

# COMPLAINT, GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURE

## 1) Policy Statement

- a) Engineering Trust Training (ETT) is committed to delivering high-quality education and training and ensuring that all stakeholders are treated fairly, respectfully and without discrimination.
- b) We take all complaints, grievances and expressions of dissatisfaction seriously and ensure that they are effectively recorded and investigated thoroughly, resolved promptly and used to drive improvement.
- c) We take every concern seriously, whether described as a complaint or not. While informal feedback is welcomed and acted upon at the time, any expression of dissatisfaction that requires investigation or cannot be resolved immediately is formally recorded. These records are tracked and reviewed through our centralised Complaints Log/LMS system to ensure we resolve issues promptly and use the insights to drive meaningful improvement
- d) Feedback, both positive and negative form a core component of ETT's Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy (ACIP) and directly inform the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), SMT oversight and quarterly performance review processes.

## 2) Aims and Objectives

- a) This policy provides information for ETT Staff, Learners, subcontractors, and other partner organisations.
- b) It sets out how a complaint or grievance can be raised and the rights to appeal decisions.
- c) ETT encourages all parties to deal with issues and concerns when they happen and to discuss these with us informally. There is no substitute for attempting to clarify misunderstandings and resolving problems informally before entering the formal process.
- d) A complaint or grievance can be raised against any aspect of our work or service where you feel you have not been fairly treated, received unacceptable actions or behaviour (by ETT Staff, an employer, another ETT Apprentice or a staff member in a partner organisation) or have not received the service you were expecting or led to believe would be delivered. This may include (but not limited to);
  - i) delivery (or lack of delivery) of services for education and training, including teaching, course content, coaching, tutoring, assessment (including timeliness), feedback on progress or support,
  - ii) delivery (or lack of delivery) of support services including recruitment, administration of fees, enrolment processes, safeguarding, health and safety and welfare, or

- iii) any other area of engagement with ETT where the service received was not what was expected, including administrative processes, conduct of staff, learners, employers or subcontractors
- e) Feedback received through learner surveys, employer surveys, Learner Voice forums, progress reviews, observations, emails or verbal comments will be treated as a complaint when it meets the threshold set out in this document.
- f) ETT has separate policy and procedure to resolve Assessment Appeals.

### 3) How to Make a Complaint or Lodge a Grievance

- a) Informal Complaint or Grievance Procedure
  - i) If you have a complaint or grievance relating to any aspect of your learning, your employment with ETT, the service ETT are providing your business or the work you are doing with ETT then we encourage you to raise this informally with your Training Officer, TESA Lecturer, line manager or member of the SMT.
  - ii) Please raise your complaint or grievance in person, by phone or by email to the appropriate person.
  - iii) If you are unsure who to contact, please speak or email Melvyn Parr (Director of Delivery and Operations). 07807 348696.  
[m.parr@theengineeringtrust.org](mailto:m.parr@theengineeringtrust.org).
  - iv) The complaint or grievance will be resolved promptly, within 10 working days of the meeting, phone call or email.
  - v) If you feel your complaint has not been resolved, either to your satisfaction or within the timeframe indicated in the above point, you can escalate it to the formal procedure.
  - vi) Staff members can escalate a complaint to the formal process if they feel the issue is of a serious nature or required further investigation.
- b) Formal Complaint or Grievance Procedure
  - i) Formal complaint threshold;
    - (1) a complaint or grievance that cannot be resolve informally or has been closed but not to the complainant's satisfaction
    - (2) a complaint or grievance that the complainant or staff member receiving the complaint feels is of a serious nature and/or can't be resolved via the informal procedure. A formal complaint can be lodged without using the informal procedure first.
  - ii) A formal complaint or grievance should ideally be made in writing within 15 working days of an incident or action or from the date when the informal complainant was deemed as being resolved. In exceptional circumstances, a longer period will be considered.
  - iii) A formal complaint or grievance must be lodged either by email or via our Formal Complaint of Grievance Form. [ETT Complaint Form – Fill in form](#)

- iv) Should the complaint or grievance relate to the CEO, it can be lodged directly with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.  
[Trustee@theengineeringtrust.org](mailto:Trustee@theengineeringtrust.org)
- v) The formal complaint will go to the Head of Quality, Risk and Compliance (HOQ) with the DDO and CEO cc'd. If the complaint involves the HOQ, they be removed from the process and the DDO or CEO will respond.
- vi) If the complaint involves a Learner, they will be offered support throughout the process.
- vii) Children (aged 16 and 17) or Vulnerable Adults must have the support of a parent, guardian, care worker, or a person of their choice, who can act as their advocate.
- viii) If it appears that a decision will not be reached within the due period set out below, those involved will be advised of the need for a longer period.
- ix) All formal complaints will be recorded on the Complaints Log, including updates for tracking, agreed actions and outcomes.
- x) A formal complaint or grievance will be addressed in 4 steps.
  - (1) Acknowledgement within 2 working days.
  - (2) Initial assessment and investigation within 10 working days. The complaint or grievance will be assessed and an investigation complete to establish the facts and substance of the issue. This may include interviewing the complainant; the respondent; witnesses to the matter or events; and anyone they believe may have a role in establishing or disproving the complaint or grievance. It may also include gathering and viewing evidence.
  - (3) Outcome of the complaint within 15 working days. An outcome will be established and delivered to all those involved in writing as appropriate. The outcome will include any resolution, next steps of resultant actions.
  - (4) Further actions (timeline set out within the outcome). Further actions may be established and may involve processes set out in other ETT Policy and Procedure e.g. Learner Absence, Disciplinary and Exclusion Policy and Procedure, Performance & Disciplinary (ETT STAFF) Policy and Procedure, Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy and Procedure (list not exhaustive).

#### **4) Appeal**

- a) You have the right to appeal the outcome if you feel it has been unfavourable and/or unreasonable.
- b) You may submit your appeal in writing for consideration by an Appeals Panel.
- c) Please submit your appeal to the person who led your formal process. They will escalate it to the ETT CEO who will form an Appeals Panel including a member of the Trustee Board. Where the complaint involved the CEO, the Appeals Panel will be chaired by a Trustee and will exclude the CEO from all stages.

- d) You must outline the decision and reasons for your appeal, including any compassionate or compelling circumstances and documentary evidence in support of your appeal.
- e) Appeals must be received within 10 working days of the formal procedure outcome.
- f) The Appeals Panel will review the appeal and provide you with a written statement including details of the reasons for the outcome, and any actions to be undertaken. This may involve further interviews with the parties involved.
- g) The appeal process will be concluded within 25 days from the date you lodged the appeal.
- h) The decision made will be final, however this does not affect your legal rights or your right to complain directly to a third-party including Ofsted, the DFE or the End Point Awarding Organisation. Each third party will have their own complaints or appeals processes that should be followed.

#### **5) Centralised Recording and Oversight - Complaints Log**

- a) All formal complaints are recorded on ETT's central Complaints Log. This log provides a live audit trail and enables monitoring, escalation and quality review.
- b) Each entry will include:
  - i) Date received
  - ii) Source
  - iii) Nature and category
  - iv) Informal or formal status
  - v) Assigned SMT lead
  - vi) Agreed actions
  - vii) Target resolution date
  - viii) Actual resolution date
  - ix) Outcome(s)
- c) No complaint will be considered closed until the outcome has been communicated, any further actions completed and the period for appeal has passed.

#### **6) SMT Oversight**

- a) The Complaints Log is reviewed at monthly SMT meetings as a standing agenda item.
- b) Urgent safeguarding, welfare or reputational risks are escalated immediately and are not deferred to scheduled meetings.
- c) Complaint data is formally reviewed quarterly as part of the Performance Review process and may influence RAG status, sampling intensity, observation frequency and CPD requirements.

#### **7) Monitoring, Governance and Continuous Improvement**

- a) ETT analyses complaints data to monitor:
  - i) Volume and type
  - ii) Time to resolution
  - iii) Recurring themes
  - iv) Staff or programme-specific trends

- v) Links to learner outcomes
- b) Complaints and trends will be referenced within the SAR and form part of the evidence base for QIP actions.
- c) The Board of Trustees receives summary complaints data through Board reporting in line with the AELP governance framework.
- d) Records are retained for 3 years and made available to regulatory authorities upon request.