



Complaints Policy and Procedure

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

A1 Education & Training's mission is to provide vocational education and training programmes to a wide range of learners and employers. We aim to engage actively with learners and employers to identify their training needs and then to provide cost-effective, flexible, and high-quality training programmes that enables learners to achieve and progress. Our vision is to transform lives through Education, Growing the learner and ensuring our employers and learners Gain vital knowledge, skills, and behaviours. Our mission and vision are underpinned by our core values which are doing the right thing, innovation through technology, excellence and being the best. It is through our people that we will achieve our vision. They are the most important asset in our business, as they bring to life what we do. All employees act as representatives of the Business and our employer brand. The success of a sector, function or department depends on the performance and behaviours of our people.

As an organisation we strive to ensure that our learners and employers are happy with our level service. However, there are times when service may fall below their expectations and satisfaction, resulting in a formal complaint being raised. Therefore, the overall purpose of this policy is to receive and act upon adverse feedback in a timely and professional manner, in order to address issues being raised and to support continuous improvements within our organisation.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

We aim to implement a set of procedures which can be clearly followed by all parties and are not too drawn-out. Therefore, we aim to:-

- Resolve issues at the earliest stage possible, taking the necessary steps to safeguard the learner being accessed
- Provide appropriate level of consultation to the discuss issues being raised
- Take appropriate action, communicating outcomes with relevant parties
- Where appropriate, exploring the issue raised with our wider audience, including external stakeholders
- Keep a record of all communications sent and received
- Respect the right to confidentiality and Data Protection
- Effectively address any resulting issues through our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
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3. KEY CONTACTS

Line managers are responsible for the implementation of this policy. Guidance can be obtained from the Lead IQA.

4. WHO NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THE POLICY?

This policy applies to all staff, associates, employers and learners involved in a training programme with A1 Education & Training.

The Director's for A1 Education & Training have the overall responsibility for this policy.

Senior managers have the responsibility for implementing and monitoring the overall effectiveness of this policy by carrying out internal investigations, and reporting on outcomes in regards to learner and employer complaints.

Staff and associates have the right to escalate concerns in regards to the level of service being provided, through whistleblowing opportunities and or supporting investigations with subsequent improvements. This may include a commitment from individuals to address concerns surrounding their own performance.

5. PROCEDURE

Learners may have grounds for a complaint based on shortfalls within A1 Education & Training operations. This can include, but not limited to:-

- Administrative shortcomings resulting in delays in certification and or assessment opportunities.
- Inadequate resources, such as inappropriate or insufficient physical (e.g. technical) resources
- Insufficient or inappropriately experienced and qualified staff
- Discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, colour, ethnic background or national origin, age, marital status, family circumstances, social-economic background, employment status, responsibilities to dependants, disability or religious or political beliefs or other irrelevant distinction
- Subject to bullying or victimisation

Before exercising your right in making a formal complaint, you should make every reasonable effort to resolve the matter informally with the person concerned. In the event of escalation the following should be adhered to:-

1. If, having attempted to resolve the matter, you feel you still have grounds for complaint you should begin the formal complaints procedure within 4 weeks of the incident which gives rise to the complaint occurring
2. If you wish the matter to be taken up as a formal complaint then you should email an outline of your concern to emma.merrick@a1-training.co.uk
3. You will be sent a written acknowledgement that your complaint has been received within 7 working days by the Quality Lead who will be responsible for dealing with your complaint
4. We will endeavour to complete our investigations within 10 working days, where we will provide you with an overall decision and an explanation as to the judgement
5. If you are not happy with the outcome then you may make an appeal directly to the Director's in writing, within 10 days of receiving notification of the decision
6. This is an impartial review which may include a request for additional information
7. You will be notified of the final decision in writing

A1 Education & Training will:-

- Remain impartial during the investigation process in order to make informed decisions
- Maintain the confidentiality of information
- Monitor the progress of complaints advising individuals at given stages
- Ensure complaints are dealt with by experienced personnel who are given the time and resources to

investigate rigorously and within agreed timescales

- In regards to complaints and allegations made against bullying, harassment or victimisation A1 Education & Training will follow internal disciplinary procedures in order to safeguard the welfare of individuals
- Provide learners with a clear explanation of our findings and overall outcome
- Deal with the complaint in a professional manner, maintaining positive working relationships with all parties by treating individuals fairly and with respect and sensitivity
- Address any areas for improvement through our quality improvement plan
- Inform, where necessary, employers and other stakeholders, such as funding and awarding organisations, in order to maintain the integrity of our programme.

6. ESCALATION ROUTES

In the event a customer is not happy with the outcome and or resolution, they can contact the awarding organisation:

Highfields: [Home | Highfield \(highfieldqualifications.com\)](https://www.highfieldqualifications.com)

ICQ: [iCQ: an Ofqual, CCEA and Qualifications Wales regulated Awarding Organisation \(icanqualify.net\)](https://www.icanqualify.net)

If the customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome from the awarding organisation, they can contact the regulatory body:

Ofqual: [Home - Contact Ofqual](https://www.ofqual.gov.uk)

7. RELATED POLICIES

Appeals Policy and Procedure

Quality Assurance Policy and Framework

Quality Improvement Plan

Data Protection Policy

Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

Whistleblowing Policy