



Complaints policy

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Complaints policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document sets out a policy for handling complaints about the Australian Dental Council (ADC).
- 1.2. The ADC aims to provide the best customer service for all its stakeholders. We are committed to handling complaints about the ADC in a fair and transparent manner and using what we learn to improve our service in the future.
- 1.3. In this policy, 'we' and 'our' refer to the ADC.

2. Scope of the policy

- 2.1. This policy covers complaints about the ADC. A complaint is any matter raised by a stakeholder which expresses concern about, or dissatisfaction with, how the ADC has carried out its work. This might include, for example, complaints about how we have communicated with a stakeholder, how timely or appropriate our customer service was, or a policy or process we have in place.
- 2.2. Separate policies and processes are in place which allow stakeholders to appeal against certain decisions we have made, or to send us information to help inform our work.
 - Overseas qualified dental practitioners are able to appeal against the outcome of an initial assessment, written examination or practical examination. These policies are:
 - Initial assessment appeals policy
 - Written examination appeals policy
 - Practical examination appeals policy
 - Education providers are able to appeal against accreditation decisions including decisions to refuse or revoke accreditation. The right to appeal and the decisions that can be appealed against are set out in the 'Program accreditation appeals policy'.
 - Stakeholders are able to raise concerns that an ADC accredited program may not meet one or more of the ADC/Dental Council (New Zealand) 'Accreditation Standards for Dental Practitioner Programs'. This is set out in the 'Concerns about accredited programs policy'.
- 2.3. These policies are published on the ADC website.

3. Process

- 3.1. In some instances, what might otherwise be a complaint can be satisfactorily resolved informally through discussion with ADC staff without the need for further escalation.
- 3.2. Where a formal complaint is made, the ADC will follow this process.

Acknowledgement

- Complaints will normally be made in writing. All complaints will be centrally recorded. The ADC will acknowledge receipt and provide information about the process that will be followed.
- Where a complainant is unable to put their complaint in writing because of a disability, the ADC will put in place any reasonable adjustments.
- The complaint will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and/or a member of the senior leadership team (or their delegate). If it is determined that the complaint relates to a disagreement with an ADC assessment or accreditation decision, or a concern about an accredited program, it will be passed on as appropriate to be handled under the relevant policy and the complainant will be informed.

Assessment

- The complaint will be assessed by the Chief Executive Officer and/or a member of the senior leadership team (or their delegate) to determine the most suitable person to manage the complaint and the scope of the investigation that may be required.

Investigation

- The complaint will be investigated. This may include asking the complainant for further clarification, reviewing documentation including previous correspondence and/or speaking to members of staff as necessary.

Conclusion

- A response will be drafted and sent to the complainant, explaining the outcomes of their complaint. It may not always be possible to resolve complaints to each parties' satisfaction but the ADC is committed to providing clear information and explaining its decisions.
- Outcomes of complaints might include the following.
 - An explanation of the ADC's policy and processes.
 - An apology for any errors that have may have occurred and what we have done to put matters right (if possible).
 - Any changes to policies or processes we have made or plan to make as a result of the complaint.

4. Timeliness

4.1. We are committed to investigating complaints in a timely manner. We aim to:

- Acknowledge receipt of complaints within five working days of receipt.
- Send a substantive response to a complaint within 15 working days of receipt.
- Keep complainants regularly updated if it is not been possible to resolve a complaint within expected timeframes.