



Complaints Resolution Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Synapse believes that any client or stakeholder who has contact with, or accesses the services provided by Synapse has the right to lodge a complaint if they are unsatisfied or concerned with the treatment or support they receive. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the responding to Preventing and Responding to Abuse, Assault and Neglect Policy.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTEXT

This Policy applies to clients and stakeholders.

3. DEFINITIONS

A **Stakeholder** of Synapse is classified below:

Class of Persons	Class of Act
Stakeholder	An individual or group with an interest in the success of the organisation in delivering intended results and maintaining the viability of the organisation's products and services.

A **Client** of Synapse is classified below:

Class of Persons	Class of Act
Client	A client is a user or recipient of services provided to them by an external organisation or stakeholder (either in the Government, private, or community sector), such as Synapse. Services provided to a client might include, but are not limited to: domestic support; personal care support; social support; community access support; behaviour support; personal development; education; and specialist consultancy services. Clients may receive these services utilising government funding or on a fee for service basis.

Reviewed	May 2016	Next Review Date	May 2017
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A **Complaint** is classified below:

Class of Act
<p>A complaint, concern, issue, dispute, matter or situation that causes concern or resentment and is grounds for action. Some examples of a complaint are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns regarding the physical design of, or access to Synapse• Concerns regarding Policies, Procedures or Practices of Synapse• Any behaviour towards a person that causes undue discomfort; including any form of sexual, financial, physical, emotional or psychological abuse, harassment or discrimination.

4. GENERAL POLICY

People who make a complaint or voice a concern have the right to have their concerns investigated fairly. All formal avenues for handling of complaints will be fully documented and the aggrieved concerns will be considered in the determination of appropriate steps and actions.

Open communication and feedback are regarded as essential elements of satisfying service provision and productive work environment. Clients and stakeholders should be comfortable with discussing issues with the appropriate person and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Complaints Resolution Procedure.

There will be no discrimination or retribution by Synapse against people who lodge a complaint utilising this policy to resolve an issue.

Synapse encourages its clients and stakeholders to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with the appropriate person and in accordance with the terms of this policy.

Synapse acknowledges the right of all parties to seek external support or professional advocacy service of their choice in the resolution of complaints.

Reviewed	May 2016	Next Review Date	May 2017
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Synapse's Responsibilities:

- Ensure that all parties are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to resolving complaints.
- Respond and attempt to resolve any complaint within clearly defined timeframes (defined in the Complaints Resolution Procedure).
- Ensure each complaint is handled in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Remain proactive in identification, prevention and addressing of potential complaints before they become formalised.
- Resolve complaints in conjunction / negotiation with the aggrieved unless disciplinary procedures, criminal action or compulsory notification of abuse issues are involved.
- Document and monitor formal grievances as outlined in the Complaints Resolution Procedure.
- Treat all employees, volunteers, clients and stakeholders with fairness, equality and respect.
- Provide information to clients / stakeholders for advocacy.
- Provide assistance to clients to make a complaint

Aggrieved Responsibilities:

- Actively participate in the complaint resolution process as outlined in the Complaint Resolution Procedure.
- Endeavour to resolve complaints following the procedures outlined in the Complaint Resolution Procedure.
- Provide productive feedback on the resolution process.

5. REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION & LEGISLATION

Synapse Complaint Resolution Procedure
Synapse Complaint Report Form A
Synapse Complaints and Compliments Register
Synapse Complaints Policy and Procedure Statement

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