

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The college believes that students should be entitled to have access to effective systems for handling any complaints that might arise during the course of their studies, as one way of ensuring the highest possible academic and service standards. Students should feel able to make a complaint, secure in the knowledge that it will be fairly investigated.

This complaints procedure relates to complaints made about the policies, administration or management of the training centre. All reasonable efforts should be made to settle all complaints before a formal complaint is initiated.

1. The candidate should initially discuss the complaint informally with their tutor or with the college administration staff.
2. If the complaint still remains to be unresolved, a formal complaint can be directed to the Complaint Officer.
3. An acknowledgement receipt will be issued within seven working days.
4. The Complaint Officer will monitor and ensure that the complaint has been responded to within 28 working days.
5. An investigation will be undertaken by members of staff excluding anyone that has prior involvement with the complaint in question.
6. If the complaint is not resolved within 28 days, a further 28 days is allowed for the investigation.
7. A response will be sent out detailing the nature of the investigation and any step that are to be taken.
8. If complaint is not resolved with in the College then student have the full right to contact their awarding body directly.
9. The Complaints Officer will record all complaints and reports of outcomes as part of the centre monitoring process.

## **Awarding body involvement in the College internal appeals procedure**

External Verifiers will give the College general guidance, but they don't normally become involved in specific appeals that are still going through the centre's internal procedure.

In the rare event that the External Verifier does become involved the College may have to pay an additional fee, along with any associated travel and other expenses. We would always discuss this with you beforehand and the fee would depend on the level of our involvement.

### **What Awarding Body do, step by step**

So if a student and/or sponsor is still dissatisfied, the centre's internal procedure has been exhausted and it is not an excluded issue, they can refer the matter to Awarding Body. We do not charge for our involvement.

The candidate must send the full details of the action they are dissatisfied with, with their name and address, centre details and copies of any relevant evidence, in writing to the Head of Quality & Administration of their Awarding Body.

When the Awarding Body receive the complaint we:

- acknowledge receipt in writing to the College and to the candidate within five working days
- check that the learner was registered with their awarding body at the time of the disputed action or failure to act
- check that the centre's internal complaints procedure has been exhausted
- request a copy of the centre's full file on the complaint, to be sent to awarding body within 10 working days.

During this time the Head of Quality & Administration nominates an appropriate member of awarding body staff as an adjudicator to review the complaint. Where necessary that adjudicator:

- can get technical advice from a Quality Manager and/or External Verifier who is not attached to the centre that's involved
- may decide to ask for extra evidence from anyone associated with the complaint.

Within 30 working days of us receiving the appeals file (or extra evidence, if that was later), the Head of Quality & Administration writes to the candidate and the centre with the outcome of their investigation. If they consider the complaint is justified, the notification sets out any remedial action.

If the candidate is dissatisfied with the way the procedure was handled – not the decision itself – a final appeal may be possible.

### **Escalation to Awarding Body**

If a learner is still dissatisfied with delivery of course or assessment of awarding body's programmes at the college, Awarding Body will consider it – but only when the College internal complaint/appeal procedure has been exhausted.