

COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK POLICY

1 PURPOSE / BACKGROUND

SYC recognises that people have a right to question and influence decisions made and services provided by us. SYC values complaints, appeals and feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve on the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of its services. SYC takes all complaints, appeals or feedback seriously and manages them in a timely, transparent and meaningful way.

Complaints, appeals or feedback may be made by a person to whom we deliver services or who is affected by our services, a local organisation or funding partner with which we work, our employees, volunteers, stakeholders or a member of the public.

2 ENDORSEMENT(S)

Executive 13 / 04 / 2015

3 POLICY STATEMENT AND DETAILS

3.1 Statement

3.1.1 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.

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

3.2 How complaints may be made

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

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

3.3 How we will handle minor complaints

- 3.3.1 SYC encourages the resolution of complaints, in the first instance, at the local level where the service is delivered.
- 3.3.2 If the complaint is not able to be resolved locally, it may be escalated through Line Managers to SYC's central complaints management system.

3.4 How we will handle complex complaints

- 3.4.1 Serious complaints that require formal acknowledgement, multifaceted assessment and investigation or may require remedial 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.
- 3.4.2 If a regulatory body is investigating or commences investigating a complaint, SYC will assist the agency with their investigation if required, but may cease to continue any other actions pending finalisation of the agency's investigation.

3.5 Timeframes for responding to and closing a complaint

- 3.5.1 Complaints resolved at local levels, to the expressed satisfaction of the person making the complaint, will not be formally responded to by SYC.
- 3.5.2 Once a complaint has been received, SYC will undertake an initial review of the complaint. If the person making the complaint provides an email address or street address at the time of the complaint, SYC will automatically acknowledge the person, in writing, that the complaint has been received and is being reviewed.
- 3.5.3 A person making a complaint will be given the opportunity to specifically request a response from SYC and will be contacted within five (5) working days where this has been requested. Contact details such as an email address, street address or telephone number must be provided by the person.
- 3.5.4 This period may be lengthened if there is a requirement to gather information by the investigating officer. SYC may need to contact the person making the complaint to clarify details or request further information or documentation.
- 3.5.5 Where a request for a response has been made, the person making the complaint will be updated on the progress on the investigation of their complaint in writing if it is not resolved within 30 days, and at 30 day intervals if the complaint is complex, until the complaint is resolved.
- 3.5.6 Complaints are considered as resolved when
- the person making the complaint expresses satisfaction with the resolution provided by SYC,
 - SYC determines that all avenues available to it to resolve the issue have been exhausted,
 - an external agency considers the complaint to be resolved.
- 3.5.7 If the person making the complaint believe that SYC has not resolved the complaint to their satisfaction they may ask to have the decision reviewed.
- 3.5.8 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. SYC will provide the complainant with the contact details of the relevant regulatory authority applicable to the service provided.

3.6 Confidentiality

- 3.6.1 SYC respects the right of clients, employees, stakeholders and members of the public to remain anonymous when making a complaint or providing feedback.
- 3.6.2 SYC will not reveal a persons name or personal details to anyone outside the organisation without their permission.
- 3.6.3 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.

3.7 Recording and Reporting complaint data

- 3.7.1 SYC maintains a record of all complaints and feedback received from clients, stakeholders, employees, volunteers and members of the public.
- 3.7.2 An individuals personal information will be recorded as part of the complaint in accordance with SYC's Privacy Policy and relevant privacy legislation.
- 3.7.3 Complaint data is reported to SYC Executive on a regular basis.

3.8 Continual improvement

- 3.8.1 SYC reviews its complaint handling system through its systematic review of processes within its quality management system framework.
- 3.8.2 An important element of the complaint management process is the identification and implementation of systemic improvements. Complaints are monitored by management to identify trends or recurrent system problems.
- 3.8.3 Where appropriate SYC will amend its policies, procedure or practices as a result of a complaint.

4 APPLICABILITY, PERIODIC REVIEW REQUIREMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

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

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

Risk Rating: Extreme

Complaints or suggestions for improvement regarding this policy or its implementation may be registered in the SYC Continual Improvement Register.

5 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

In support of this policy, the following documents apply:

Service Access Policy
Feedback, Complaints and Continuous Improvement Procedure
Measurement, Analysis and Improvement Procedure
Feedback and Complaints form

6 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.

7 REFERENCES

AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008 Quality management systems - Requirements

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

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015