



FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

1 PURPOSE / BACKGROUND

SYC recognises that the people that we support have a right to question and influence decisions made and services provided by us.

SYC values complaints, compliments, feedback and appeals as an opportunity to learn and improve on the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of its services and encourages the people we support to communicate with us through this process or by any other means.

SYC takes all complaints, compliments, feedback and appeals seriously and manages them in a timely, transparent and meaningful way.

Complaints, compliments, feedback and appeals may be made by the person we support or who is affected by our services, their family, friends, carer or a nominated advocate with permission to speak of their behalf, by a local organisation or funding partner with which we work, our employees, volunteers or a member of the public.

2 POLICY STATEMENT AND DETAILS

2.1 Statement

2.1.1 SYC's complaints management is governed by the following principles:

- complaints are best handled promptly and as close to the source as possible,
- complaints will be handled objectively and confidentially and the person making the complaint will not suffer any reprisals from making a complaint,
- persons making a complaint will be treated with respect and will be provided with clear explanations of SYC's decisions and actions taken where this is appropriate or required,
- complaints will wherever relevant, inform the continual improvement of SYC's policies, procedures and practices.

2.1.2 SYC makes all efforts to ensure that the complaints process is impartial, transparent and accountable and adheres to procedural fairness.

2.2 How complaints may be made

2.2.1 SYC has made available dedicated client mechanisms designed to obtain meaningful client feedback including:

- a. direct reference to an on-site SYC Manager,
- b. a dedicated "Feedback" email address (feedback@syc.net.au),
- c. feedback facilities on SYC's external websites,
- d. a "Feedback and Complaints" form which is provided to people we support at all SYC operational sites,
- e. reference to external agencies that are available for complaints associated with the particular SYC service.



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2.3 How we will handle complaints

- 2.3.1 SYC encourages the resolution of minor complaints or appeals at the local level where the service is delivered.
- 2.3.2 If the complaint or appeal is not able to be resolved locally, it may be escalated through Line Managers to SYC's central complaints management system.
- 2.3.3 Complex complaints or appeals that require formal acknowledgement, multifaceted assessment and investigation or may require corrective action, e.g. a change in our practice, training or the involvement of a regulatory body, will be reviewed through SYC's central complaints management system.
- 2.3.4 If a complaint or appeal is referred to a regulatory body or external agency and the regulatory body or agency commences investigating or is investigating the complaint, SYC will assist the body/agency with their investigation if required, but may cease to continue any other internal actions pending finalisation of the body/agency's investigation.

2.4 Responding to a Complaint

- 2.4.1 Minor complaints which are resolved at local levels, to the expressed satisfaction of the person making the complaint, will not be formally responded to by SYC.
- 2.4.2 A person making a complaint will be given the opportunity to specifically request a response from SYC and will be contacted where this has been requested. Contact details such as an email address, street address or telephone number must be provided by the person.
- 2.4.3 Once a complaint has been received, SYC will undertake an initial review of the complaint.
- 2.4.4 Where requested, SYC will acknowledge the receipt of a complaint received by email, letter or telephone, within five (5) working days
 - a. by return email, to the email address provided at the time of the complaint,
 - b. by letter, to a street address provided at the time of the complaint, if this has been requested,
 - c. by telephone, to a telephone number provided at the time of the complaint, if this has been requested.
- 2.4.5 SYC aims to resolve all complaints within 30 days however this period may be lengthened if the complaint is complex and there is a requirement to gather information by the investigating officer.
- 2.4.6 SYC may need to contact the person making the complaint to clarify details or request further information or documentation.
- 2.4.7 If there is a requirement for SYC to meet with the complainant or any other person in order to investigate or resolve the complaint, any person that is involved in the complaint may be accompanied and assisted by a third party at any relevant meeting.
- 2.4.8 If a complaint is not resolved within 30 days the person making the complaint will be updated on the progress on the investigation of their complaint, and at 30 day intervals if the complaint is complex, until the complaint is resolved.



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2.4.9 If a complaint has been referred to a regulatory body or external agency, SYC will only provide responses regarding the investigation or resolution of the complaint to the regulatory body or external agency even if the identity and contact details of the complainant is known to SYC.

2.5 Closing A Complaint

2.5.1 Complaints are considered resolved when

- a. the person making the complaint expresses satisfaction with the resolution provided by SYC,
- b. SYC determines that all avenues available to it to resolve the issue have been exhausted,
- c. an external agency considers the complaint to be resolved.

2.5.2 Where required by a regulatory body or external agency, SYC will ensure that the complainant or appellant is given a written statement of the outcome of the complaint and of any appeals including details of the reasons for the outcome.

2.5.3 In most other cases SYC will advise the complainant of the outcome of the complaint,

- a. by electronic mail (email), if this is the most appropriate means of communication,
- b. by face-to-face communication with a Line Manager at the Site where the service has been delivered.

2.5.4 If the person making the complaint believes that SYC has not resolved the complaint to their satisfaction they may ask to have the decision reviewed.

2.5.5 If the person making the complaint is still not satisfied or feels that they can't discuss the complaint further with SYC, we will assist the person to refer their complaint to a regulatory authority or external agency. SYC will provide the complainant with the contact details of the relevant regulatory authority applicable to the service provided.

2.6 Confidentiality

2.6.1 SYC respects the right of clients, employees, stakeholders and members of the public to remain anonymous when making a complaint or providing feedback.

2.6.2 SYC cannot, and will not, acknowledge, respond to or provide details of any outcome to a complaint made anonymously, even if SYC is aware, or becomes aware, of the identity of the complainant as a result of any investigation, contact with a regulatory body or external agency or other resolution process.

2.6.3 SYC will not reveal a person's name or personal details to anyone outside the organisation without their permission.

2.6.4 In the event a response to the feedback/complaint is requested, only the parties directly involved in responding to and resolving the complaint will have access to information supplied.



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2.7 Recording and Reporting complaint data

- 2.7.1 SYC maintains a record of all complaints and feedback received from clients, stakeholders, employees, volunteers and members of the public.
- 2.7.2 An individual's personal information will be recorded as part of the complaint in accordance with SYC's Privacy Policy and relevant privacy legislation.
- 2.7.3 A complainant has the right to access their personal information held by SYC, including that related to complaints, according to the "Access and correction" provisions of SYC's Privacy Policy.
- 2.7.4 Complaint data is reported to SYC Executive on a regular basis and is retained by the organisation for at least 5 years.

2.8 Communication

- 2.8.1 The operation of SYC's complaint management system is included in the induction training of all SYC employees.
- 2.8.2 This Policy and the Procedure which implements this policy is communicated to employees through SYC's intranet and through SYC's Service Portfolio communication systems e.g. newsletters, management meetings.
- 2.8.3 This Policy is available to clients and customers of SYC, volunteers, stakeholders and members of the public through all SYC external websites.

2.9 Continual improvement

- 2.9.1 SYC reviews its complaint handling system through its systematic review of processes within its quality management system framework.
- 2.9.2 SYC's complaint management process is an important element of the identification and implementation of continual improvement.
- 2.9.3 Complaints and feedback is monitored by SYC management to identify trends or recurrent system problems.
- 2.9.4 Where appropriate SYC will amend its policies, procedure or practices as a result of a complaint.



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3 DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this document, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Complaint	expression of dissatisfaction or concern regarding the provision of a service, a decision or action by SYC, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected
Appeal	expression of dissatisfaction or concern regarding a decision made by the organisation. The decision made may be regarding an assessment decision or outcome

4 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS / REFERENCES

In support of this policy, the following documents apply:

Privacy Policy

Service Access Policy

Feedback, Complaints and Continual Improvement Procedure

Records Management Procedure

Monitoring Business Assurance

Feedback and Complaints form

AS/NZS ISO 9001:2015 Quality management systems - Requirements

AS ISO 10002-2006: Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

[National Disability Insurance Scheme \(Complaints Management and Resolution\) Rules 2018](#)

5 APPLICABILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, RISK ASSESSMENT AND PROPERTIES

This policy applies to all SYC Directors, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, independent contractors and volunteers.

Managers are responsible for the awareness and implementation of this Policy and the Procedure which implements this policy in their area.

Organisational compliance with this policy will be determined through management review and internal audit.

Opportunities for Improvement in relation to this policy or its implementation may be registered in Skytrust.

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