



Policy: Clint Stamper Training Ltd - Complaints Procedure

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1.0 Principles

The Complaints Procedure is designed to enable anyone interacting with the Centre to bring matters of concern about their experiences of our services and provision to our attention and to enable investigation of those concerns to achieve satisfactory resolution. This process provides us with welcome feedback to help us improve our services generally, as well as helping us resolve any particular problems experienced by an individual complainant.

The procedure aims to be simple, clear and fair to all parties involved. It is based on the belief that complaints should be taken seriously, should be investigated promptly and dealt with as closely as possible to their origins. For this reason, all complainants are asked to try to resolve the issue as informally as possible in the first instance. The intention is that most issues can be effectively handled locally, in a spirit of conciliation. Therefore, the formal complaints procedure should be seen as a last resort in the search for a solution.

2.0 What is a Complaint?

The Complaints Procedure covers any expression of dissatisfaction about:

- Standards of service, courses or facilities provided by the Centre
- Actions or lack of actions by the Centre or its staff
- Provisions of the Centre affecting students, customers, partners or

The Complaints Procedure does not cover the following:

- Matters of academic/assessment judgement
- Requests for new or different services or provision
- Matters covered by separate policies or procedures, including:
- Assessment Appeals
- Disciplinary-related issues
- Equal Opportunities

3.0 Who Can Use the Complaints Procedure?

This procedure is for use by any learner/candidate or prospective learner/candidate, who seeks or receives a service from the Centre or any person who is directly affected by the activities of the Centre.

4.0 Guidelines For Making and Handling Complaints

All complaints will be taken seriously and, as far as is reasonable, be treated in a consistent fashion throughout the Centre. In line with our equal opportunities policy, all complainants will be treated equally and learners who make complaints will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint. Only where complaints are proven to be malicious or vexatious might there be recourse to disciplinary investigation and possible sanction against the complainant. As a general rule, complaints which are made more than three months after the incident or action which is the subject of the complaint will not be investigated.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively and with due consideration to confidentiality for all concerned. Any person named in a complaint, however, will be informed of the complaint and will have a right of reply as part of the investigative process.

Anonymous Complaints

Although anonymous complaints are very rare, they are dealt with in exactly the same way as other complaints. They are logged, investigated and, if the findings warrant, appropriate action taken to address the source of the complaint. Obviously, however, it is not possible to respond personally to the complainant.

Third Party Complaints

It is normally expected that complaints will be made by complainants themselves. However, it is also recognised that it might be difficult for some people to make their complaint effectively on their own behalf. Consequently, complaints from third parties will be accepted and processed but only with the written permission of the person on whose behalf the complaint is being made. On receipt of a third-party complaint, the person on whose behalf the

complaint is being made will be contacted to ask for his/her written permission. The complaint will not be processed until this has been received.

Accompaniment at a Complaint Hearing

In the event that a hearing is arranged to consider a complaint, any learner, candidate or member of staff asked to attend such a hearing has the right to be accompanied by a person of his/her choosing.

5.0 How, Where, When And To Whom To Complain?

The procedure aims to be simple, clear and fair to all parties involved and seeks to allow issues to be explored in a supportive, conciliatory context. Informal resolution is encouraged at every stage of the process. Use of the formal complaints procedure should only be taken as a last resort.

Stage 1 The Informal Stage

Clint Stamper Training Ltd believes it is in everyone's interest to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, as close to the source of the problem as possible, and by informal means in preference to formal ones. Dealing with small problems or areas of concern as they arise will often prevent them becoming larger problems which are harder to resolve.

Therefore, complainants are encouraged to raise any issues at an early stage and to discuss the matter with the person responsible for the issue giving rise to the complaint. Many apparent concerns result from misunderstandings which can often be resolved quickly and easily by talking through the matter.

This can be done by:

- a telephone or text conversation with the appropriate person
- a face-to-face meeting with the appropriate person
- an email to the appropriate person

Informal complaints should normally be responded to within 5 days of receipt of the complaint. Records of such complaints will not normally be retained or recorded centrally, unless the complainant and member of staff dealing with it wish to do so.

If the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at this stage, complainants are encouraged to raise the matter with the centre manager. The centre manager will make enquiries with those concerned and report back to the complainant on the outcome.

Stage 2 The Formal Stage

Every effort should be made by complainants and staff to use the informal mechanisms available to resolve issues of dissatisfaction. However, the Centre recognises that there may be problems that either have not been resolved or are too serious to be dealt with informally. The Centre is also aware that there

may be occasions in which, for whatever reason, a complainant feels that it is impossible to raise an issue directly with the member of staff concerned. In any of these circumstances, the Centre's formal complaints procedure should be used. Preferably, a formal complaint should be submitted to the Centre manager on a Complaint Form. Complaints may also be made by letter or email.

The Centre will acknowledge the complaint within 48 hours and will reply to the complainant within 10 days.

At this stage, the majority of complaints will be resolved satisfactorily with no further action being necessary. However, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response received as a result of Stage 2, the complaint may be taken to Stage 3 of the procedure.

Stage 3 The Appeal Stage

If a complaint has still not been satisfactorily resolved after Stage 2 of the procedure, a written appeal, together with any supporting evidence, should be sent to the Centre Manager within 14 days of receiving the Stage 2 response. The Centre Manager will decide whether to convene a panel to hear the complaint and review the evidence.

Membership and Conduct Of The Complaints Panel

The Complaints Panel will normally comprise three people – the Centre Manager [Chair], the IQA and another Staff member as appropriate.

Details of panel membership will be given to both parties to the complaint in advance of the panel hearing. Any request to veto a member of the panel for good reason must be made in advance to the Centre Manager in writing, stating clearly the reason for the request. The panel will investigate the complaint, including all documentary evidence relating to the complaint. The panel may seek to resolve the complaint on the basis of the documentation provided alone. However, if necessary, the panel will invite both parties to the complaint to a panel meeting to present evidence and to be questioned on the evidence provided.

After investigation of the complaint, the Chair will produce a written response to all parties involved in the complaint, outlining whether the complaint is upheld or not and detailing what actions, if any, are necessary to resolve the issue. The decision of the Complaints Panel is final. This exhausts the Centre's own internal complaints procedures.

6.0 Learning From Complaints

In order that the Centre can learn and improve as a result of complaints, the Quality manager will keep accurate and complete records of all complaints received and the resulting correspondence, interviews and actions. A report

on complaints received and their outcomes will be submitted to the Centre Manager at least once a year. Subsequently, complaints relating to issues with a direct impact on the candidate experience will be passed to the Centre Manager for consideration. This will help to improve customer service throughout the Centre and monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure.