

1. Introduction

AUSTSWIM recognises the importance of complaints to the organisation and regards them as an opportunity to learn, correct and improve our services. Complaints provide the organisation with an opportunity to gather information and improve on a variety of services, delivery methods and customers' needs and expectations.

All prospective customers shall be advised that there is a Customer Feedback and Grievance Policy. Customers who are concerned about the conduct of AUSTSWIM are encouraged to attempt to resolve their concerns using this procedure.

Please note: For all complaints relating to AUSTSWIM Teachers and the AUSTSWIM Teacher Code of Behaviour please see the AUSTSWIM Code of Behaviour and the AUSTSWIM Code of Behaviour Disciplinary Process.

2. Statement of Commitment

AUSTSWIM is committed to providing a high level of customer service that effectively addresses customer complaints. AUSTSWIM will resolve all customer complaints in a timely manner and to the expectation of the customer.

AUSTSWIM is committed to improving its services. As part of our commitment, we actively encourage feedback from stakeholders who are dissatisfied with the service they have received from either us or any other party acting on our behalf.

Our complaints processes reaffirm our commitment to our corporate values of being constructive, accountable, transparent and effective. All complaints are investigated thoroughly in accordance with company policies and the principles of natural justice. All complaints will be handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution. All complaints will be managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.

3. Identifying a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by an organisation or its representatives, that has failed to reach the standard stated or expected. This includes complaints about service that has been or should have been delivered. Complaints can originate from members of the public, AUSTSWIM candidates, AUSTSWIM Teachers, Venue personnel, Presenters, Council and Board Members or staff. All staff are trained and empowered to handle complaints in the first instance and it is preferred they are dealt with promptly at the initial point of contact. Unresolvable complaints follow a chain of command to reach a point of resolution; team member to supervisor to manager to CEO to Board.

4. Guidelines for Handling Complaints

Refer to Checklist Customer Service Feedback and Grievance Process AND Detailed Customer Feedback Process (excel)

A customer may register a complaint in writing. Customers should be encouraged to lodge complaints via the website (**feedback form – this is the first preference**) or via email. If the complaint relates to a presenter, teacher or venue, written submission is required to ensure the complaint reviewed and tracked appropriately.

Immediate initial response should be provided to the customer to acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise a timeline/framework for response/resolution. This should be done within two (2) working days. If possible, respond/resolve the complaint in this initial correspondence.

If there is a need to investigate the complaint, every effort should be made for resolution to occur within a maximum of five (5) working days. Ongoing communication and advisement to the customer is essential for complaints that fall beyond this timeframe. All complaints should be resolved in a fair and equitable manner within fifteen (15) working days.

If the complaint is complex and cannot be resolved with fifteen (15) working days, you are required to regularly update the customer as to the progress and the likely timeframe.

The decision to be communicated to the complainant shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, personnel not previously involved in the subject of the complaint.

5. Process for Handling Complaints

Refer to Checklist Customer Service Feedback and Grievance Process AND Detailed Customer Feedback Process (excel)

Informal Process

1. Any customer with a question or complaint may raise the matter with staff of AUSTSWIM in the relevant Business Centre and attempt an informal resolution of the question or complaint. Upon receipt of a complaint, AUSTSWIM shall confirm whether the complaint relates to certification activities for which it is responsible for, and if so, shall respond accordingly.
2. Questions or complaints dealt with in this way do not become part of the formal complaint process and will not be documented, recorded or reported on unless the AUSTSWIM staff member involved determines that the issue question or complaint was relevant to the wider operation of AUSTSWIM.
3. Customers who are not satisfied with the outcome of the question or complaint are encouraged to register a formal complaint or put further requests in writing via the AUSTSWIM web site feedback form.

Formal Process

1. Any customer can submit a complaint via the **website (feedback form – this is the preferred method)**, or email.
2. Complaints submitted in this manner will be reviewed by the General Manager – Compliance and Accreditation who will then allocate the complaint to a relevant staff member to investigate.
3. Staff member should read the complaint and contact customer to inform them they have received the complaint. They should also ask the customer any questions, queries or further information where required.
4. Staff member to check **feedback grievance register on the AUSTSWIM extranet under website tab** to see if previous complaints have been lodged against the same person/swim school.
5. Contact the person/swim school the complaint has been made against. Inform them of the details of the complaint and allow them a chance to explain their version of events.
6. Follow your phone conversation with an email (or written correspondence) outlining the details of the complaint made and the details of your conversation. Get them to respond in writing to confirm their version of events.
7. Make contact with the complainant if required to inform them of any infringement. This may simply be to remind them of their obligations under the AUSTSWIM Code of Conduct.
8. Make contact with the customer who lodged the complaint and inform them of the outcome
9. Inform the General Manager – Compliance and Accreditation of the outcome so that all details of the complaint and resolution can be logged appropriately in the complaints register
10. If the complaint remains unresolved it can be referred to the AUSTSWIM Management Team.
11. If resolution cannot be resolved internally, AUSTSWIM will appoint an independent external arbiter to review the complaint and propose a resolution.

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As a controlling mechanism, 'General Manager – Accreditation and Compliance' will have access to all the complaints raised via the web, even though they will get directed to relevant Business Centre Managers. 'General Manager – Accreditation and Compliance' can therefore track the progress of complaints received, assess the efficiency of each manager in terms of responding to complaints and take necessary actions accordingly.

Review

Any systemic issues identified as a result of the complaint will be fed into AUSTSWIM's continuous improvement system via a report to the Continuous Improvement Procedure.

Remember let's use complaints as a means to improve the quality of the services we provide