

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

1. INTRODUCTION

This Procedure defines the arrangements for dealing with customer complaints.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To identify and deal with complaints quickly and efficiently
- To ensure complaints are considered fairly and objectively, based on evidence
- To ensure that complainants are fully informed of any findings and, where possible, arrive at a satisfactory resolution for the complainant
- To review concerns/complaints and/or trends and consider any corrective action needed to minimise concerns/complaints in the future and improve our service

PROCEDURE

3. ENCOURAGING FEEDBACK/DEALING WITH CONCERNS (INFORMAL COMPLAINTS)

Customers (including employers, learners, apprentices and other stakeholders) are encouraged to give feedback on the quality of service they receive from Access Training. This includes through review visits or through regular surveys. Where a concern is raised/identified this will be dealt with immediately wherever possible.

The member of our staff closest to the source of any concern (eg the apprentice's Trainer, the employer's main contact) will aim to deal with it quickly and effectively, where necessary agreeing responses/remedial actions with a member of the management team. If you are not satisfied with the response you may wish to make a formal complaint (see section 4).

Where customers do not wish to make a formal complaint the concern/complaint will be discussed with a member of the management team. This will also be recorded on our Incident/Complaints Log (which is reviewed at monthly management meetings).

4. FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Formal complaints can be made in writing, by email or letter, and should be addressed in the first instance to:

**Sharon Wallace
Quality Manager
Access Training
Gateshead Skills Academy
Eighth Avenue
Kingsway South
Team Valley
Gateshead
NE11 0JL**

**Email: swallace@accesstraining.org
Tel: 0191 490 4659**

Where possible, the formal complaint should include the following information:

- What the complaint is
- When it happened
- Who was involved
- Whom you reported it to
- How you would like it resolved

We will acknowledge a formal complaint within 48 hours of receipt and will put processes in place to investigate and review the complaint further.

We will respond in writing our findings to the complainant within 7 days unless further investigation is required.

At least two senior managers will be involved in reviewing the complaint and agreeing a response.

Our response to a complaint will explain what we have done to investigate the complaint, our findings and what we intend to do as a result to resolve the issue.

We will provide a named person to contact (usually our Managing Director) if the complainant remains unhappy or wishes to discuss the matter further.

If the matter is still not resolved, and where the complaint concerns programmes that are funded through the ESFA, the complainant can follow the ESFA's complaints procedure.

ESFA Apprenticeship helpdesk on 08000 150400 or email nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk

5. REVIEWING COMPLAINTS AND OTHER CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

We regularly review feedback received from customers, including any complaints received. We aim to learn from all customer feedback that we receive. Our management team reviews our Incident/Complaints Log at monthly management meetings and consider trends and any remedial actions required to improve our service.

As part of our annual self-assessment process, we consider all feedback received during the year, including questionnaires, evaluations, letters of complaint, incidents. We use this feedback to identify areas where we can improve. Any required improvements are included in our Quality Improvement Plan.