

TONGA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION BOARD



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE DECEMBER 2017

Contents

1. Students complaints about a PCET provider.....	3
2. Concerns about a PCET provider	3
3. Complaints about Tonga National Qualification and Accreditation Board (TNQAB).....	5
4. Ways in which a Complaint or a Concern can be made.....	5
5. The Complaint Resolution Process	5
6. Attachment 1: Formal Student Complaint Form about a PCET Provider	7

1. Student complaints about a post compulsory education and training (PCET) provider

Do you have a complaint about a PCET provider?

If you are **a student (or someone representing a student – parent, guardian)** and are dissatisfied with the services provided at a PCET provider or had an experience that directly affected you, then this is what you can do to address the matter:

Inform the PCET provider involved about your dissatisfaction and try to resolve the situation

It is extremely important that you make a genuine effort to resolve the situation with the PCET provider first. This can be done informally where you discuss the matter with a staff member or teacher if it is an academic issue OR it can be done formally where you use the formal complaints procedure established by the PCET provider.

PCET providers should have in place, a procedure for receiving and responding to students' complaints and appeals for academic results. This can be found in the student handbook or you can ask a staff member for a copy of the complaints procedure. Follow the procedure precisely and compose a written complaint, saving a copy of it with you as evidence if needed later. Once your complaint is submitted, you should get a response from the PCET provider addressing your concern.

If the matter remains unsolved -

If the PCET provider makes no attempt to address your concern or if you remain dissatisfied with the solution they provided and believe that you were dealt with unfairly, then you can proceed to lodge your complaint with TNQAB. However, there are parameters around the kind of complaints that TNQAB can deal with.

TNQAB will not handle a complaint if –

- a) the complaint is out-of-date (must be lodged within 6 months of the incident happening)
- b) there is insufficient information regarding the matter – for example, if the complaint form attached in the appendix of this document is not filled out completely and signed by the complainant.

If TNQAB **does** take on the complaint, both parties, the student and the PCET provider, will be required to provide information for the investigation. If after assessing both parties' arguments, TNQAB concludes that the student was dealt with unfairly, it will execute the following actions:

1. Issue a notice of non-compliance if the conclusion indicates that the PCET provider is in breach of the TNQAB Act 2004 and TNQAB policies and regulations. The PCET provider will be subjected to comply with the Act and policies by a set time or consequences will apply.
2. TNQAB will maintain a mediator role and will not be directly involved in negotiations between the student and the PCET provider. However, the student can use the conclusion that TNQAB reached from the investigation conducted, to try and make a settlement with the PCET provider. Otherwise, the student may approach the Ombudsman office, using the conclusion that TNQAB reached, as the basis of their motion.

2. Concerns about a PCET provider

*If you are **not** a student but have a concern about a PCET provider, this is what you can do:*

Lodge your concern with TNQAB and we will assess the information carefully and it may lead to a formal investigation. If an investigation takes place, we can inform you of the final conclusion reached after the investigation. However, the details of the investigation will not be disclosed to you. Furthermore, your identity will not be disclosed to the PCET provider in order to protect you.

3. Complaints about Tonga National Qualification and Accreditation Board (TNQAB)

If you are a student or stakeholder and you are dissatisfied with the services carried out by the staff of TNQAB, please let us know so that we can remedy the situation and learn from it. With your feedback, we can improve our services.

Your complaint will be handled by the Senior Risk Analyst and the ACEO and the conclusion reached regarding the situation, will be forwarded to the TNQAB Appeal Committee to be finalized.

4. Ways in which a Complaint or a Concern can be made

Complaints can be made to TNQAB in the following ways:

- 1) Telephone call to the Senior Risk Officer, Miss Siniva Samani at TNQAB. The work telephone number is 28136 or;
- 2) Fill in the TNQAB complaint form available on the TNQAB website (www.tnqab.to) and send it via email to complaints@tnqab.to or;
- 3) Write a letter addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, TNQAB, Molisi City Central Level 1, Nuku'alofa

5. The Complaint Resolution Process

TNQAB wants to assure you of the following:

- 1) All complaint information will be handled sensitively and confidentially.
- 2) TNQAB will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days.
- 3) The complaint will be registered in the complaints log and a reference number assigned to it.
- 4) The complaint will be investigated in accordance with the Complaint Resolution process.
- 5) If the matter cannot be resolved within the agreed time frame, the TNQAB will provide an update to the complainant on the progress of the investigation and the new timeline for completion.

The Complaints follow the Resolution Process outlined below:

Level	Officer Responsible	Action	Process Time
1	Senior Risk Officer	The Senior Risk Officer will lead the investigation with the assistance of relevant officers to provide background information when needed and will investigate the complaint and resolve the matter. Complaints not resolved at Level 1 are referred to Level 2	10 working days
2	CEO	The complaint is referred to the Principal Qualification Officer of the relevant division and the ACEO. They will carry on further investigation to resolve the matter and report to the CEO for decision to resolve the matter.	10 working days

		Complaints not resolved at Level 2 are referred to Level 3	
3	The Chairman of the Board	The complaint is referred to the Chairman of the Board. The Chairman of the Board and the members of the Board, may reach a decision concerning the matter.	20 working days
4	The Appeal Committee	If the complaint is not resolved by the Chair and the Board, the complaint is submitted to the Appeal Committee whose decision is final.	20 working days

6. Attachment

Attachment 1: Formal Student Complaint Form about a PCET Provider

1. Details about the PCET Provider (<i>Ngaahi fakaikiiki fekau'aki mo e ako'anga</i>)
PCET provider name/school name: Hingoa 'o e ako'anga:
2. Your details (<i>Fakaikiiki fekau'aki mo koe</i>)
You must provide this information in order for TNQAB to consider your complaint. If the complaint is from a group of students, please provide the details of the primary contact person. Kuo pau ke ke fakakakato mai 'a e 'u fakaikiiki koeni kae toki lava 'e he TNQAB 'o ngaue ki ho'o launga. Kapau koe launga mei ha tamaiki ako, kataki 'o tuku mai 'a e hingoa moe fakaikiiki 'o e tokotaha ke fai kiai 'a e fetu'utaki. Name/Hingoa:..... Contact phone number/Fika telefoni:..... Email address/Tu'asila email:.....
3. Complaint details (<i>Ngaahi fakaikiiki fekau'aki mo ho'o launga</i>)
Write the details of your complaint as clearly as possible below. Try and give specific examples that support your complaint and provide facts such as dates, times and places. Fakamatala'i mahino mai 'a e fakaikiiki ho'o launga. Fakakau mai mo ha ngaahi fakamo'oni ke poupou'i 'aki ho'o launga, kau kiai 'a e 'aho, taimi mo e feitu'u.

What is your desired outcome? Ko e ha e ola 'oku ke faka'amu ke ma'u?

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4. Supporting documents

Attach any documents that support your complaint and list these below. Depending on the nature of your complaint you could include copies of the provider's response to your complaint, other correspondences regarding the complaint, notes from meetings, publicity material, receipts etc.

Fakakau mai ha tatau 'o ha ngaahi fakamatala pe fakamo'oni 'e tokoni ki hono fakamo'oni'i ho'o launga. Fakatatau ki he natula 'o ho'o launga, te ke lava 'o fakapipiki mai ha tatau 'o ha tohi mei he ako'anga fekau'aki mo e launga 'oku ke fakahoko mai, pe ko ha miniti mei he fakataha mo e ako'anga pe ko ha tali totongi 'o ha me'a na'e totongi.

List of supporting documents attached :

Lisi 'o e ngaahi fakamo'oni

5. Authorisation

You must sign this in order for TNQAB to consider your complaint.
 Please indicate *Yes* or *No* then sign below.

Yes
 ('Io)

No
 ('Ikai)

Kuo pau ke ke fakamo'oni 'i he launga ni kae toki lava 'o ngaue kiai 'a e TNQAB. Katakai 'o fakatonuki 'a e 'Io pe 'Ikai pea ke toki fakamo'oni mai 'i lalo.

I confirm that I have attempted to follow the internal complaints procedure of the provider and have given it the opportunity to resolve my complaint before submitting this complaint to TNQAB.

'Oku ou fakapapau kuou 'osi muimui pau ki he founa launga 'a e ako'anga pea na'a ku feinga ke mau ngaue fakataha ke fakalelei'i 'a e palopalema koeni ki mu'a peau toki fakahoko mai 'a e launga ni.

I have attached a copy of the outcome of my formal complaint to the PCET provider.

'Oku ou fakakau heni 'a e ola 'eku launga ki he ako'anga.

<p>I authorise TNQAB to inform the tertiary organization of my name.</p> <p>'Oku ou fakamafai'i 'a e TNQAB ke fakaha hoku hingoa ki he ako'anga 'oku ou launga'i.</p>		
<p>I authorise TNQAB to release a copy of this form and documents I have supplied to the tertiary organization.</p> <p>'Oku ou fakamafai'i 'a e TNQAB ke tukuatu ki he ako'anga 'a e tatau 'o e ngaahi fakamatala kuo u fakakau 'i he launga ni.</p>		
<p>I authorise TNQAB to proceed with investigating my formal complaint</p> <p>'Oku ou fakamafai'i 'a e TNQAB ke nau fakahoko 'a e fakatotolo mo e fekumi ki he mo'oni 'o e launga ni.</p>		
<p>Your signature (Ko ho'o fakamo'oni)</p>		
<p>Date ('Aho/Mahina/Ta'u)</p>		