retaliation.

Policy Scope

This procedure applies to:

- All enrolled learners.
- Prospective learners participating in Nature Care College interactions.
- Former learners where the complaint relates to services received during enrolment.
- All staff, contractors, volunteers, and representatives of Nature Care College.

Policy Content:

Nature Care College will ensure that:

- Complaints are handled fairly, impartially, and confidentially.
- Learners are treated with respect throughout the process.
- Complaints are acknowledged and addressed in a timely manner.
- Learners are not victimised or disadvantaged for making a complaint.
- Procedural fairness is observed.
- Records of complaints and outcomes are maintained securely.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction regarding any aspect of the Nature Care Colleges services, including but not limited to:

- Quality of teaching
- Student support services
- Learning materials or resources
- Administrative processes
- Communication from staff
- Learner conduct.
- Facilities and equipment.
- Accessibility or inclusion concerns.
- Workplace health and safety matters
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying

A complaint is distinct from an academic query, request for information, or routine feedback.



Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, learners are encouraged to attempt informal resolution first.

This may include:

- Discussing the matter directly with the staff member involved
- Raising concerns with a trainer, coordinator, or supervisor.
- Seeking assistance from Student and Learning Services personnel.

Many issues can be resolved quickly through discussion and clarification.

Learners may proceed directly to a formal complaint if they are uncomfortable with informal resolution or if the matter is serious.

Formal Complaint Process

Step 1 – Lodging a Complaint

A complaint may be submitted:

- In writing via email
- Verbally where assistance is required, with a staff member documenting the complaint.

The complaint should include:

- Learner name and contact details
- Description of the issue
- Date(s) of occurrence
- Any supporting evidence if applicable
- Desired outcome

Anonymous complaints may be considered where sufficient information is provided

Step 2 – Acknowledgement

Nature Care College will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **five (5) business days**.
- Provide information about the complaint process and expected timeframes.
- Advise the learner if additional information is required.

Step 3 – Investigation

The designated responsible manager will:

- Review all information provided
- Gather relevant evidence
- Interview relevant parties where necessary
- Ensure all parties have an opportunity to present their perspective
- Maintain confidentiality to the extent possible

Investigations will be conducted impartially and without bias.

Step 4 – Outcome

Nature Care College will aim to provide a written outcome within **twenty (20) business days** of receiving the formal complaint.

Where additional time is required, the learner will be advised of:

- The reasons for the delay
- Expected completion date

Possible outcomes may include:

- Explanation or clarification
- Apology
- Corrective action
- Policy or process improvement
- Staff training or development

Appeal or Review of Outcome

If the learner is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a review within **ten (10) business days** of receiving the decision.

The review will:

- Be conducted by a person who was not previously involved in the matter where possible.
- Consider the original complaint, investigation process, and outcome.
- Determine whether the original decision was fair and reasonable.

The review decision will normally be provided within **ten (10) business days**.



External Resolution

If the learner remains dissatisfied after the internal process is completed, they may seek assistance from an external body appropriate to the nature of the complaint, such as:

- Consumer protection agencies
- Anti-discrimination bodies
- Human rights commissions
- Workplace health and safety regulators
- Ombudsman services (where applicable)

Learners are responsible for any costs associated with external processes unless otherwise determined.

Confidentiality- Nature Care College will:

- Keep complaint information confidential wherever practicable.
- Disclose information only to those involved in managing and resolving the complaint.
- Store records securely in accordance with privacy requirements.

Protection Against Victimisation

Learners who lodge a complaint in good faith will not be disadvantaged, discriminated against, or subjected to retaliation.

Any victimisation arising from a complaint will be treated as a serious breach of Nature Care College policy.

Record Keeping - Nature Care College will maintain a Complaints Register containing:

- Complaint reference number
- Date received
- Nature of complaint
- Actions taken
- Outcome.
- Date finalised

Continuous Quality Improvement

Complaint outcomes will be reviewed periodically to:

- Identify recurring issues
- Improve services and processes
- Enhance learner experience and satisfaction
- Inform staff training and development



Quality Outcome: Nature Care College is committed to resolving complaints promptly, confidentially, and without fear of disadvantage or retaliation.