

Complaints and Critical Incidents Self Review

Date of Review: October 2025

Reviewer: Greg Stuthridge - EmployNZ Quality Assurance Manager

Introduction: NZQA requires providers to include data about complaints and critical incidents occurring in 2024 in their 2025 self-review reports. The report or a summary of the report must be published via the providers website and readily available to learners, staff and the general public.

This document follows the NZQA guidance document 'Complaints and critical incidents – Reporting and publishing data in your self -review report' and sets out how EmployNZ:

- Reviewed its complaint and critical incident practices and systems.
- Identified improvements and the action plan to implement these.

1. The definition of a complaint - EmployNZ defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction.

Complaints may be raised and addressed at the following levels:

Student Feedback: is defined as a matter where it is likely that a resolution can be obtained by direct, informal consultation with the people concerned. Often a concern is raised because of a misunderstanding, and these can often be quickly resolved. If the learner considers the outcome of this process as being unsatisfactory, they are required to lodge a formal complaint as per EmployNZ Formal Complaints process.

Formal Complaints: Formal complaints must be made in writing and submitted to the Programme Manager or to the Education Division Manager (if the complaint is regarding the Programme Manager). Upon receiving a formal complaint, the EmployNZ Formal Complaints process is followed. If the learner considers the outcome of this process as being unsatisfactory, they may appeal via the EmployNZ appeal committee and further dissatisfaction with the outcome allows them to appeal externally to the Independent Tertiary Education New Zealand (ITENZ) Quality Commission.

2. Complaint and appeals processes description - Outcome 2: Process 2: Learner complaints clauses 13a – 13d requires providers to:

a) Make complaints and procedures easily locatable and provide clear guidelines on the process to follow.

- EmployNZ has easily locatable complaints procedures which are communicated to the learner during their programme orientation. On or before commencement of their programme the tutor inducts the learner (via the Student Handbook) to the EmployNZ Complaint and Grievance Policy, processes, procedures and guiding principles.
- Via the student website a student can at any time gain access to the student information hub. This provides access to the Student Complaints and Grievances section which allows access to the Student Handbook and the following forms and process steps:
 - File a complaint form which requires the population of the student's name, e-mail and Message which is automatically sent to Education Manager.
 - What happens next – process information.
 - Appeals – process information
 - Complaints from Domestic and International Students – leads to the learner being directed to 'Study Complaints' a free dispute resolution provider specialising in resolving disputes between learner and provider.

- iii. Via the Tutor Handbook all tutors have access to and are inducted to the EmployNZ Complaint and Grievance Policy, processes, procedures and guiding principles and the requirements to cover this during a learner's orientation period. A high level of student satisfaction regarding their orientation, their tutor's readiness to explain things clearly and clear guidance within our publications are evident by looking at EmployNZ 2024 survey data. The data (below) is derived from a total of 516 respondents across all EmployNZ programmes.

KPI Survey - Surveying students at a high level about their overall experience at EmployNZ.

- 98.6% of learners were satisfied with the staff at EmployNZ.
- 99.2 % of learners were satisfied with the experiences they had while on their programme at EmployNZ.

Survey 1: Orientation - Surveying students about their experience during their orientation period.

- 87% of learners indicated that they had been introduced to people, shown around the training centre, and know where everything is located.
- 86% of learners indicated they had gone through the Student Handbook and understood what was expected of them and their rights.
- 88% indicated they were familiar with the Health & Safety procedures of their training centre"
- 92% indicated they knew who to go to if they needed help with anything.
- 87% indicated they were satisfied with the experiences they had while on their programme.

Survey 2: My Tutor – Surveying students about their experience with their Tutor.

- 82% of learners indicated that their tutor explains things clearly.
- 90% of learners indicated that their tutor encouraged them to participate, ask questions and express opinions.
- 90% of learners were Overall satisfied with their tutor.

Survey 3: Training Centre and Resources Surveying students about their experience with their Training Centre and Resources.

- 87% of learners were satisfied with the training centre and resources.

b) Number, Nature, and outcome of complaints, including learner experience with processes.

Due to the culture of our organisation and low learner to tutor ratios within the classroom setting it enables trust and open communication to be established between the learner and their tutor and programme manager. As such in 2024 no formal complaints were received as all expressions of dissatisfaction were addressed via the student feedback process.

c) 2024 Review of complaints and appeals process.

This review included but was not limited to reviewing all Complaint, Health and Safety and incident reporting sections, associated forms and registers of the following:

- EmployNZ Quality Assurance Document
- EmployNZ Student Handbook
- EmployNZ Tutor Handbook
- EmployNZ Offsite Handbook
- EmployNZ website, Student website and student hub
- EmployNZ Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety Handbooks (All EmployNZ training facilities)
- Complaint references within the EmployNZ Quality Assurance System document.
- Code Mapping Document
- EmployNZ Risk Management Process Document

This identified that EmployNZ has a robust system, which identifies types of situations that may warrant student feedback or to lodge a formal complaint. The process allows for facilitation and investigation to address the situation with offers of support mechanisms and succinct detail in terms of reaching resolutions, documenting the resolution and or how to lodge an appeal, with who and when.

The Employ Quality Assurance Manager is tasked with maintaining complaints register and the lack of any lodged formal complaints in 2024 indicates that EmployNZ is meeting its Policy, Purpose and Principles as stated in the EmployNZ Quality Assurance Document. The Student Handbook and EmployNZ Website along with the Tutor Handbook which contribute to the EmployNZ Quality Management System provide clear, accurate and relevant information to our students before, during and after their study and ensures that the information is explained and understood in a way that meets their needs.

d) Involvement of learners in developing or reviewing the complaints process or practices.

The Student Voice is a collaboration between students and EmployNZ with the objective to better support and improve the overall student learning experience and learner engagement and promote improved learning outcomes. EmployNZ strongly encourages all students to participate and express their viewpoint through the Student Voice process. No feedback via the open line feedback line or other informal feedback and communications has been received in 2024 regarding EmployNZ complaints processes or practices.

e) Planned or completed actions to improve processes.

Completed actions:

EmployNZ continues to implement learner information and processes provided by a digital environment via our Online Student Portal. This allows access to processes, student support and student voice initiatives. This is a live and interactive environment, and its development has replaced hardcopy information products.

EmployNZ Social media APP is implemented, Students are directed to it via our publications and orientation. App data is monitored for effectiveness of direct messaging and number of views.

Actions to improve processes:

Actions to be taken	Owner	Due Date	Plan for monitoring implementation	Measures of success
To engage with Māori and involving Māori in the design of physical and digital environments where appropriate EmployNZ has commenced a Te Ao Maori development project which includes reflective discussions of how we can improve engagement with Maori overall. This is an ongoing project lead by EmployNZ Pou Arahi – Sonny Wharekura. An output of this may strengthen documented processes which consider issues from a cultural perspective and provisions of culturally responsive approaches that consider traditional processes for raising and resolving issues.	EDM Pou Arahi QA	ongoing	Once implemented to staff, track effectiveness based on feedback from staff, learners and Tangata Tauranga representatives.	Consent to use framework provided by Sonny for overall implementation. Consent to use content by Tangata Tauranga. Resources introduced to staff by Sonny for use in everyday activities and processes for raising and resolving issues.

5. Critical Incident Definition:

A critical incident is an unplanned or unforeseen traumatic event which is likely to be a one-off event like an accident, natural disaster, an attack or on-going trauma resulting from relentless stressful events which affects a learner, learners or staff and which has an impact on EmployNZ, its staff, its learners and/or the wider community.

6. How does EmployNZ give effect to Outcome 1: Process 4: Responsive wellbeing and safety systems

a) Summary information

There were no critical incidents at EmployNZ in 2024.

b) What plans does Employ have for managing critical incidents?

Policy 3.8 Risk Management refers to the Risk Management process.

The risk management process utilises a Risk Assessment Matrix which rates:

- Consequences from insignificant (level 1) to Catastrophic (level 5).
- Likelihood from Almost Certain (A) to Rare (E)

From this input the identified risk is given one of four ratings Low, medium, high or extreme. The risk treatment can extend being acceptable (low) which deems the risk able to be managed by routine procedures to Not acceptable (Extreme) where immediate action is required, and which must be managed by senior management via an approved response plan.

Policy 3.5 Health and Safety Management

Each delivery site also has a site-specific Health and Safety Handbook which provides key contact information, the procedures to take in specific emergency situations and injury and incident management and reporting.

Specific emergency responses provided for are:

- Site specific evacuation procedures
- Fire and spills
- Medical Emergencies
- Environmental Emergencies (Earthquake, Tsunami, Pandemic, Flood, Hurricane, Tornado)
- Bomb threat and explosives
- Discovery of unusual objects
- Burglary and armed robbery

EmployNZ Incident /Accident reporting process informs staff to immediately ensure the health and safety of themselves, other staff and the public via step 1. Step 2 requires them to immediately contact their Line Manager should the incident/Accident be ascertained as serious. It is deemed serious if the situation poses an immediate risk to self, others, our organisation and/or it may result in an apparent or suspected notifiable Injury or Illness.

It is the Line Manager who will ascertain the seriousness of the situation and advice the staff member accordingly and or to escalate the management of the situation to Senior Management.

In February 2025 a new **Vehicle Handbook** was published which clarifies roles and responsibilities when utilising EmployNZ vehicles or personal vehicles for work purposes. This includes but is not limited to procedures and guidance to follow when staff are involved in incidents while being in charge of a motor vehicle, required and standardised safety equipment to be kept in the vehicle (first aid kit, torch and reflective jacket) and stipulated pre departure checks required to be conducted prior to using a vehicle. All current staff were inducted to the handbook and signed an acknowledgment form which is kept in their personnel file.

The EmployNZ Code of Conduct stipulates that only the Managing Director of EmployNZ can authorise public statements. This applies to responses to media enquiries or any other external communication by a member of the media, such as calls from journalists wanting staff members to “comment” on a situation.

How effective are these plans?

EmployNZ premises undergo fire drills on a regular basis, and these have been effective. EmployNZ is proactive in participating in nationwide tsunami and earthquakes emergency response drills.

When were plans developed or last reviewed and who was involved?

Health and Safety Handbooks are updated regularly as staff and roles change, and as policy and procedure are updated or amended. Review of Handbooks is also formally completed on an annual basis. The most recent updates happened in September 2025. As a result of staffing changes handbooks were updated in terms of the allocation of responsibility as site contacts, designated fire wardens and first aiders. Select Handbooks (Tauranga and Mount Maunganui) were updated to reflect the most current Tsunami Evacuation plans.

c) How has critical incidents data been gathered, and has EmployNZ identified common themes, issues, improvements and priorities.

No critical incidents occurred in 2024.

d) How effective are current practices for staff and learners. Are staff trained in these processes and is the training effective?

All staff are inducted to the Health and Safety Handbooks for their respective training facilities and the EmployNZ Code of Conduct. This is a requirement of their induction as they commence their employment. Staff are proactive in informing or seeking advice from their Line Manager for minor incidents and are aware of the requirement to escalate the management of critical incidents to their line and Senior Management.

Staff are trained and identified to other staff in rolls such as fire wardens, first aid responders.

e) Are your critical incident and emergency processes consistent across the organisation? Yes

7. Future work planned in this area.

Health and Safety Handbooks are scheduled for review annually as part of EmployNZ review process and are revised and updated to reflect the most current civil emergency information and changes in staff and first responder certifications.