Complaints about TEQSA policy

Purpose

This policy sets out principles that inform TEQSA's approach to managing complaints about TEQSA's practices and services, or about the actions of a TEQSA employee or contractor and its complaints handling process.

Scope

This policy applies to external complaints about practices and services that TEQSA provides to its external stakeholders, and external complaints about the actions of TEQSA employees or contractors, including complaints alleging TEQSA employee or contractor bias.

This policy does not cover:

- complaints about regulatory decisions by TEQSA—these are covered by review and appeal provisions
- complaints about fees or charges for TEQSA applications—these are set by legislative instrument
- complaints about higher education providers — these are covered by TEQSA's Raising a complaint or concern page
- internal complaints about TEQSA's practices and services—these are covered by TEQSA's internal grievance and public interest disclosure procedures
- investigations about TEQSA conducted by the Commonwealth Ombudsman. Information about making complaints to the Commonwealth Ombudsman can be found on its website (www.ombudsman.gov.au).

Principles that guide complaint handling

1. TEQSA aims to provide high quality services to all stakeholders, and invites complaints from external stakeholders when its practices or services, or the actions of its employees or contractors, do not meet the standards set out in its Service Charter.
2. All complaints against TEQSA or its employees will be considered seriously.
3. Complaints about TEQSA will be handled in a way that is prompt, respectful, responsive, fair and consistent.
4. Principles of procedural fairness will be applied to all parties when investigating and responding to a complaint about TEQSA's activities and practices, and about the activities and practices of its staff.
5. TEQSA will use findings following investigation of a complaint to improve its practices and services to stakeholders.

Complaints handling process

1. TEQSA does not restrict the manner in which a complaint may be made. However, in general, complaints should be submitted by email to review@teqsa.gov.au.
2. If a complainant provides contact information, TEQSA will confirm receipt of the complaint, and provide information about how TEQSA complaint will handle the complaint (including, as far as possible, the timeframe in which TEQSA will consider and respond to it).
3. Consideration of complaints about TEQSA and staff members will be coordinated by TEQSA's Legal Team, except in the case of a complaint about the Legal Team or a member of the Legal Team. In the case of complaints about the Legal Team or a member of the Legal Team, they will be referred to the TEQSA CEO—and TEQSA's consideration of them will be informed by TEQSA's conflict of interest policy and any other relevant policies. Depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint(s), the TEQSA CEO may also seek external legal advice about any complaint(s) made about the Legal Team or a member of the Legal Team.
4. Complaints are handled in accordance with TEQSA's privacy and confidentiality obligations. TEQSA's privacy policy is available here: www.teqsa.gov.au/privacy. In particular, to the extent that TEQSA proposes to disclose a complainant's personal details, the complainant's consent will be sought.
5. Subject to TEQSA's confidentiality obligations, complainants are informed of the action TEQSA takes in response to a complaint.
6. Records of complaints about TEQSA will be maintained separately from other complaints, including from records of complaints about providers.
7. Where a complaint falls outside TEQSA's remit, the complainant will be informed of any other agencies to which the complaint may be relevant.
8. TEQSA may decide not to investigate a complaint found to be fraudulent, vexatious or vindictive.

Further information

Further information about TEQSA's approach to the management and handling of complaints about TEQSA can be obtained by directing an email enquiry to: review@teqsa.gov.au.