

8Downs Industry Schools Co-Op (DISCO)**Policy: Feedback**

Policy number: 5.1		Date adopted: 12/12/2023
Authorised by: DISCO Management Committee		
Date last reviewed: 1/12/2023 Version 10 – Dec 2023	Reviewed by Mike Paton - CEO	Date of next review: 01/12/2024

Refer to Section 6 below for information on the process for policy review.

Policy context: This policy relates to:	
Queensland Standards for Community Services	Standard 5 (Feedback and complaints)
Other standards	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Commitment Charter for Children & Young People
Legislation or other requirements	Community Services Act 2007 Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)

1. Purpose: Why do we have a feedback policy?

Feedback mechanisms are the starting point for the active engagement and participation of our clients and stakeholders in our service, leading to open and honest communication. Encouraging feedback provides an opportunity for people to praise or criticise our service. Feedback enables our staff and management to have insight into the experience of our clients and stakeholders. Feedback assists us to deliver appropriate and effective services and represents an opportunity to continuously improve our services.

Feedback is an important tool that DISCO uses to improve its services. All feedback helps DISCO to respond by providing better service delivery.

DISCO welcomes the opportunity feedback provides as it allows the organisation to reflect on its practices and continue to improve programs and services and how they are delivered. DISCO welcomes feedback that affirms and further enhances service delivery.

2. Scope

This policy will apply to all clients and their families, employees, stakeholders and organisations connected to DISCO. All services delivered by DISCO will require feedback from clients on the service delivery they received.

It is the responsibility of all Program Officer's to collect feedback from their client's and liaise with any agencies aligned to DISCO to assist with independent support to measure their performance at the end of service delivery. All feedback sought and obtained will be analysed by Program Managers and collected for overall assessment by the CEO and DISCO Management Committee.

All staff will receive appropriate training and ongoing support in obtaining and seeking feedback from clients and stakeholders. DISCO Officers are encouraged to respond positively to all feedback received. Individual staff feedback that may be negative or positive is reviewed by the Program or/and the Operations Manager (and if necessary, the CEO) to ensure appropriate feedback and discussion occurs with the relevant staff member. DISCO is keen to acknowledge excellent performance and determine future training requirements where performance is assessed as poor depending on the nature of the feedback to ensure that poor performance is not repeated.

DISCO endeavors to respond to compliments, complaints and general feedback in a way which recognises, promotes and protects an individual's right to provide information about DISCO and its staff. Our organisation provides a Compliments and Complaints Card and feedback box at all offices and encourages all clients and stakeholders to provide feedback about DISCO's programs, services and staff. Individuals can complete this card anonymously or leave their name if they wish. DISCO recognises the importance of responding to feedback personally, privately and in a professional manner. This feedback response may be undertaken through a personal meeting or in written form.

Feedback can be given to DISCO in many forms, including anonymously. DISCO ensures that all feedback received is kept private and confidential in accordance with DISCO's Confidentiality Policy.

If a client or stakeholder prefers to give feedback to an external or independent person this can be done, and they can choose the best way to provide this information. Should this occur, it will be reviewed by the Operations Manager and if necessary, provided to the CEO or President of the Management Committee for assessment.

Specifically, our services are available to all 15-24 year old young people including:

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander young people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Young people with disabilities
- All young people irrespective of issues that they feel may preclude them from service

3. Policy statement: Our commitment

DISCO is committed to listening to people using our service. We take on feedback, both positive and negative, as a source of ideas for improving our services and other activities. Specifically, we will:

- Foster a service culture that encourages open and honest communication
- Inform clients about the standard of service they can expect
- Develop and promote DISCO's Client Service Charter
- Encourage feedback and make it easy for people to provide feedback
- Offer anonymity to people providing feedback
- Record and compile information arising from feedback and use it to improve the services offered at DISCO

4. Procedures

The procedures below describe how DISCO achieves the aims and goals outlined in the purpose, scope and policy statement.

4.1 Information about service culture, standards and client rights and responsibilities

Service culture, standards and client rights and responsibilities are documented in DISCO's Client Services Charter.

DISCO fosters a culture that encourages open and honest communication from our staff and with our clients and stakeholders.

All staff provide an encouraging environment that allows clients to produce feedback without feeling uncomfortable. Our organisation highlights the importance of feedback and explains that this represents a tool to improve our operational processes.

DISCO's Client Service Charter is updated and reviewed annually by the CEO and Management Committee. This document allows clients to understand how they will be treated and the expectations they should have when accessing a service from DISCO. It is displayed in each reception area of all offices and in general meeting areas. A written copy is also given to each new client during the registration and assessment process.

The Commitment Contract is an agreement between the client and the respective DISCO program or service that will be assisting the client. The guidelines within each policy may differ between programs; this is due to the type of program or service, the rules or guidelines and policies relating to the service and the duration of relationship between the client and service.

The Commitment Contract will be negotiated with the DISCO Officer and will be discussed with the client (and their parent/guardians if necessary) during the assessment process. This document will detail the timeline for the program or service, the objectives and guidelines of the program or service and explain how the process will work as well as detailing assessment or review points and a process to query any aspect of the program or service at any time. This document will need to be signed and agreed to by the client who must commit to the program or service to be seriously considered for program or service registration and accept responsibility to complete the objectives to the best of their ability.

Upon registration and assessment, clients will be informed of their rights and responsibilities as a client and the expectations of program or service standards they should have to receive a quality service from DISCO and its staff.

DISCO understands that many young people access our services that experience cultural and written English difficulties. In this case clients will be provided with information to indicate that their lack of language skills will be supported by DISCO. Clients may also have serious literacy and numeracy problems and processes will exist to communicate how DISCO will provide support in this regard. The use of interpreters will be made available in circumstances where language and written information need to be made more appropriate to ensure understanding and agreement.

4.2 Informing clients

All clients are informed of their rights and responsibilities at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with our service. We give clients access to all policies that further explain and support their rights and responsibilities. We tell clients how to take action if they feel that their rights have not been respected (Refer to policy 5.2 for DISCO's Complaints by Client Policy).

It is the responsibility of each Program Officer to provide relevant information to clients about DISCO's feedback policy. This may be undertaken:

- During the intake and assessment interview
- When a client attends an activity for the first time
- By a DISCO Officer who may send out information after telephone contact
- During service delivery
- At the end of each service delivery

4.3 Promoting opportunities for feedback

We encourage feedback from our clients and stakeholders. Feedback can be provided to us by individual clients or stakeholders on their initiative or in response to requests by our organisation. We make it as easy as possible for people to provide feedback and ensure anonymity to people who do, unless they agree otherwise.

Feedback initiated by the client or stakeholder will be encouraged by providing clients with an end of service delivery survey which will be completed at the end of a service.

Feedback will be sought from clients and stakeholders by:

- Written feedback on a Compliments/ Complaints Card which may be placed in the Compliments and Complaints Box
- Verbal feedback which may be recorded in the Compliments and Complaints register
- Electronic feedback
- Event feedback
- Client Survey Form
- Stakeholder Survey Form
- DISCO's Stakeholder Survey

All feedback should be raised as early as possible after an event/situation occurs. It is hoped that if feedback is in the form of a complaint, it will be resolved to the clients/family satisfaction in dialogue with the DISCO Officer and possibly the CEO.

Clients and their family (if applicable) should, in the first instance, seek to talk/write to their relevant DISCO Officer. If there is an issue which involves their Program Officer, the client should refer the matter directly to the manager or CEO.

DISCO provides many opportunities during its services that allow clients, parents and stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback; this includes a suggestion box which is available at all DISCO events. Suggestions work in the same way as feedback by allowing DISCO to improve on the delivery of its services.

DISCO will collect feedback during service delivery, at the exit of a service and the end of a DISCO event. All emails that are sent from DISCO allow recipients to complete an online DISCO survey which can be completed anonymously and submitted online.

DISCO Officer's and the CEO will be responsible for receiving and analysing feedback. File notes must be completed for all verbal feedback raised by clients. This must also be recorded in DISCO's Compliments and Complaints Register.

If a client (and their family) isn't satisfied with the response relating, they can be referred to DISCO's complaints procedure, which will be followed up with the relevant DISCO Officer's and the CEO. Clients and families who do this can approach the CEO to seek a review of their complaint handling process and outcome. DISCO ensures that all feedback and complaints will be approached in a positive manner. All complaints are confidential and are registered and kept in a complaints register.

The above feedback procedures allow all people associated with DISCO, the opportunity to voice their opinion. DISCO encourages clients and associates to provide both positive and critical feedback on services provided to ensure that clients receive the best possible service.

Feedback collection will be undertaken at the end of each service delivery, all feedback sought through DISCO's online survey will be collated at regular intervals. The CEO will assess all feedback and discuss the results with members of the Management Committee and relevant staff. Results will be collated and assessed using DISCO's feedback register which will identify areas DISCO needs to improve in.

4.4 Using feedback for service improvement

DISCO keeps comprehensive, clear and useful records of all feedback from clients and stakeholders. We assess, compile and use the information arising from this feedback.

All feedback will be recorded on DISCO's compliments and complaints register in date order. Once feedback is received by the Program Manager or the CEO, the relevant details will be recorded on the register. This is to ensure reliable identification of trends in the number, regularity and subject matter of complaints and feedback and their outcomes.

When received, information will be registered and used in a de-identified manner for learning and quality purposes and for the management of feedback and complaints.

Information gathered during the complaint and feedback process is protected in accordance with DISCO's privacy and confidentiality policies. Information may be shared with other DISCO staff where relevant.

When feedback is not anonymous, it must be recorded on the client file, in provision with DISCO's 4.2 Client Records Policy.

The CEO will prepare a report detailing a formal compliment/complaint for the Management Committee which will contain;

- An outline of the Program Manager's/CEO's understanding of the compliment/complaint, its facts and the applicable issues
- The findings and conclusions regarding each comment/allegation/issue and the reason on which each conclusion is based
- Recommendation resulting from the assessment and subsequent review

A copy of the Review Report will be discussed and, if necessary, provided to all Program Officer's to enable understanding about the complaint or compliment and used as a developmental tool for improvement or recognition.

At the end of each service delivery, all clients are required to complete a Client Performance and Feedback Form. The Program Manager will collate all findings and present this to all Program Officer's and the CEO. All findings will be kept in a file containing completed client surveys.

We keep records of feedback in the following formats:

- Client records
- Electronic surveys
- Emails and written feedback
- Electronic feedback register

- Complaints and Compliments Card

We ensure that client and stakeholder feedback informs our decision making and planning processes. We use feedback to improve our services by:

- Identifying areas where improvement needs to be made
- Identifying areas for staff training and development
- Monitoring and evaluating activities and services run through DISCO to allow for continuous improvement
- Reviewing all service delivery annually to improve our operational practices

5. Other related policies and procedures

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	2.3 Ending Service Delivery Policy 3.1 Client Service Charter Policy 3.2 Choice and Self Reliance Policy 3.3 Participation Policy 4.1 Privacy Policy 4.3 Confidentiality Policy 4.4 Access to Confidential Information Policy 5.2 Complaints by Client Policy 6.5 Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy Policy 8.10 Clients Case Note Management Policy 11.6 Archiving Policy 11.10 Whistleblower Policy
Forms or other organisational documents	Compliments and Complaints Register DISCO Client Services Charter Commitment Contract Program Brochures Compliments and Complaints Form DISCO Stakeholder Survey DISCO Client Survey National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Commitment Charter for Children & Young People Other Undefined Forms

6. Review processes

Policy review frequency: This policy will be reviewed by annually or as necessary.	Responsibility for review: This policy will be reviewed by the CEO.
Review process: This policy will be updated and reviewed every twelve months and approved by the DISCO Management Committee annually.	
Documentation and communication: All volunteers, management and staff will be required to read and sign this policy upon employment commencement and review it annually (and as necessary) to ensure it can be implemented and adhered to correctly. Any alterations to the policy at any time will require all staff and management to reread it and sign it. Changes will be updated as necessary with an up to date version stored and available electronically.	