



Education Buddies

Compliments and Complaints policy

January 2025

Director review – January 2026

Education Buddies Ltd Complaints & Compliments Policy

1. Scope and Purpose of Policy

Despite being an organisation committed to the highest standards of education, training and service standards. Education Buddies Ltd understands that occasionally our learners, students, apprentices, parents, employers, clients or stakeholders may wish to express their formal dissatisfaction with our education, training or business services. We therefore set out, in this policy, a consistent method of receiving, responding to, and resolving such complaints. learning from such instances.

The single policy covers all Professional Services – there is therefore no need for a local procedure.

Through this complaints policy, Education Buddies Ltd will aim to resolve concerns in timely, fair and courteous manner, in line with the businesses core values. We will periodically review the nature of complaints as potential learning points to support continuous improvement activity.

Education Buddies Ltd also values recognition of good services and believes that staff will be recognised and rewarded. In doing so, this policy sets out a basic expectation that formal compliments and commendations are gathered and relevant staff and students are duly recognised

2. Policy Statement

Overview

The complaints and compliments policy applies to all Professional Services. It is intended to safeguard the entitlement and experiences of the business's learners, students, apprentices, staff, parents, employers, clients and other customers or stakeholders of Education Buddies Ltd. Its purpose is to ensure a positive experience for those who learn with us, or use our services.

Education Buddies Ltd will therefore:

- Work within this four stage complaints procedure.
- Formally collate any compliments.
- Investigate all complaints in a formal, consistent, systematic and non-confrontational manner.
- Designate a senior leader who will have responsibility for ensuring full implementation of the procedure.
- Ensure that confidentiality is observed as appropriate throughout the procedure.
- Produce an annual report identifying the number of complaints at stages 2, 3 and 4 and highlight any general issues that have required wider resolution.
- Monitor and respond to any trends pertaining to historic issues, or complaints relating to certain groups, including those considered minorities or protected characteristics.
- Report stage 3 and 4 complaints, and any compliments at least quarterly to Director.
- Ensure that this policy is accessible to students, clients, staff, employers, visitors and the general public via the Education Buddies Ltd websites.
- Ensure that it is straightforward to make a complaint, without bureaucratic or complex language, processes, forms or systems.
- Contributes to quality assurance and to the constant improvement of services provided by the company.

General Arrangements

- Please note where a complaint is submitted via Social Media, the business will respond advising the complainant to follow Education Buddies Complaints and Compliments Policy.
- Education Buddies will not accept or act upon anonymous complaints until we can substantiate the alleged facts – we will therefore take measures to encourage complainants to provide additional information to enable the complaint investigation to progress. We will also direct the complainant to the Whistleblowing Policy (see below)
- Malicious complaints are not acceptable at any time – they waste valuable time and result in unfairness to those individuals involved. Where complaints are investigated and found to be malicious or mischievous, appropriate action will be taken, extending to discipline measures for students and staff.

3. Guidance and Links on when to use this policy and related policies

This policy is broadly to be used when a student or member of staff wishes to make a formal complaint, about a person, system or process associated with Education Buddies, based on perceived unfairness, or conduct.

To help signpost other relevant policies the complainant should consider if any of the following apply:

- Issues relating to safeguarding must first follow the Safeguarding Policy.
- Issues associated with learner conduct (including alleged bullying and harassment) should first be referred to the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Issues associated with staff conduct should first be referred to the Discipline Policy.
- Where an individual raises a concern associated with alleged fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by staff and officers of Education Buddies and subcontractors, they should follow the Education Buddies Whistleblowing and Disclosure Policy.

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4. Stages of Complaint

Education Buddies operates a four stage complaints procedure:

Stage Timescale Reporting

Stage 1 Informal	No later than 30 working days after its occurrence	Concerns will be brought by the complainant to the attention of the person who in the opinion of the
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		<p>complainant, is responsible. (For example a tutor, course leader, curriculum or service manager).</p> <p>Whilst this is an informal stage, the designated leader must ensure that the issue is recorded in a simple log or similar broadly indicating the nature of complaint, date it was raised, outline resolution and date closed.</p>
Stage 2 Formal	No later than 10 working days of exhausting Stage 1	<p>If the concern is not resolved at the informal stage, or the complainant feels that the issue has not been dealt with appropriately, then this will progress to Stage 2.</p> <p>Formal complaints are submitted to the Education Buddies designated lead for enquiry and resolution.</p> <p>The complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt of the complaint.</p> <p>The complaint will be assigned to a named manager who will take responsibility to fully investigate the matter.</p> <p>Education Buddies will work to a formal response within 15 working days, from receipt of the complaint.</p> <p>Where this is not possible, due to complexity for example, the complainant must be informed in writing.</p>
Stage 3 Internal Appeal	No later than 10 working days of exhausting Stage 2	<p>If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to the Stage 2 complaint, then they have the right to appeal by escalating to Stage 3.</p> <p>The complainant will put their appeal in writing, detail the reason for the dissatisfaction and why they consider the response to the formal complaint (stage 2) to be inadequate.</p> <p>Stage 3 appeals will be sent to the Director.</p>
		<p>The director will review the appeal, fully investigate the matter and provide a formal response within 15 working days from receipt of the stage 3 appeal.</p> <p>Where this is not possible, due to complexity, the complainant must be informed in writing.</p>
Stage 4 Group Appeal	No later than 15 working days of exhausting Stage 1	<p>If the concern is not resolved at Stage 3 and the complainant remains unsatisfied, then a final appeal can be made to the CEO's office in writing (if at company level).</p>

		<p>Before the process proceeds, the complainant must have exhausted all stages above.</p> <p>The Director will work to a formal response within 15 working days from receipt of the stage 4 complaint. Where this is not possible, due to complexity, the complainant must be informed in writing.</p> <p>End of Process.</p>
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4.1. Complaints about senior leaders

The procedure will make clear that:

Where a complainant wishes to make a complaint about the Director, then this will proceed directly to Stage 4 by addressing it to the Companies office address at 22 Spa Well Drive, Sunderland, SR5

5. Equality and Diversity Statement

It is essential that complaints are reviewed to ensure that the basis of complaints is largely random and has no apparent trend of patterns. Specific consideration should be given to protected characteristics such as disability, ethnicity, gender equality or other. Should a pattern or trend be evident then the designated lead must raise with the Director immediately.

6. Compliments

It is important to recognise and value the achievements of learners and staff, and as such company leads should collate the type and nature of compliments to recognise good work and achievement. This aspect of the policy is less formal and prescribed and as such the recognition could take the form of: newsletters, social media, Director's briefing/reports and external media where appropriate. Company leads will identify any significant themes in the Quality Curriculum Performance Review meetings, so that colleagues can identify any common areas of good practice and achievement.

7. Location and Access to the Policy

The Complaints Policy is located as follows:-

- [Www.educationbuddies.co.uk](http://www.educationbuddies.co.uk)

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Annex A –

This section highlights the complaint submission details and appropriate levels of staff, who will receive and handle the complaints.

	Stage 1 – informal	Stage 2 – formal	Stage 3 – Appeal	Stage 4 – Group Appeal
Dame Dorothy Site	Teaching staff / Manager	. Management level staff	Management level staff	Director

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Annex B – Stage 2 Complaints Form

This form is to be used for all stage 2 (formal) complaints. Complainants (the person making the complaint) must first review the Education Buddies Ltd Complaints and Compliments Policy before proceeding. Please complete all relevant questions.

Q1: Has the complaint been raised at stage 1 (informally) in line with the Education Buddies Ltd policy? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Not, please explain why [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Q2: Date you are submitting this complaint [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Q3a: About You (students) - to be completed if you are a current student (then go to Q4)

Q3b: About You (other) – to be completed if you are not a student, but wish to complain, including on behalf of someone

Q4: Are you complaining on behalf of someone else? Yes ☐ No ☐ (then go to QX)

Q5: Does the person know you are making a complaint on their behalf? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q6: What is the relationship between yourself and the person you are representing?

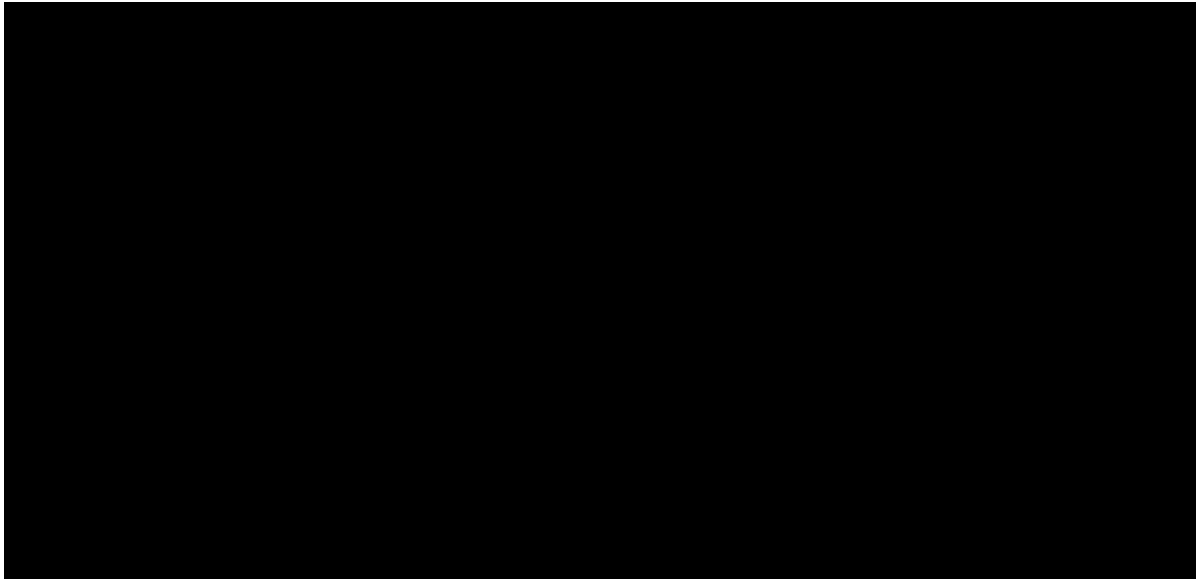
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Name

Insert any recent changes to address or contact details

Name

Telephone Number



Address



Email Address

Q7: Please clearly and briefly highlight why you are complaining today.
Briefly include what you have done so far to attempt to resolve the complaint and include which member(s) of staff have dealt with the complaint to date and why you feel the outcome was unsatisfactory (hence this formal complaint).

Details of the complaint

We will use email where possible, should you wish to be contacted another way please indicate below:

Telephone ☐ Writing by post ☐

Signed	Date
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