

ABC Awards and Certa Awards QLS Complaints Policy

1 General

- 1.1 This Policy sets out the QLS Scheme approach to handling complaints.
- 1.2 We are committed to providing a quality service. In order to do this we will listen and respond to the views of our customers.
- 1.3 We value all types of feedback in order to help us and our customers improve ours and their services.
- 1.4 All customer complaints received are recorded. Some will be dealt with informally over the telephone and others will require a more formal investigation.

2 Complaints about

- 2.1 Fees
- 2.2 Contracts between the learner and the Provider

The Provider is not by association or otherwise deemed to be part of our organisation and as such we are unable to comment on the legalities and matters relating to fee's and contracts and therefore these are beyond our remit of responsibilities.

- 2.3 Where a complaint is about an approved Provider and its provision or assessment decisions or the way a course is being advertised, complaints must first go through the Providers complaints or appeals procedure prior to contacting us. As part of our contractual arrangements with approved Providers, they all must have a complaints handling and appeals process in place for learners.

3 How to complain

- 3.1 Complaints should be made within one month of the occurrence or within two weeks of an unsatisfactory outcome of a complaint to a Provider
- 3.2 Where possible we would like to deal with you complaint informally and may do so over the telephone. In such cases we will confirm in an email the action we will take.

- 3.3 Sometimes a more formal approach is required and in these cases your complaint must be put in writing directly to QLSApprovals@abcawards.co.uk giving the reason for your complaint and your expectations of the outcome as succinctly as possible.

4 Processing your Complaint

- 4.1 Your complaint will be logged as soon as it is received and passed to the appropriate Team for action.
- 4.2 An acknowledgement will be made within five working days of receipt of any written complaint.
- 4.3 If the complaint is excessively long or complex we may ask you to provide a summary so that we are clear what the issues are.
- 4.4 If the complaint is from a learner who has exhausted the Providers complaints procedure, we will contact the Providers Head of Quality for details of their complaint procedure and the outcome of the complaint.
- 4.5 We will endeavour to complete any complaints investigation within one month of the initial written complaint. Where possible complainants will be kept informed during this period and will be informed of the outcome.
- 4.5.1 If your complaint is upheld we will, subject to the requirement of confidentiality, advise you of the actions we propose to take.
- 4.5.2 If your complaint is not upheld we will explain why.
- 4.6 If you are not happy with the way your complaint has been handled or the outcome of our investigation you can refer your grievance to the Assistant Director Access and Compliance.

In such cases

- this must be done within 10 working days of receipt of our decision;
- only the original complaint and your dissatisfaction with how it was handled will be reviewed;
- further consideration of your complaint will only be made if the review considers the complaint was not handled according to our procedures or failed to take account of some critical evidence;
- any decisions made at this stage will be signed off by the Assistant Director Access and Compliance and will be final and the complaint closed.

5 Vexatious and Persistent Correspondence

- 5.1 We offer a transparent complaints procedure and will keep complainants informed throughout any investigation. However, complainants must allow sufficient time to carry out a thorough investigation.
- 5.2 We will not engage with abusive or persistent correspondence from complainants, once a decision has been reached.
- 5.3 Repeated contact with no new evidence and /or abusive correspondence from a complainant will be considered as vexatious correspondence.
- 5.4 Where correspondence and /or behaviour are deemed to be vexatious, we will refer the complainant to this policy, explaining that if the communication continues in this manner all correspondence will cease.

6 Quality Assurance

- 6.1 This policy and guidance is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our customers.