

General Practice Training – Valley to Coast Board Policy

Appeals and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Part 1 – Appeals or Complaints against Valley to Coast

If a complaint arises as a consequence of a decision by General Practice Training – Valley to Coast (VtoC) the following procedure will apply:

1. The party with a complaint (whether a registrar, supervisor or practice) should discuss the matter with the person responsible and attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved in the above manner then the party with the complaint should notify the CEO of their complaint in writing. The CEO will then refer the matter to the Review Committee.
3. The Review Committee must meet and consider the complaint as soon as practical but no later than one month after the notification of the complaint to the CEO. The Review Committee will comprise the Registrar Liaison Officer, the Supervisor Liaison Officer and a Medical Educator. In the absence of one or more of these people the CEO will nominate a replacement person(s). If the appeal or complaint has arisen as a result of the actions of a person who is a member of the Review Committee, then that person will stand aside from the committee and the CEO will nominate a replacement person. An external independent person may be appointed to the committee as a replacement or additional member at the discretion of the CEO.
4. The Review Committee will give the party about whom the complaint has been made an opportunity to make a written submission to the Committee.
5. The party with the complaint and the party about whom the complaint has been made will be able to present their case in person to the committee. The committee will also be able to seek input from any other relevant parties to the complaint. The decision of the review committee will be communicated in writing to the relevant parties and to the CEO.
6. The party with the complaint has the right to lodge an appeal. A request for an appeal must be lodged in writing within 14 days of the notification of the decision of the Review Committee. The written appeal must be lodged in writing within 14 days of the request for appeal.
7. The written appeal will be considered by the Board of General Practice Training – Valley to Coast at the next appropriate board meeting. The party with the complaint has the right to put their case to the board in writing. The board may, at its discretion, seek further information on the matter and may ask one or both of the parties involved to present their case in person to the board.
8. The decision of the board will be final in regard to all matters except those specified in paragraph 9.
9. A candidate or registrar has the right to lodge a further appeal to the GPET Assessment and Review Panel (GARP) in the following circumstances:
 - a) when a candidate is unsuccessful in gaining a place in Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) and appeals against the selection process;
 - b) when conditions are placed on a registrar's medical registration resulting in exclusion from AGPT; and
 - c) when all procedures outlined in the GPET Policy on Performance Assessment, Monitoring and Intervention in AGPT have been exhausted.

Part 2 - Disputes between a Registrar and a Supervisor or Practice

Ideally any dispute at the practice level should be resolved by discussion between those parties. If the dispute cannot be resolved at the practice level, it should be referred to Valley to Coast. It is desirable that any such dispute is referred to Valley to Coast at the earliest possible stage.

Valley to Coast may be able to assist in the resolution of the dispute in the following ways:

- 1) By the provision of advice as to the interpretation of the National Minimum Terms and Conditions, College Standards, GPET requirements and accepted local practice.

The registrar, supervisor or practice may seek advice from Valley to Coast staff (including the Director of Education, Medical Educator, RLO, SLO, or CEO).

- 2) By attending and facilitating discussions with the registrar and supervisor/practice in order to assist them to resolve the dispute. This can be done by a Medical Educator, Director of Education, CEO or by another person nominated by the CEO.

- 3) By acting as a mediator.

Valley to Coast may offer to mediate with the intention of assisting the parties to resolve the dispute. This requires the voluntary participation of both parties. This can be done by a Medical Educator, Director of Education, CEO or by another person nominated by the CEO. The mediator will conduct meetings with both parties jointly and separately as required.

Both parties can elect to have an additional support person present during such meetings.

During the dispute resolution process, both parties should endeavour to continue to work in an appropriate and professional manner.

Termination of a term placement

Both the registrar and the supervisor/practice have a legal right to terminate their employment contract according to the provisions of that contract and relevant industrial relations law. However, the termination of a training placement may have significant consequences for both the registrar and the supervisor/practice. The term placement should not be terminated until all other reasonable options have been explored.

If either party wishes to terminate the placement, then the Director of Education must be consulted so that alternative solutions can be considered and explored. This consultation should occur before any decision regarding termination is made.

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