

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints are dealt with in an appropriate manner. The complaints policy and procedure is accessible to all, and is published on our website. All complaints are handled in a fair, consistent and timely way. This policy allows for all stakeholders and learners to log a formal or informal complaint should they have a need to.

## RESPONSIBILITY

Our Quality Director is responsible for this process, ensuring that it complies with ESFA Funding Rules. It is reviewed annually, or as and when Funding Rules or CIF are revised. The Quality Director oversees the management of the process and stakeholders involved.

## SCOPE AND DEFINITION

Provision of apprenticeships is regulated by the ESFA and quality assured by Ofsted. Our complaints procedure aligns to the requirements outlined within their guidance. All apprentices, employers, parents and local partners will be made aware of the complaints procedure by a number of means. For example the process is embedded into our apprentice induction, within employer contracting and established on our website. All complaints are dealt with appropriate discretion and sensitively.

A complaint is defined as an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction.

- Complaints concerning assessment practice will be dealt with through our appeals procedure which is aligned to awarding body requirements.
- Complaints from partners will be dealt with along alongside contracting terms.

## COMPLAINTS

1. Stage 1: Complaints can be raised informally (e.g. in day-to-day conversation with staff), which should be dealt with immediately to prevent any escalation of dissatisfaction. However, where this is not always possible, our escalation process will look to resolve complaints to a satisfactory outcome.
2. Stage 2: Complaints can be received in a number of ways, e.g. face to face, by email, or phone, and can be received by any staff member. It is therefore important to know the correct way to deal with a complaint to ensure satisfactory resolution. Complaint forms are available from the MIS and Exams office and should be handed in at the office marked for the attention of the Director of Quality.
3. Where a complaint is received it should be documented and forwarded to the Quality Director. The complaint is then formally logged and investigated.
4. On receipt of a formal complaint the Director of Quality will send an acknowledgment within 3 working days and arrange for an investigation to be carried out. During this Step we may need to contact you for further information. You may bring a friend or relative with you to the meeting.
5. You will normally receive a written response informing you of the outcome of the investigation within 10 working days from the date of our acknowledgement.
6. The allocated manager will investigate the complaint. Where a complaint is made against a specific member of staff the investigating manager will ensure that the complaint is handled in line with our internal HR policies and procedures. The Managing Director will take over the investigation depending on the nature of the complaint.
7. On completion of the investigation the manager or Director responsible will send a formal response to the complainant. The response will detail the findings from the investigation, and any resolution offered to the complainant, if applicable.
8. All stages and decisions will be recorded centrally on the complaints log, electronic records will be retained of the complaint investigation.

## APPEALS

9. Step 3: Every complainant has the right to appeal against a decision made under this procedure, if they are not satisfied with the outcome or the resolution offered. Details of how to appeal will be provided as part of the response to the original complaint. The appeal must be made within 7 working days of the complainant being informed of the decision and must be made in writing to the Director of Quality. The complainant may approach any member of staff for help in formulating their appeal.
10. The Director of Quality will send an acknowledgment within 3 working days and arrange for the evidence to be reviewed by a panel of people who have no direct involvement with the service about which you have complained. This review will be carried out within 7 working days from the date of our acknowledgement and you will be given the opportunity to meet with the Complaint Review Panel within this timescale. You may bring a friend or relative to the meeting.
11. You should normally receive a written response to your complaint from the Panel within 3 working days from the date that the Panel meets.
12. If your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction at and if you have new evidence to support your case you may ask to progress to step 4 of the Complaints Procedure. To do this you should contact The LHAA Managing Director within 5 working days from the date of the response from the Complaint Review Panel. The Director of Quality will send an acknowledgment within 3 working days and pass your complaint to the LHAA LBTA Managing Director.

13. The Managing Director or Director of Quality will review the complaint to ensure that the outcome has been reached in accordance with the processes involved in Steps 1 to 3 of this Procedure.
14. You should normally receive a written response from the Managing Director or Director of Quality confirming the outcome of the Step 4 review within 5 working days from the date of our acknowledgement at this step.
15. We aim to deal with all complaints during the early steps of this procedure. However, Where a complaint cannot be resolved through the internal procedure the complainant has the option to submit a complaint to the ESFA. The ESFA will not normally investigate a complaint until our internal complaints procedure has been exhausted. ESFA complaints team can be contacted by email at [complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk) or in writing to Customer Service Team, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT.

## REPORTING

16. Each manager taking responsibility for a complaint must log the complaint information on the central complaints log. The Quality Director will produce a report regularly reviewing the number of complaints, root cause of complaints and resolutions which will be provided to the senior management team. The Quality Director is then responsible for identifying actions and adding them to the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to prevent any future complaints relating to the complaint trends.
17. It is the responsibility of the Quality Director and the Academy Management Team to ensure they identify actions and address them.



# THE LONDON HAIRDRESSING APPRENTICESHIP ACADEMY

For further information please contact us on 020 8953 9344 or email [enquiries@lhaa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@lhaa.co.uk)

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