

2016

City & Guilds

Feedback and Complaints policy

April 2016

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Scope

This policy applies to all Centres offering qualifications and all Learners working towards City & Guilds regulated qualifications (e.g. Diplomas, Vocational Related Qualifications, National Vocational Qualifications, Scottish Vocational Qualifications), and other non-regulated qualifications such as End Assessment who wish to lodge a complaint or provide feedback. The policy provides definition and examples of Complaints which may occur for a Centre or Learner. The process for making a complaint is described, although a Learner must follow their Centre's process before referring to City & Guilds.

This City & Guilds policy is provided to guide you in how to approach City & Guilds.

Please refer to The Institute of Leadership and Management's (ILM's) website to access their Complaints policy www.i-l-m.com.

Definition

We aim to give you an excellent experience when dealing with City & Guilds, so we welcome your comments, suggestions, compliments and feedback about the service you have experienced when contacting us or when using any of our products or services.

1. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from you about our products, services or the complaints- handling process itself where it's clear that you expect us to identify the cause of the problem and to take some kind of remedial action.
 - making a complaint is as easy as possible;
 - we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
 - we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
 - we respond in the right way, for example by giving you an explanation or an apology where we have got things wrong, and respond in the most appropriate way;

2. It is not possible to provide a definitive list of examples of complaints, but the following are examples of situations that would constitute a complaint:
 - incorrect invoicing
 - certificate spelling errors
 - lack of response to queries
 - unable to unsubscribe to emails
 - incorrect products received
 - delay with receipt of certificates
 - non-compliance with stated City & Guilds process e.g. not adhering to published timescales or processes

Process

1. For Centres

If you have a complaint relating to our products or the quality of service you have received from us we welcome your feedback and see this as an opportunity to improve our service. Please contact us using the details below.

2. For Learners

You must first raise the matter with your Centre using their formal complaints/appeals procedures. If after doing this, you are unhappy with the outcome provided, you may raise your complaint with us, remembering to send copies of all correspondence between you and your Centre relating to your complaint. Please ensure you provide us with your enrolment number (if known), your date of birth and the details of your Centre (Centre number if known).

Contact details

Feedback and Complaints team
City & Guilds
1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
feedbackandcomplaints@cityandguilds.com

3. For Higher Education Students

Students in Higher Education have the right to escalate their complaint directly with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) once they have instigated their centres formal complaints/appeals procedures.

The on-line OIA complaint form can be found [here](#) .

Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, we will keep your complaint confidential but in some cases the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may make it impossible to maintain confidentiality. In these situations we will discuss this with you.

The Investigation and timelines

We will appoint an appropriate person to investigate the matter on your behalf. We'll acknowledge your complaint within one working day and let you know who will be dealing with it.

We aim to resolve complaints within eight working days but if it's going to take longer you will receive an action plan within eight working days informing you of the progress.

Outcome and action

Once we have completed our investigation, we will explain what went wrong and why, apologise when it is appropriate and take action to remedy the situation as soon as possible.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can take the matter further by asking for the complaint to be escalated to the appropriate manager who will evaluate all the information and ensure the correct process has been carried out.

If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome after escalating your complaint you can contact the appropriate regulator providing evidence that you have instigated City & Guilds's complaints procedure in the first instance:

The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

In England and for vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland

info@ofqual.gov.uk

Council for the Curriculum, Examination & Assessment (CCEA)

For general qualifications in Northern Ireland

info@ccea.org.uk

Qualifications Wales/Gymwysterau Cymru

In Wales

enquiries@qualificationswales.org

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

In Scotland

accreditation@sqa.org.uk

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

It should be noted Learners registered on a Scottish Vocational Qualification have the right to complain direct to the regulator, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

Centres should ensure their Learners induction materials include reference to further complaints to the awarding organisation and the regulator SQA.

Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO)

Users of public bodies¹ in Scotland have the right to complain to the SPSO as the final arbiter. Users have to exhaust the public body's own complaints procedure before the SPSO will consider their complaint, and it must usually have been raised within the previous 12 months. The complaint cannot be under consideration in a court of law.

The SPSO defines a complaint as “an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more customers about [the college's] action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by [the college²] or on its behalf”.

The SPSO will not consider complaints about academic decisions, such as the outcome of an assessment. These types of complaints should be treated as an appeal and should follow awarding bodies' appeals processes.

The SPSO's Further Education Colleges Model Complaints Handling Procedure can be found [here](#).

1 The SPSO's rules apply only to public bodies (e.g. FE colleges and local authority centres). Learners at centres that are not public bodies will not be able to escalate their complaints to the SPSO.

2 For some complaints, there will be no requirement for the college to escalate the complaint to awarding bodies, e.g. if the Complaint concerns the behavior of a centre staff member (in this case, once the student has exhausted the college's complaints process, they would go direct to the SPSO if dissatisfied).

Continuous Improvement

All complaints are reported and reviewed internally each month. They are also reviewed by the Quality and Standards Executive Committee who meet quarterly.

We aim to improve our business processes and our response to customers in the light of learning from the feedback we receive.

This policy shall be the subject of a three year review cycle or as necessary.