

# Complaints & Feedback

- we want to hear from you



## Giving feedback, including suggestions, compliments and complaints

At Aspect we encourage you to give us your feedback so that we can update and improve our services. We make sure there are lots of ways and times for you to tell us what you want or need from us, and what you think of the job we are doing.

There are two important policies that talk about our approach to feedback and complaints in, our Quality Management Framework policy and our Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback policy.

### Who can give us feedback?

Anyone can give us feedback on Aspect's schools, supports, services and staff.

Aspect will often ask for feedback from particular groups on how we work to make things better. Some groups that may like to give us feedback include:

- The people we support - students, participants and their families or circles of support
- Advocates, community members or other organisations that work with us or the people we support
- Aspect members
- Aspect supporters
- Government and funding bodies
- Representatives of specific communities such as:
  - » People on the autism spectrum
  - » Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities
  - » Culturally and / or Linguistically Diverse communities
  - » Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Intersex and Queer/Questioning (LGBTIQ) communities
- People who would like to access one of Aspect's schools, supports or services
- The general public

### What type of feedback can I give?

We welcome all types of feedback and we want you to feel safe to tell us what you think, especially if you are unhappy with us. Below is a list of the types of feedback we receive:

**Feedback:** Feedback is when you tell us how you feel or what you think about something to do with Aspect's services, supports or staff, either positive or negative.

**Suggestion:** A Suggestion is when you tell us an idea for something you would like to see happen, change or included within Aspect's services or supports for you.

**Compliments:** A compliment is when you tell us about something to do with Aspect's services, supports or staff that you thought was done well, or you would like to give praise or thanks about.

**Complaints:** A complaint is when you tell us you are not happy, or you are angry, upset or don't like something to do with Aspect's services, supports or staff, and you would like something done to change that.

Aspect is committed to appropriately responding to, and preventing any incidents of abuse, neglect, discrimination, violence or exploitation of the people we support. Any concerns or allegations of any staff misconduct or reportable conduct are followed up as part of our complaints and incident management processes, including following our legal reporting requirements to the relevant regulatory bodies. If you have a complaint of this nature, you can escalate this to the manager of the staff member your concern or allegation is about. See Aspect's feedback and complaint escalation process for more information.

## How can I give Aspect my feedback?

There are many ways you can give feedback to us, including:

- talking in person directly to Aspect staff (this includes using an alternative or augmented communication system if you have one);
- phoning the school, service or staff you work with directly, or calling our main office on **1800 ASPECT (1800 277 328)**;
- emailing a particular Aspect school, service or staff member directly, or emailing Aspect's Customer Service address: [customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au) (this includes emailing video or audio files);
- writing or drawing in a letter or fax addressed to Aspect or the Aspect School / Service you use;
- contacting us through our social media channels;
- filling in a feedback or complaint form - available at your local school or service; or
- using the contact form on Aspect's Contact Us page.

It is important that you include your contact details if you would like us to reply or get in touch with you.

If your feedback is a complaint we may encourage you to write the complaint down to help us better understand what the problem or issue is, and what it is that you would like from us to fix it. However you **do not** have to fill in a form or put it in writing. This is optional.

You are welcome to give us your feedback through an interpreter, support person or advocate. It is your choice how you want to tell us.

## Giving feedback in a language other than English

To support non-English speakers who need assistance with giving feedback or interpreting Aspect's information in another language, Aspect uses the National Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

If you need support to understand Aspect's written information or would like to give feedback in a language other than English, we encourage you to use the following options:

- Call TIS on 131 450 to request an interpreter in your preferred language, and ask for Autism Spectrum Australia (1800 277 328);
- Ask someone you know and trust who can translate for you to help you; or
- Get support from an advocate. To find advocacy services information, visit: <https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

For information in your language, visit: <https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/MultiLingual%20Support>

## What happens when you give feedback to us

### Positive feedback (including suggestions or compliments)

This type of feedback is passed on to the people who work in the area the feedback is about, to ensure that we can continue to grow and learn from the feedback that we receive.

If your feedback is in writing we will acknowledge it within two (2) business days. If your feedback is given in person or on the phone we will acknowledge what you have told us straight away,

If you have requested us to get in touch with you, or we would like more information about the feedback you have given us, we will make contact using the contact details you provide us.

### Negative feedback (including complaints)

Aspect has a feedback and complaints process that is fair and follows the law. Aspect will listen to all complaints and try to fix the problem. All complaints to Aspect are kept private.



If you have a problem, we will:

1

**Welcome your negative feedback or complaint as an opportunity for learning**

Where we have not been able to acknowledge your feedback or complaint immediately, you will receive acknowledgement within two (2) business days.

2

**Listen to you and help you fix the problem**

This may involve doing an investigation by talking to people involved in the complaint and looking at evidence. We may ask you for more information.

If the complaint requires us to report to an external authority, such as a funding body, the government or the police, we will do so as soon as possible and work with them to solve the problem.

We will come back to you with an update, solution or answer within 10 business days. If we have not been able to resolve the issue in that time, you will be told how long it is likely to take to complete our investigation before we can give you answers.

When we make a decision about your feedback or complaint, we will give you the reasons why we made that decision.

3

**Make sure you are treated fairly**

This includes keeping you safe and protected from retribution. It is against the law for anyone to treat you badly for making a complaint.

4

**Give you support to understand us and talk to us**

This means helping you with finding support people and giving you information in the ways you can understand such as finding interpreters or using visuals. You can find useful contacts for organisations that can help you by state in our Useful Contacts for the People We Support document.

5

**Keep your information private, and your complaint confidential**

Only the people that need to know about your feedback or complaint will be involved.

Other people who use Aspect's schools and services will not be told about your feedback or complaint. If the complaint involves another person who uses Aspect services and we need to speak with them, we will keep your identity private.

If we make improvements to our schools, supports or services because of your feedback, we may share that the improvements have come from receiving feedback and complaints, but will never reveal your identity or the details of your feedback or complaint.

If we have to tell someone about your complaint by law e.g. a regulatory body or the police, we will let you know.

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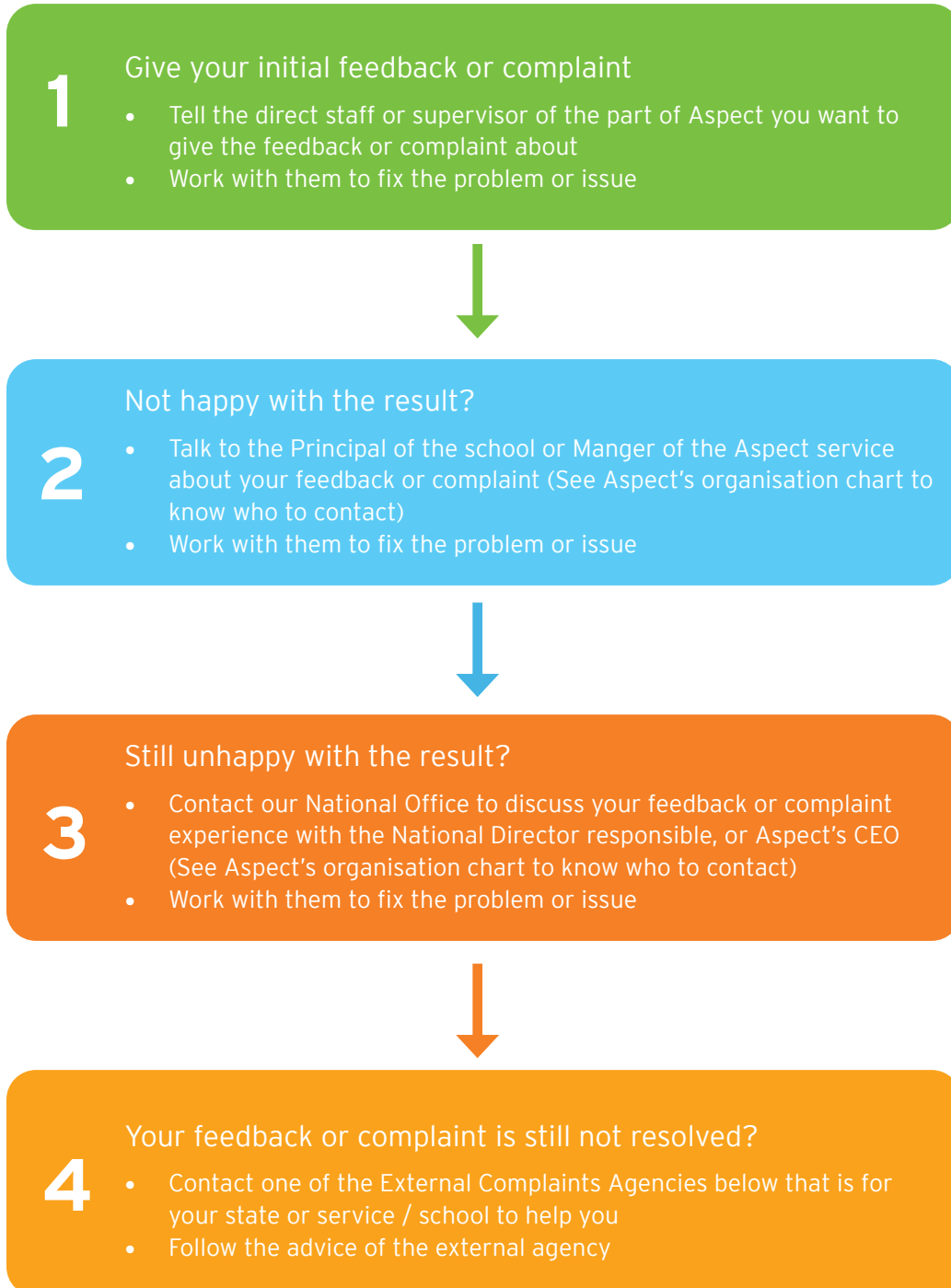
After we have worked with you to fix the issue or problem, if you are still not happy, there are other people inside and outside of Aspect that you can speak with. If you are not happy with the response you get from us, you can ask us to tell you who else you can speak to or what else you can do.

We have a Feedback and complaint escalation process below that we encourage you to follow.

There is also contact information for other organisations that can help you in the External Complaints Agencies list on this page, or you can ask us and we can tell you who else you can speak to or what else you can do.

## What if you are unhappy with the result? Aspect's feedback and complaint escalation process

If you feel that your complaint or feedback is not being taken seriously, or you are not happy with our response, you can escalate your complaint using the escalation process outlined below:



## Feedback Aspect cannot accept

Aspect cannot accept feedback about:

- Services that are not a part of Aspect's work - please contact the other organisation directly;
- Government funding package amounts such as NDIS packages - please contact the funding body directly;
- People on the autism spectrum that are not supported by Aspect.

Aspect has a large amount of information on our website available regarding autism, and we are happy to support you with general information. However we cannot support you with any specific concerns you have with someone who is on the autism spectrum who is not associated with us. We recommend you speak with that person directly to resolve your concerns.

## External Complaints Agencies

For a detailed list of useful contacts for organisations that can help you by state, please see our Useful Contacts for the People We Support document, or click on the links for the organisations below.

### National

**National Disability Insurance Scheme** - For complaints about the NDIA

<https://ndis.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/feedback-complaints>

**The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline** - For reporting abuse and neglect of people with a disability.

<https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability/do-you-need-report-abuse-or-neglect-people-with-disability>

**Office of the Australian Information Commissioner** - For complaints regarding privacy and information access. This includes acting as the Privacy Commissioner for the ACT.

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/>

**Australian Human Rights Commission** - For complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying based on a person's sex, disability, race, age or sexual preference.

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/>

**Disability Advocacy Finder** - This website can locate government funded advocacy services in your area.

<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

**NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission** - For complaints about NDIS Service providers

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/participants/complaints>

### Australian Capital Territory

**ACT Human Rights Commission** - For complaints about disability and community services, and services provided to children and young people. This includes the Disability & Community Services Commissioner; The Public Advocate; Discrimination Commissioner, Health Services Commissioner; Children & Young People Commissioner, Victims of Crime Commissioner and the Human Rights Commissioner.

<http://hrc.act.gov.au/>

### New South Wales

**Ombudsman New South Wales** - For complaints about community and disability service providers; and complaints about child protection matters for independent schools.

<https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/>

**Family and Community Services (FACS)** - For complaints about disability and community services funded by FACS (including ADHC).

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/>

**Information and Privacy Commission NSW** - For complaints regarding privacy breaches or access to information

<https://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/>



## South Australia

Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC) - For complaints about health and disability service providers in South Australia

<http://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au/>

Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) South Australia - For complaints or concerns that a South Australian person with a mental incapacity may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation

<http://www.opa.sa.gov.au/>

Equal Opportunity Commission - Acts as an impartial third party in handling complaints of discrimination arising in South Australia

<http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au/>

The Association of Independent Schools South Australia - For complaints about non-government independent non-Catholic schools

<http://www.ais.sa.edu.au/>

Please note for complaints involving school services in South Australia: Neither the South Australian Minister for Education and Child Development nor the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development has any power to directly intervene in any complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school. Complaints regarding Aspect's school services in South Australia must be made through Aspect's complaints management process directly.

## Victoria

Disability Services Commissioner - For complaints about disability service providers in Victoria

<http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/>

Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner - For complaints regarding privacy breaches or access to information

<https://ovic.vic.gov.au/>

Department of Health & Human Services Victoria - For complaints regarding disability and community services in Victoria funded by DHHS.

<https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/>