



POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy title	Complaints
Policy number	018
Effective from	06 January 2021
Review date	04 January 2022

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

We are committed to providing a high quality service for our apprentices, learners, clients and the community we serve.

We will deal with legitimate complaints in a fair, prompt and objective manner. Complaints will be dealt with without recrimination and apprentices / learners will not be disadvantaged by raising a complaint.

We will be fair in the treatment of all those who complain irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity and disability. Complaints will be dealt with promptly and constructively. All complaints will be dealt with in confidence but shared with any person who may be the subject of a complaint. The outcomes of any complaint will be shared with the complainant and any staff involved. Complaints made which, on investigation, turn out to be malicious, may result in disciplinary action.

The Head of Learning & Development will be responsible for the management of the Complaints Policy and all apprentices / learners will be informed whom this individual is within their induction.

SCOPE OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Procedure deals with complaints arising from:

- Delivery (or lack of delivery) of services for education and training including teaching, course content, tutoring, assessment, feedback on progress and apprentice / learner support during learning programmes.
- Incorrect or misleading information about services provided by Elite EMS.
- Delivery (or lack of delivery) of support services provided by Elite EMS including administration of fees (where applicable), enrolment processes, accommodation, health and safety and learner resource services.
- Unacceptable actions or behaviour by Elite EMS L&D staff and/or other apprentices / learners

Separate procedures exist for:

- Apprentice / Learner Discipline.
- Assessment Appeals.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

Complaints must be made in writing to the Head of Learning & Development.

Support can be made available for all those involved in a complaint including:

- Representation: parent, guardian, friend or supporter.
- Help with completing the Written Complaint.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS

Most complaints should be able to be resolved by discussion between the complainant and the appropriate member of staff. The initial complaint may be made orally or in writing and the member of staff receiving the complaint should make a response within 10 working days, orally or in writing.

It is expected that staff are tactful and courteous in dealing with a complaint. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received, they should then be guided to using the formal procedure.

FORMAL PROCEDURE

A formal complaint should be made in writing within 5 working days of an incident or action from which the complaint arises, or from the date when the complainant received an oral or written reply to an informal complaint (see above). In exceptional circumstances, a longer period will be considered. The complaint should be sent to the Head of Learning & Development. If the complaint involves the Head of Learning & Development, then an alternative senior manager will be appointed to manage the process. The complaint will be logged and its receipt will be acknowledged to the complainant within 5 working days.

The Head of Learning & Development will carry out an initial assessment of the complaint within 5 working days. In most cases, complaints will be referred to the appropriate staff for investigation and report. More serious or unusual complaints will be investigated personally by the Head of Learning & Development.

An appropriate manager will carry out an investigation of the complaint and may interview the complainant; the respondent; witnesses to the matter or events; and anyone they believe may have a role in establishing or disproving the complaint, as necessary. They will prepare a summary and report back to the Head of Learning & Development within 10 working days of the initial assessment.

The Head of Learning & Development will record the outcome of the complaint and either arranges a meeting to deliver the outcome or notify all those involved in writing as appropriate. All outcomes will be confirmed in writing to all those involved.

If the complaint involves a learner, they will be offered support at the meeting. All learners will be encouraged to bring a supporter to the interview. Vulnerable Adults and those under 16 years of age must have the support of their care worker, or a person of their choice, who can act as their advocate and the Head of Learning & Development must be informed.

The formal complaint should be resolved within 25 working days of the receipt of the original formal complaint. If it appears that a decision will not be reached within the due period, those involved will be advised of the need for a longer period.

The decision made will be final but this does not affect an individual's legal rights.

REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PRACTICE

Once a year the Senior Management Team will review the Complaints Policy and Practice to include:

- Number of complaints of each type.
- Time taken to process complaints.
- List of outstanding complaints.
- Outcomes to complaints.
- Results of appeals.

Analysis of complaints and outcomes by age, gender and ethnicity of complainant. If changes are required the Complaints Policy will be rewritten and all staff and learners will be informed.

A record of all complaints for 3 years will be available to the relevant authorities for audit purposes.

1. Complaints can be quickly resolved if they are raised promptly with the administration department or with the relevant assessor/tutor. Apprentice's / Learner's are expected to try and resolve any complaints locally with the relevant tutor/assessor or course director in the first instance.
2. All complaints should normally be made within 15 days of the alleged incident, matter or concern.
3. Formal complaints to the company general manager should normally be made within 15 days of the last verifiable attempt at local resolution.
4. If a formal complaint is submitted outside the 15 day deadline then notwithstanding exceptional circumstances as determined by the company, the complaint will be deemed out of time and the company reserves the right not to progress the complaint.
5. All complaints to the company general manager will be dealt with seriously, objectively, and within 5 working days.
6. The complainant is entitled to state the nature and detail of their complaint to the company general manager, and to the company directors if it is believed that the matter has not been correctly dealt with. Records of all meetings and correspondence will be maintained and copies made available to the complainant.
7. Complaints escalated to senior management will be dealt with seriously, objectively, and within 5 working days.
8. Decisions regarding action to be taken for non-academic formal complaints will be determined by the a senior manager in the first instance, or by the company director where the complaint has been escalated.
9. Where the nature of a complaint is deemed to be so serious that external intervention is necessary, then the company directors will be made aware of this without undue delay, and such intervention by appropriate authorities will be sought at the earliest opportunity.
10. Academic appeals (i.e. appeals against the decision of a formal verbal, written, or skills ability assessment conducted by authorised training staff), may be escalated to the company directors, who will review the evidence and academic work completed to date. After interview with the appropriate training staff and the student concerned, a final decision regarding the academic appeal will be made.
11. In determining academic appeals, valid and agreed mitigating circumstances will be taken into account.
12. Where the nature of an academic appeal is deemed to be so serious that external intervention is necessary, then the company directors will be made aware of this without undue delay, and such intervention by appropriate awarding bodies or other relevant external accreditation bodies relevant to the course being studied will be sought at the earliest opportunity.

13. Where an apprentice / learner submits an academic appeal and a formal complaint at the same time, regarding the same or related issues, the company will consider the complaint in the first instance as the outcome of the complaint may inform consideration of the academic appeal.