



Apprenticeship learner and employer complaints procedure

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Reach4Skills staff work in partnership with learners and their employers to meet their needs. The aim of this document is to clarify the preferred procedure in which we look to deal with complaints from anyone in order to deal with their concern promptly and appropriately.

This procedure is given to apprentices and employers at engagement and re-enforced at induction.

This policy will be communicated to learners and apprentices as part of their induction to a Reach 4 Skills apprenticeship or training programme. The policy will be on display at all of our sites, incorporated into learner handbooks and available via our website.

All staff will be trained in how to handle complaints and to fully implement these procedures as part of their initial training. Partners with who we work with will be informed this policy, which will form part of our service commitment.

Any complaint regarding any aspect of the training provision should be made in writing to the Head Office at: GATCOMBE HOUSE, COPNOR ROAD, PORTSMOUTH, HAMPSHIRE, PO3 5EJ as soon as possible but in any event within 14 days of the incident. The details of the incident/allegation should be as full as possible to allow a comprehensive investigation to be carried out. Records of all complaints will be retained for a period of three years. A summary of complaints is available for learners on request.

All complaints must be substantiated with clear evidence, Reach4Skills will not investigate complaints based on speculation. Any evidence must be submitted at the time of the complaint.

The Training Centre Manager / Director, is responsible for dealing with complaints. If the complaint is about the Centre Manager, the Head of Reach4skills or Group Director will investigate the matter. The Compliance Manager will log the complaint and track the case to ensure it is dealt with promptly and effectively and ensure all of the relevant managers and staff are consulted as part of the investigation.

Any complaints received about staff members will be recorded on an Incident log and a Complaints log will be completed. Any complaints will be dealt with in the following manner:

Confidentiality

During an investigation, we will try to keep your identity confidential, but we cannot guarantee it. We will need to share relevant details with appropriate staff in order to carry out a full and thorough investigation, however this will be kept to a minimum. In sufficiently serious cases, we may reveal your identity to the police or other authorities.

Stage One

Dealt with by the Centre Manager / Director

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Complaints about an individual staff member:

- If appropriate, we will encourage the learner to discuss the matter with staff concerned.
- If the learner feels that this is not appropriate, the matter will be discussed with the Centre Manager, who will then discuss the complaint with the individual concerned and try to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Complaints about learners will be dealt with following the same process, and will include interviews with employers, other learners (if appropriate) and their assessor, if appropriate.

Stage Two

Dealt with by the Managing Director

If it is impossible to reach a satisfactory resolution to the complaint through informal discussion, the learner should put their complaint in writing to the Andrew Norton-Director-Head Office: GATCOMBE HOUSE, COPNOR ROAD, PORTSMOUTH, HAMPSHIRE, PO3 5EJ

The manager will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the letter within 7 days and investigate the matter within 28 days
- Send a full response in writing, to all relevant parties, including details of any recommended changes to be made to practices or policies as a result of the complaint
- Meet relevant parties to discuss the response to the complaint, either together or on an individual basis.

Timescales (can be extended by executive management discretion)

Level 1 complaint	within one month	Response within 6 weeks
Local management resolution - no escalation but recorded as appropriate		
Level 2 complaint	will be acknowledge Within 5 days	Response within 6 weeks
Centre Manager / Director	Investigation	Response within 6 weeks
No resolution	acknowledged within 5 working says	response within 4 weeks

Managing Director Investigation and discussion with complainant seeking resolution.

Monitoring & Review

The Training Centre Manager will monitor the level of complaints and feedback on a six monthly basis analysing the range and type of complaints/feedback, response times, speed of complaint resolution, including identifying trends in teams, locations, subjects.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Training Centre Manager to ensure that it continues to meet business needs, including adopting recognised industry best practice. The Compliance Manager will report to the Managing Director who will determine the effectiveness of the policy and whether any changes are needed.

Contact details for Further Action

In the unlikely instance that a complaint remains unresolved, the following contact details can be used for apprenticeship escalation.

ESFA complaints team
complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk
Complaints team
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT
The ESFA will reply to let you know what will happen next.

If you are unhappy with any issues relating to external activities e.g. External Quality assurance or delays in issuing certificates or concerns relating to agreeing End Point Assessment activity the following can be contacted. Note each organisation will have its own complaints procedure which will be published on their web-site.

For apprenticeship framework complaints:

Apprenticeship Frameworks are being gradually phased out. If apprentices are working on a framework details individual awarding body contact details will be notified at induction.

Some useful generic contacts include:

For overall apprenticeship completion certificates: <https://acecerts.co.uk/web/>

Telephone

0300 303 4444

Email

ace.helpdesk@fiss.org

For apprenticeship standards complaints:

End Point Assessment depends on the organisation chosen by the employer - complaint contact details will be notified at induction.