

DISPUTE AND GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION POLICY

Purpose

This policy provides guidance for the resolution of disputes and grievances regarding the work of the Manufacturing Jobs and Skills Council (JSC).

Scope

This policy applies to all areas of the Manufacturing JSC's operations. It sets out the framework for resolution of disputes and grievances which may occur between members of the Strategic Industry Taskforce, sub-committee members and other industry stakeholders engaged in the work of the JSC.

Requirements for employees of the Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (the Manufacturing Alliance) are outlined in a separate policy – *Grievance and Complaints (Employees)*.

Definitions

Dispute	A disagreement or argument.
Grievance	A complaint against an unjust or unfair act.
Mediation	Intervention in a dispute in which an independent person facilitates the process of identifying, assessing, and considering options to assist the parties in the purpose of resolution.
Natural Justice	To act fairly and without bias.

Policy Statement

The Manufacturing Alliance will ensure effective processes are in place to manage disputes and grievances across the full range of work undertaken by the Jobs and Skills Council. The approach to be taken across the organisation will be to focus on prevention, awareness raising and timely management and resolution of disputes, complaints, or grievances as quickly as possible after they are identified.

Disputes or grievances are required to be dealt with as soon as possible after they are identified. Resolution processes should be flexible to respond appropriately to the issue at hand and may require strategies ranging from informal discussions to formal mediated interventions.

All disputes and grievances are to be handled respectfully, confidentially and in accordance with natural justice.

Where the dispute or grievance relates to a matter covered by another policy, such as Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination, the dispute or grievance will be investigated in accordance with that policy.

Principles

The Manufacturing Alliance will use its best endeavours to ensure:

- Contributors to the work of the Manufacturing Alliance work ethically, fairly, responsibly, and collaboratively.
- Contributors to the work of the Manufacturing Alliance act in good faith to promote the proper operation, management and best interests of the organisation.
- Processes are in place to assist with the prevention of disagreements or disputes in the work of the JSC.
- Early intervention on issues where a dispute is developing to enable resolution before the matter becomes significant.
- Disputes are managed in a manner that is fair, transparent, and responsive and enhances the understanding of, and confidence in, the work undertaken by the Manufacturing Alliance.

The Manufacturing Alliance will use a range of mechanisms to prevent disputes and grievances arising in relation to Jobs and Skills Council matters. These will include:

- Requiring individuals to meet behavioural and conduct requirements set by the organisation in line with the *Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) Jobs and Skills Councils Code of Conduct*.
- Comprehensive induction processes and training on roles, responsibilities, and behavioural expectations.
- Clear processes to prevent and manage potential disputes and grievances including the identification and management of real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest, dispute resolution processes with appropriate escalation and decision-making points, and arrangements for addressing grievance complaints against individuals.
- A complaints management process to enable concerns to be raised by industry participants.

The Manufacturing Alliance recognises that early and prompt action to resolve issues is likely to provide the best opportunity to ensure they don't become significant. To achieve this, the Manufacturing Alliance will:

- Ensure complaints received from stakeholders are considered by the relevant Executive Manager or Chief Executive Officer within 21 calendar days of receipt.
- Use a range of approaches such as meetings and information sharing to enable early discussion and consideration of views where there is, or is likely to be, dissenting views to maximise the opportunity for early agreement between parties.
- Outline decision-making processes so all parties understand how matters are progressed and decided.
- Ensure feedback loops are in place to ensure relevant stakeholders are informed of progress and outcomes from the resolution process.

The Manufacturing Alliance will work to learn from the disputes and their handling to improve the way the organisation manages its work and work processes. This may result in changes to policies and procedures including those which seek to prevent disputes from arising.

All updates to the Manufacturing Alliance's policies and procedures will be reported to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) in line with requirements of the *DEWR Grant Agreement*.

Training Package Matters

Where the dispute or grievance is a matter relating to the development of training products, resolution will be managed in line with the *Model Dispute Resolution Policy* which is included as Appendix C of the [Training Package Products and Endorsement Process Policy](#).

Approval Details

Policy Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Approval Authority	Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance Board
Review Date	Annual or as required if disputes or grievances result in an update being required.