

Family:	Leadership and Management	REF: ARCP0006
Policy title	Praise and Complaints	
Version:	2.2 – this replaces all previous versions	
Policy owner:	Operations Director	
Policy author:	Quality Manager	
Date of Review	03.11.2022	
Next review date	03.11.2023 (Annual Review)	
Applies to:	All staff	
Related policies	Learner Handbook Safeguarding Policy Staff handbook Equality and Diversity Policy Disciplinary procedure GDPR Policy Public Interest and Disclosure	

Policy Aim

The Praise and Complaints Policy is intended to bring matters of concern or good practice to the attention of the Group and enable investigation of those concerns with the aim of a satisfactory resolution. This policy and process is an integral part of the Group's quality framework.

The process aims to be simple, clear and fair to all parties involved, with informal resolution an option at any point. Complaints will be handled sensitively and with due consideration to confidentiality. Any person named in a complaint will be informed of the substance of the complaint and will have the right to reply as part of the investigation.

Process

This Praise and Complaints process is intended for learners, potential learners, employers, clients and the general public. No complainant bringing a complaint under this process, whether successfully or otherwise, will be treated less favorably by any member of staff than if the complaint had not been brought.

A complaint can be made either informally or formally. The informal process emphasises resolution at the 'local' point where the complaint arose. This process may or may not involve a member of the Senior Leadership team (Director) but will be overseen by the department or line manager. The formal process is overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership team (Director) within timescales that will enable complaints to be resolved as quickly as possible. The formal process is set out into two stages – stage 1 and stage 2.

It is anticipated that most complaints can be resolved through informal means and actioned as appropriate in a timely manner. As a result of this, it is expected that, except in exceptional and fully documented circumstances, a complainant will invoke the informal stage in the first instance.

However, in the event of a complaint not being resolved at the informal stage, the formal procedure may be used. The Group will accept written statements of complaint (either via the formal reporting form or letter/email) and will take appropriate action to disseminate and/or investigate the claim. In addition, if the member of staff who has received the complaint deems the complaint to be formal, then the Group's formal procedure must be followed as noted below. Finally, if a complainant does not feel able to use the Informal Procedure, he/she may invoke the Formal Procedure at any time.

Confidentiality and anonymity are assured as appropriate, with information only released to those who are investigating or responding to the investigation.

Formal Process

- The Quality Manager will issue receipt of the complaint within five working days. This will result in an initial investigation of the complaint by the Quality Manager within 10 working days of receipt of the notification
- Where necessary, this will be followed by a full response within one calendar month
- If appropriate, the complainant may be invited to attend a hearing to consider the complaint. He/she may be accompanied by a friend or other representative.
- The decision notified to the complainant will set out the steps to be taken to remedy the complaint, or the reasons why the complaint has not been upheld – this is the end of stage 1.
- If the response to the complaint is not considered by the complainant to be satisfactory, he/she may invoke the second stage of the formal procedure by a request in writing and within ten working days of notification of the decision
- The request should be addressed to the Operations Director outlining why the outcome of the first stage is not satisfactory.
- Considering the substance of the complaint, and the previous attempts at resolution, the case will then be reviewed by the Operations Director. The Operations Director will provide the complainant with a decision in writing within one calendar month of receipt of the complainant's request under the Appeal Stage.
- The Operations Director will set out the steps to be taken to remedy the complaint or the reasons why the appeal has failed. The decision of the Operations Director is final – this is the end of stage 2.
- If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your complaint from ARC Academy, you can request the contact details for the awarding body and the qualification regulator for your qualification, and you will be advised how to escalate your complaint to them
- If, at the end of the formal process, the complainant does not feel that the problem has been resolved satisfactorily, he/she can complain to the respective authority (including: ESFA, Ofsted, NSAR, Sentinel etc).

Time Scales

The time periods as set out in this procedure are for guidance and may be subject to extension. Where any such extensions are made, they will be notified to the complainant in writing.

Complaints that are frivolous or vexatious

If a complaint is frivolous or vexatious, it may be rejected by the Group. If this is the case, the Operations Director, will write to the complainant within 10 working days of the rejection, outlining the reasons for rejecting the complaint. Any learner/apprentice complaints that are found to be vexatious may result in disciplinary action.

Monitoring

Complaints will be monitored and analysed as to identify any trends or issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion and reported annually to the Quality Review Board

If applicable, it is the responsibility of the Operations Director to inform Awarding Bodies/EQA of any complaint procedures and outcomes

Praise

Any correspondence relating to praise will be fed back to the individual/group of staff concerned and the appropriate line manager/s.

Details will be logged for reporting to the Quality Review Board and will be shared with employers and learners

Formal Appeals & Complaint Recording Form

Please complete all sections of this form in order for your complaint to be dealt with effectively

Title (Please tick)									
Mr		Mrs		Miss		Ms		Other	
First Name							Last Name		
Full Address (Including Postcode)									
Contact Number/s									

ARC Academy is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. As part of this commitment we collect data to monitor how we are progressing against our Equality and Diversity Action Plan. The information you provide will help us monitor our services and put in place actions to address any issues. The information provided on this form will not be attributed to an individual

How would you describe your ethnic origin or personal identity? (Please tick)

31	English/Welsh/Scottish/N. Irish		32	Irish	
33	Gypsy or Irish Traveller		34	Any Other White Background	
35	White & Black Caribbean		36	White & Black African	
37	White & Asian		38	Any Other Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Background	
39	Indian		40	Pakistani	
41	Bangladeshi		42	Chinese	
43	Any Other Asian Background		44	African	
44	African		45	Caribbean	
46	Any Other Black/African/Caribbean Background		47	Arab	
98	Any Other Ethnic Group		99	Not provided	

Do you consider yourself to have a learning difficulty / disability?	Yes		No	
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Course Name			
Course Trainer/Assessor			
Your status (Please tick)			
Learner		Employer	
		Employee	

1. Details of the complaint/appeal including dates & additional evidence

**2. Please explain here what steps you have taken, together with dates, to resolve your complaint/appeal using the Informal Procedure.
If you feel unable to use the Informal Procedure, please set out your reasons here:**

3. This section to be completed by member of staff receiving the complaint

The complaint/appeal was made (please tick)

In person	<input type="checkbox"/>	By telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Complaint form	<input type="checkbox"/>	Letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Email	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Signed _____ Print name _____
Date _____ Department _____

Please forward this form to the Quality Manager of ARC Academy