

Complaints Policy & Procedure

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This policy and procedure is subject to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation, Disability.

1. Policy

Rapid Improvement places a significant emphasis on customer feedback and views the complaints process as valuable tool to drive improvements in the quality of our services. The policy of Rapid Improvement is to respond to all suggestions, whether positive or negative, in a prompt and courteous manner. All complaints will be treated seriously.

2. Minimum Expectations

2.1 All complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt

2.2 We will try to resolve complaints to the satisfaction of all parties within ten working days of receipt.

3. Protocol for Responding to Complaints

3.1 Formal acknowledgment of the complaint, with, where relevant, a copy of the Complaints Policy and Procedures, will be confirmed within two working days of receiving the complaint. This communication will inform the complainant that they will receive a full response within 10 working days.

3.2 The administrator responsible for complaints will copy the complaint to the Quality and Compliance Manager and to appropriate personnel. All complaints will be treated as confidential and will be handled with sensitivity by the investigating manager.

3.3 Every communication, either from the complainant or from Rapid, will be copied to the Head of Quality & Training in electronic format, where possible. Notes will be kept of meetings and telephone calls and will also be copied to the Head of Quality & Training for filing with the original complaint.

3.4 The Senior Manager responsible for the area of business about which a complaint has been made will ensure that a full response to the complaint is provided within 7 working days wherever possible. When this is not possible, explanation will be given to the complainant within ten working days, this will include a proposed schedule for response.

3.5 The final response should include an explanation to the complainant of how to take their complaint further, if necessary.

3.6 On receipt of a complaint made to the Board, they will inform the Director and ensure that a full investigation of the complaint takes place, including how it has

been handled. An acknowledgement will be confirmed within two working days and a full response will be given within 10 working days.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The manager responsible for the area of business about which a complaint has been made is responsible for investigating and responding to the complainant.

4.2 The manager who receives the complaint is responsible for copying information on the response to the complaint and the Head of Quality & Training

4.3 Head of Quality & Training will be responsible for monitoring the timely and effective implementation of the complaints policy and procedure.

4.4 Head of Quality & Training will be responsible for recording an overview of the nature and number of complaints in a monthly report to Board.

5. Protocol for Complainants

5.1 Learners, Employers, members of the public and members of staff are able to complain through a number of avenues, including: via e-mail; a telephone call direct to a member of Rapid staff; the Rapid info e-mail service or by contacting a member of the Management Team.

5.2 If the complainant needs help in making a complaint, this can be provided through the Rapid Administration Team or by contacting a member of the Rapid Training Team.

5.3 If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the response from the relevant manager, they are able to take it further by contacting a member of the Rapid Board of Directors.

5.4 If the complainant has exhausted the Rapid complaints policy and is still not satisfied, they have the right to escalate a complaint to the relevant Awarding Organisation should they remain dissatisfied or write to the relevant funding agency about the handling of the complaint, details of which will be provided on request.

5.5 If the complaint is an appeal against grading or assessment, the separate appeals procedure should be followed. The appeals policy is available to all Learners upon enrolment and on One File. It is also discussed at the 12-week progress reviews.

6. Receipt of Complaints

6.1 If a complaint is received by post or given to reception it will be forwarded on the same day that it is received to the Head of Quality & Training.

6.2 If a complaint is received directly by a Manager, copies of all correspondence and notes of telephone calls or meetings will be forwarded to the Head of Quality & Training

Appendix 1

Definition of Complaint

A complaint is defined as the formal expression of dissatisfaction by anyone who uses or is affected by any of the organisation's services and facilities.

An informal complaint is one that is received by a member of staff and is resolved with the agreement of the complainant at the time at a local level.

A formal complaint is one that cannot be resolved immediately at the local level and/or is directed to the Head of Quality & Training or any member of the Rapid Training Team (usually in writing).

A vexatious complaint is one which is primarily intended to annoy or distress other parties in a malicious way. Or is part of a series of complaints by the same complainant where other complaints have been investigated and resolved. Or a complaint promoted by an employee with the intention of by-passing or subverting the normal organisational procedures.

A high risk complaint is one which involves:

- i) Allegations of corruption against a company employee
- ii) A claim of personal injury
- iii) A claim of dereliction of duty by a company employee
- iv) A claim that a law has been broken
- v) A claim of discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age etc