



# Complaints Procedure

## 1. Introduction

Airco Centre of Excellence (Airco CoE) is committed to providing high quality services for all our customers, students, employers and the community in general and we welcome their feedback as it forms an important part of how we improve quality. From time to time a customer may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of his or her dealings with Airco CoE and when that happens it is important that the issue is dealt with as quickly as possible. Complaints might be about, for example:-

- An aspect of the training policy.
- The provision of a service in relation to training.
- The way a customer has been treated by a member of staff.

## 2. The Key Principles of the Complaints Procedure are:

- 2.1 The customer should try to resolve the matter informally in the first instance. Dissatisfaction often arises from misunderstanding, which is why the best starting point is with the person whose actions are the cause of dissatisfaction, or with the Office Manager.
- 2.2 Once it is clear that it cannot be resolved by informal means, a formal complaint should be made as soon as possible. It is much more likely that the matter will be resolved to the customer's satisfaction if it is raised at an early stage. Formal complaints will require a full and thorough investigation which may involve others.
- 2.3 Complaints should be dealt with quickly and complainants kept informed of progress, where the investigation is prolonged
- 2.4 Staff are under an obligation not to allow a complaint by a customer to have any bearing on the way the customer is treated or assessed, where possible complainants should remain anonymous.
- 2.5 Equal opportunities will apply throughout the Complaints Procedures. The complainant will be able to discuss the complaint with a male or female member of staff. Alternative formats of the Complaints Procedure and Form will be provided on request.

## 3. Procedure

This procedure is designed to deal with any complaint a customer might have that can or cannot be resolved by informal means, except for those matters for which there are separate established procedures such as academic appeals. Any customer who wishes to complain but is uncertain of the appropriate procedure should seek advice from their tutor, administration team or the Office Manager.

### **Informal complaints:**

- 3.1 Any complaint received through one of the following will be classed as an informal complaint unless the complaint states they wish to make a formal complaint.
  - Learner discussion group
  - On a customer feedback form
  - Tutorial session
- 3.2 All informal complaints will be recorded by the Office Manager
- 3.3 If an informal complaint is deemed serious, this will be escalated to a formal complaint by the Training Centre Manager
- 3.4 On occasions where comments are made in writing, on a learner course feedback form for example, these will be recorded and forward to the appropriate person for a written response to be made.

### **Formal Complaints:**

- 3.5 A formal complaint is when a person expresses a concern in writing which needs further investigation.
- 3.6 Any complaint which needs further investigation or referral should be recorded on a Complaints Form (Annex A) which is available from the Office Manager and should be returned as instructed on the form. These are processed and responded to as appropriate.
- 3.7 Customers will receive a complaint acknowledgement letter within 5 working days from the Office Manager.
- 3.8 If a letter or email of complaint is received it should be forward to the Office Manager for processing. The Office Manager will liaise with the Training Centre Manager regarding follow up action.
  - Any nominated person receiving the complaint should carry out an investigation into the incident and respond directly to the complainant within 15 working days but some complaints, especially if they are complex may take longer. If it takes longer the complainant will be informed of the progress.
  - A copy of the response to the complaint is to be sent to the Training Centre Manager
  - Progress of the complaint will be monitored by the Training Centre Manager
  - Completed forms may only be accessed by staff and managers as appropriate

## 4. Policy

- 4.1 All complaints will be processed under this policy
- 4.2 All complaints will be handled sensitively and with due consideration to confidentiality for all involved in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 4.2 Any person named in a complaint will be informed of the substance of the complaint at an appropriate point and if required will have the right to reply as part of the investigation.
- 4.3 Detailed information contained within the complaint will be made available only to those involved in its resolution.
- 4.4 Any person who makes a complaint under this policy, will not be treated less favourably by anyone at the Training Centre than if the complaint had not been brought.
- 4.5 If evidence to the contrary is found students or staff may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
- 4.6 Airco CoE will listen to and investigate all complaints that clearly express the nature of their complaint and the remedy sought.
- 4.7 Where there is no clear evidence to support the complaint the Training Centre Manager may request contact with the complainant in the first instance for additional information in order to support an investigation.
- 4.8 All formal complaints will be investigated thoroughly and fairly. The information obtained by the Training Centre through its investigation of complaints will be used to improve its services.
- 4.9 If the complaint is of a criminal nature, the matter will be immediately referred to a member of the Senior Management Team who may, where appropriate, inform the Police.
- 4.10 The Senior Management Team will be kept informed of all complaints received against the Training Centre concerning student welfare.
- 4.11 Complaints relating to Safeguarding will be passed immediately to a member of the Safeguarding team for investigation.
- 4.12 If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the investigation, they have 10 working days in which to submit an appeal.
- 4.13 Where a student exhausts the Training Centres procedure, they have a right to complain to the ESFA against Airco CoE. A complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is not a further stage of appeal. The ESFA does not hear evidence or seek to substitute its own decision for that of the College. Details of which are below

## Comment/ Complaint Form

Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Tel. No.:	
E-mail:	
Course:	

Comment/ Complaint *(Use back of form for additional comments)*

Please return to the Office Manager:

<b>Logged by:</b>	
<b>Investigated by:</b>	
<b>Actions taken:</b>	
<b>Response to customer:</b>	