

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE



1. Our approach

Make UK views compliments and complaints as a valuable source of feedback from its customers, learners and an opportunity to respond to complaints by reviewing practices and processes. Where appropriate this may involve change and improvement. The practice at Make UK is to distinguish between an informal and a formal complaint.

2. Compliments

Make UK are happy to receive any compliments to be acknowledged. These can be e-mailed to hubfeedback@makeuk.org outlining the reason and any members of Make UK community involved. All compliments will be shared with the relevant Department Manager and the Senior Leadership Team for consideration of further recognition through Make UK reward system.

3. Informal Complaints

Informal complaints are those raised, usually verbally and usually directly with a member of staff involved in delivering the service. The majority of complaints are informal, responded to and usually resolved promptly and effectively. No formal records are kept of these complaints, only logged, and the person complaining may not perceive the matter as a complaint, rather an enquiry, a suggestion or expression of a concern.

4. Formal Complaints

Definition of a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint is:

- a continued expression of dissatisfaction about a matter after the informal process has been exhausted, over which we have some control, or is perceived by the complainant to have some control
- where a complaint is of a more serious nature
- where the complainant does not wish to raise the matter on an informal level
- is made in writing and submitted via the Make UK hubfeedback@makeuk.org

5. Scope of the Complaints Procedure

The complaints procedure covers complaints from:

- Apprentices/learners (or their parents/guardians)
- Employers of apprentices
- Customers who purchase a service (commercial) provided by Make UK (Employers)
- Visitors
- Members of the local community.
- *Staff

The procedure covers both matters of policy and of operational matters. It covers a broad range of equality, diversity and safeguarding issues.

*With regards to complaints specifically relating to a member of staff, consultation and advice will take place with Human Resources to determine the most appropriate way forward which may result in this being pursued in accordance with HR policies and procedures.

Complaints must be raised within 90 days of the subject of the complaint arising.

Any complaints which are made against the Director of Skills should be referred to the HR department at email CentralHR@MakeUK.org

6. Confidentiality

Make UK is committed to confidentiality and protection of the complainant. Should the complainant wish to remain anonymous, we will endeavour to uphold this, providing it still allows a thorough investigation to be conducted. However, the complainant should be aware that anonymity may restrict some elements of the investigation or in some cases, prevent a full investigation from taking place. Upon submitting a complaint to the Compliance Department, the complainant will be required to tick a declaration indicating their permission (or not) for disclosure of their identity (on the Complaints Form).

7. Appeals

Following a complaint investigation the complainant can appeal the decision if dissatisfied.

Following unsuccessful appeals, Employers/Apprentices/learners will be directed to the Apprenticeship and Skills Director.

8 Curriculum Appeals

Within the context of Make UK's Skills provision, Appeals are defined as:

- A formal request by a learner for the review of a decision that has been made in relation to the progress on their programme of study, including the award of any qualification as a result of that progress.
- Should a learner submit an Appeal Application concurrently with an application under the Complaints Procedure, the application under the Complaints Procedure will remain until the conclusion of the Curriculum Appeal Application. Submit in reason, the reason for the appeal.

9. Advice and Guidance

Individuals can access advice and guidance on Moodle via the learner VLE platform and approach all staff for direction to this information. The Policy procedure is managed by the Compliance Department and therefore designated as the key contact for advice and guidance. The Learner Voice representative can give advice and direct support for Apprentices/learners in raising complaints

10.Fair Treatment

No individual raising a complaint under this process, whether successfully or otherwise, will be treated less favourably by any member of staff than if the complaint had not been submitted. All staff involved in handling any stages of a complaint have a duty to ensure that any decision they make regarding assessment of evidence, or the way a learner is treated, must not be influenced by the raising of a complaint. If evidence to the contrary is found, the member of staff may be subject to action under the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

11. Staff Development and Training

All staff associated with the handling of complaints appeals will be given appropriate training and development

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



Stages in the Process

There are three stages in Make UK Compliments and Complaints Procedure; these are shown as Stage 1, Stage 2 Stage 3 and stage 4.

Stage 1: Informal Complaint

A concern is raised, usually verbally with a direct member of staff involved in delivering the service. Staff will then address the concern within 10 working days. Where informal complaints are not resolved, complainants have the option of submitting a formal complaint.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

When a complaint is received by the Compliance Department, if stage 1 has not been completed it is encouraged to raise and resolve a complaint at this informal stage first. However, it is not necessary if the complainant has requested this stage to be omitted. The relevant department will forward written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint with accompanying policy and procedure outlining the timeline for a response. Following completion of stage 2, a written acknowledgement from the relevant department, investigating the complaint with be sent to the complainant.

Stage 3: Appeal to SLT

It is likely that an appeal will be based on:

- inadequate investigation into the original complaint
- a challenge to the evidence used to support the judgment made in the original response to a complaint
- the judgment in the original response is not adequately supported by evidence
- new evidence that has come to light
- the action offered is viewed by the complainant as inadequate

Stage 4: Appeal to a Director of Apprentice and Skills

Repeat of stage 3 – the appeal will allow the Director of Apprentice and Skills to moderate the whole process.

Management of the Procedure

The complaints handling process is managed by the Compliance Department.

1. Publicising the Procedure

Information about Make UK complaints procedure will be included in the information provided for all Apprentices/learners at enrolment and induction. Information will also be available on Make UK website and learner virtual learning environment (VLE) Moodle. Smart Assessor.

2. Target Timescales

Make UK aims to provide a response to an informal complaint within 10 working days.

- 2.1 Make UK aims to provide a response in writing to a formal complaint within a specified timescale. Normally this will be 20 working days of receipt. It is recognised that some complaints are complex and require extensive investigation. In such circumstances the investigation will be deemed by the Senior Manager to be complex and Make UK will provide a response usually within 30 working days. This will be communicated to the complainant. This also includes complaints involving a member of staff for which consultation will take place with Human Resources (HR) to determine the most appropriate way forward and may be pursued in accordance with HR policies and procedures.

- 2.2 Definition of “working days” constitutes as when Make UK is open to Apprentices/learners.
- 2.3 Where complaints are made during low staffing periods, employer shut down periods, learners on site e.g. consolidation weeks, we will aim to address the complaint within the normal 20 working day timescales. If this is not possible the complainant will be made aware of increasing timescales and/or changes to investigating staff.

3. Receipt of an Informal Complaint

Informal complaints should be raised directly within the department. In most cases the informal complaint is resolved at this stage.

Where informal complaints are addressed to the Compliance Department, these will be recorded and then referred to the relevant department in the first instance. The Compliance Department will contact the complainant within 10 working days of the outcome to assess their satisfaction.

4. Receipt of a Formal Complaint

- 4.1 Publicity about Make UK Compliments and Complaints Procedure indicates that complaints should be addressed to the Compliance Department. Upon receipt, complaints will be referred to a Senior Manager to decide who will be the investigating officer.
- 4.2 Make UK is committed to confidentiality and protection of the complainant. Should the complainant wish to remain anonymous, Make UK will endeavour to uphold, providing this still allows a thorough investigation to be conducted. However, the complainant should be aware that anonymity may restrict some elements of the investigation or in some cases, prevent a full investigation from taking place. Upon submitting a formal complaint to the relevant department, the complainant will be required to tick a declaration indicating their permission (or not) for disclosure of their identity.
- 4.3 A reference number will be issued for each complaint received by the Compliance Department and issued to the Senior Manager investigating the complaint.
- 4.4 A record of all complaints received will be monitored within the Compliance Department.
- 4.5 The Senior Manager will send an e-mail confirmation acknowledging receipt of the formal complaint to the complainant with accompanying policy and procedure.
- 4.6 The Senior Manager will appoint an investigating officer who will examine the complaint and decide upon the appropriate course of investigative action.
- 4.7 The investigating officer will have had no direct involvement in the matter being complained about.
- 4.8 The investigating officer will be sent the complaints documents to support the process:
 - 4.8.1. A copy of the original complaint
 - 4.8.2. Compliments and Complaints Policy & Procedures
- 4.9 The Senior Manager may, if deemed appropriate, send a copy of the original complaint (marked confidential) to another manager for information.

5. Investigation of a Formal Complaint

The independent investigating manager will:

- 5.1 Familiarise themselves with the details of the complaint.
- 5.2 Treat the investigation of a formal complaint as a matter of urgency and be mindful of Make UK target timescales for the response to complaints.
- 5.3 Thoroughly investigate the complaint always considering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.
- 5.4 Maintain adequate records of their investigation. *(passing all details to Senior Manager to file in Complaints folder)*
- 5.5 Complete the relevant sections of the Complaint Investigation Form and return to the Senior Manager. This will include lessons learned and actions which are reported to SLT and monitored for completion.

6. Response to a Formal Complaint

- 6.1 Following investigation, the Senior Manager will send an email addressing all points raised in the original complaint to the complainant. Receipt of the complaint investigation report will enable the complaint to be closed.
- 6.2 The email will contain:
 - 6.2.1. A decision as to whether the complaint is justified, partly justified or not justified and the reasons to support the decision
 - 6.2.2. A review of all concerns raised in the original complaint
 - 6.2.3. In cases where a complaint is justified or partly justified, the actions that Make UK proposes to take.

7. Appeal against the Judgement of a Formal Complaint

If the complainant is not satisfied with the substantive response to their complaint, they have the opportunity to make an appeal (stage 3). If they wish to do this they should write to the Director of Apprenticeship and Skills (DAS) hubfeedback@makeuk.org stating that they are unsatisfied with the outcome, the reasons why and what they will consider as an alternative outcome. This should be done within 20 days of the outcome letter being sent to the complainant.

The DAS will evaluate all evidence and determine if there are requirements for further investigation. Where this is the case, the complainant could be requested to provide additional information and may be invited in to discuss this.

The DAS will respond to the complainant within 20 working days of receiving the appeal, once all internal complaints procedures have taken place

8. Monitoring and Reporting


- 8.1 The Compliance department will ensure that adequate records of the complaints handling process are maintained.
- 8.2 The Compliance Department will produce a monthly report of complaints received to include the outcome of investigation, lessons learned, and actions taken. The report will be submitted to SLT monthly and quarterly to the Apprentice and Skills Board.

Documentation relating to Formal Complaints Procedure: -

Compliments and Complaints Policy & Procedure

Notes of Guidance for Learners/employers – Complaints form

Complaint Investigation Report Form

| Policy Author | Policy Signature | Last Review Date | Policy Date | Policy Review Date |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Jayne Griffiths Compliance Manager |  | October 2023 | February 2025 | February 2026 |