

COMPLAINT POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed by learners, apprentices and employers, undertaking the apprenticeship programme; who have an issue or dispute with the services provided by The Training Place of Excellence. Anyone considering making a complaint are advised to raise the issue informally with an appropriate team member. Informal complaints will be documented and will usually be resolved quickly between the relevant parties.

If the complaint is unable to be resolved informally or the person isn't satisfied with the result, then a formal complaint can be made following the steps stated below.

An 'appeal' is a request submitted by an apprentice, learner or employer for a review of the decision taken about their formal complaint.

SCOPE

All prospective, existing and former learners, apprentices and employers.

AIM

This policy aims to provide a process to resolve individual complaints in a manner which is as fair, consistent, constructive and expeditious as possible. It is our objective to find a solution to individual complaints as early in the procedure as possible.

We ensure that there will be no discrimination against any applicants making a complaint, and that all complaints will be dealt with confidentially.

COMPLAINTS FROM APPRENTICES/LEARNERS

When an apprentice or learner has an issue or dispute relating to the provision or the delivery of services undertaken by The Training Place of Excellence, the person shall make the matter known to us in writing by completing the 'Complaints Form' and submitting it to the Administrator. The form can be submitted electronically by emailing admin@thetrainingplace.org, and quoting 'Apprentice Complaint' as the subject; certified copies of documents (e.g. medical certificates) may be requested. This will be logged onto our data system. Should a student prefer the complaint to remain anonymous and it is feasible to do so, the Organisation shall seek to respect the student's wishes.

The apprentice/learner should fully document the complaint and provide evidence, if appropriate. The Administrator will confirm receipt of the complaint to the student within 10 working days and will liaise with the designated Head of Department regarding the complaint to ascertain if the complaint will be upheld in whole or in part or if the complaint will not be upheld.

The Head of Department will seek appropriate evidence from within the department to conduct the review. If necessary, the Head of Department considering the case shall have access to appropriate legal advice and the student should be invited to meet with the Head of Department. The Head of Department should set out a written response within two weeks of meeting with the student, or the student declining the invitation to a meeting.

If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation of the complaint, he/she may submit an appeal against the outcome within 10 working days of the written judgement being issued by the Head of Department.

The appeal should be submitted to the Director and should indicate in writing why the response to the complaint is not satisfactory. Taking into account all the previous attempts at resolution, the Director will decide whether a further complaint hearing is required, and will normally communicate the decision to the student within 10 working days of the appeal against the outcome being received.

Should such a complaint hearing be required, it will be chaired by the Director or a person nominated by the Director with a senior academic or administrative member of staff who will be unrelated to the complaint. The complaints hearing will normally meet within one calendar month of the appeal against the outcome being received.

The student (and if deemed necessary, staff from the Organisation) will be invited to any such meeting and the meeting can be held via telephone or videoconference if necessary. In the event of a meeting being held, the student (and if deemed necessary, the staff from the Organisation) shall have access to all relevant documentation relating to the complaint. The student may be accompanied, but not represented. Any person accompanying the appellant shall be asked by the Board to identify themselves at the beginning of the proceedings and may be invited by the Board during the hearing to speak in support of the case.

The outcomes available are as follows:

- (a) Complaint not upheld.
- (b) Complaint upheld in whole or in part
- (c) In the event of a complaint being upheld in whole or in part, recommendations should be made in respect of remedial action required.

A Completion of Procedures letter and details of any action to be taken in the light of the complaint, will be sent to the student and if a young person is involved, it will be sent to the parents or guardian.

If the apprentice is dissatisfied with the processing of, or response received, and have exhausted the organisation's complaints procedure, the person has the right to make a complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Any complaint, concerns or enquiries regarding the apprenticeship may be escalated to the ESFA via the apprenticeship helpline by email at complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk.

COMPLAINTS FROM EMPLOYERS

Employers of our apprentices can make a complaint about the service provided by The Training Place of Excellence. We are committed to delivering a high quality service and we take feedback from both students and employers. We promise to settle complaints promptly, fairly and courteously in the best interest of all parties, and to address areas where improvement is needed. We will ensure to handle complaints in an efficient and fair manner, treat complaints with seriousness and confidentiality, encourage informal conciliation nearest to the source of the complaint and facilitate early resolution. We will monitor the complaints received to check for evidence of trends in failure of provision or delivery.

Where possible, complaints should be raised immediately with relevant departments verbally at the source of the complaint, or in writing by completing the 'Complaints Form' and submitting it to the Administrator. The form can be submitted electronically by emailing admin@thetrainingplace.org and quoting 'Employer Complaint' as the subject. This will be logged onto our data system.

We will try to resolve the problem directly and informally at the earliest opportunity. The member of staff involved would be asked to provide a written outcome to the employer's complaint.

The Administrator will confirm receipt of the complaint to the employer within 2 working days and will liaise with an assigned 'Investigating Officer' who will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has not been previously involved with the complaint.

A full response will be given within 4 weeks after the Investigating Officer has carried out a thorough investigation, which may include having a meeting with the employer or relevant staff. If necessary, the Head of Department considering the case shall have access to appropriate legal advice.

If mediation is offered to resolve the complaint, revised timescales for the resolution will be agreed in writing.

If the employer is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they could submit an appeal against the outcome within 10 working days of the full response being issued by the Investigating Officer. The appeal should be made in writing to the Director.

The Director will not re-investigate the complaint unless new evidence is presented, but will ensure that appropriate procedures were followed, the decision was reasonable, as well as considering any new evidence submitted.

If the employer is dissatisfied with the processing of, or response received, and have exhausted the organisation's complaints procedure, the employer has the right to make a complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Any complaint, concerns or enquiries regarding the apprenticeship may be escalated to the ESFA via the apprenticeship helpline by email at complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk.

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER RELATED POLICIES OF THE ORGANISATION.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THIS POLICY BY DIRECTORS