

Feedback and Complaints Management Policy

1. Purpose

Gladstone Community Linking Agency (GCLA) actively seeks the input of customers and stakeholders and encourages them to provide all feedback and complaints, as a source of ideas for improving services and activities and ensuring all customers have a voice in determining the suitability of care and support provided.

2. Scope

This policy is applicable to all stakeholders of GCLA.

3. Policy Statement

Gladstone Community Linking Agency (GCLA) is committed to ensuring that any person or organisation using GCLA services or affected by its operations is encouraged to provide feedback and have the right to lodge a complaint or to appeal a decision of the organisation. All concerns that are raised will be addressed in ways that ensure access and equity, fairness, accountability, and transparency.

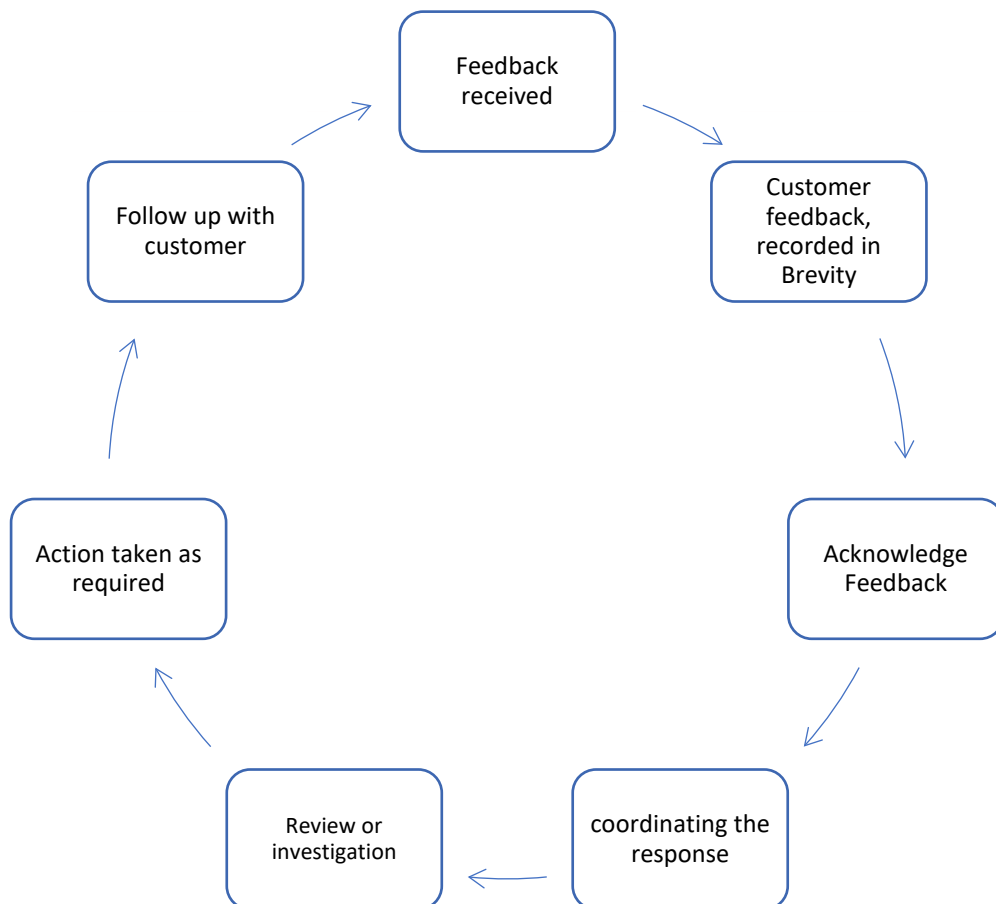
The organisation will provide a complaints and appeals management procedure that:

- allows any person to make a complaint or provide feedback.
- ensures confidentiality and anonymity.
- facilitates complaints by cultivating a supportive environment in which they can be made.
- is simple, accessible, and easy to use.
- is effectively communicated and promoted to all customers and stakeholders.
- is proportionate to the size of the organisation and the services it provides.
- ensures complaints or appeals are fairly assessed and responded to promptly.
- is procedurally fair and follows principles of natural justice.
- complies with legislative requirements.
- All customer documents are available in “easy read” version or in a mode of language/communication which is acceptable to the customer. Employees will provide information to customers, in a way that is easy for them to understand and consider.

GCLA will:

- Foster a service culture that encourages open and honest communication.
- Inform customers about the standard of service they can expect.
- Protect the right of customers and stakeholders to provide feedback and to make complaints about our services.
- Ensure that all customers, stakeholders, and employees are encouraged and supported to raise any concerns they have about the service provided or organisation.
- Treat all complainants with respect, recognising that the issue of complaint is important to the complainant.
- Ensure support and advocacy is available to customers who make a complaint and require support.
- Resolve complaints, where possible, to the satisfaction of the complainant.

- Ensure all stakeholders have access to GCLA's Complaints Management Policy.
- Investigate all complaints in a timely manner.
- Keep parties to the complaint appropriately involved and informed of progress of the complaint.
- Ensure that Board of Directors, employees and volunteers are given information about the complaint's procedure.
- Ensure all customers and stakeholders are aware of the complaints policy and procedures.
- Ensure that all complainants are aware of and understand how to escalate their complaint in the event they are not satisfied with GCLA response.
- Ensure that a complainant is not penalised in any way or prevented from use of services during the progress of an issue.
- Ensure that feedback data (both positive and negative) is considered in organisational reviews and in planning service improvements.
- Review and evaluate the accessibility and effectiveness of the complaints management system and continually improve its processes.
- Record and analyse information arising from feedback and use it to improve services.



4. Responsibilities and Delegations

Employees	All employees and volunteers working with customers and stakeholders are responsible for ensuring they are familiar with the procedures for customers and stakeholders to provide feedback, and for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accepting and reporting informal feedback • offering customers an opportunity to provide formal feedback.
Plan Partners, Team Leaders and Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing customers of what to expect from the service • Inform and assist customers to understand the complaints process and support them when lodging complaints. • Acknowledging complaints and feedback within allocated time frame • Providing feedback to the customer following investigation of the issues raised.
Quality, Risk and Safety Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse complaint trends and provide recommendations for improvement to Leadership and Executive Teams • Assist with investigations where requested by Executive or Leadership Teams
Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the mandatory requirements and standards to support implementation of this policy • Evaluate implementation of the policy

5. Policy Context

The following references the relevant standards and legislation that are in force and changed from time to time.

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care Quality Standards • NDIS Quality & Safety Standards • Better practice guide to complaints handling in aged care services • Effective Complaint Handling Guidelines for NDIS Providers
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules • National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules • Aged Care Act • National Disability Insurance Scheme Act
Contractual Obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Agreement/s
Organisation Quality Documents and Processes / Forms, record keeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct & Culture Policy • Customer Feedback Form • Complaints, Compliments and Feedback EIMS • GCLA Website

6. Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation regarding its employees, services or products that warrants response or resolution.
Complainant	A customer, advocate, employee, entity, or member of the public who expresses their dissatisfaction about an organisation to either the organisation itself or an external body.
Escalation	The process of reporting complaints to an external agency (e.g the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission or NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission) if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint.