

1. Policy Statement

Skills Construction Centre recognises that:

- All Centre Users, including learners and apprentices, have the right to a high standard of customer service, teaching, learning, and training.
- All Centre Users have the right to complain if they are not satisfied with the standard of the services they receive.
- A straightforward process must be in place for complaints to be submitted quickly and easily.
- Learning from complaints helps us to improve the service we provide to our learners, apprentices, employers, partners, and managing agencies.

2. Policy Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Provide a high standard of service to all Skills Construction Centre Users.
- Ensure that learners, apprentices, employers, partners, and agencies know they have the right to complain and how to do so.
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with in a standardised, fair, and positive way.
- Outline the remit of the Complaints Procedure.
- Explain the steps that complainants should take.

3. Policy Users

This policy applies to learners, apprentices, young people, partners, employers, and those using or wishing to use our services.

- **Employees** with concerns about their own experience should refer to the **Grievance Policy**.
- **Staff** wishing to report malpractice or wrongdoing should refer to the **Whistle-blowing Policy**.
- **Safeguarding, Prevent, and Equality and Diversity concerns** will be dealt with under their respective policies.

4. Our Commitment

Skills Construction Centre will:

- Clearly define what constitutes a complaint.
- Provide a simple complaints procedure.
- Publicise the policy in notices, handbooks, and on our website.
- Ensure Centre users understand their rights and the process.
- Guide users to other relevant policies when appropriate.
- Ensure no penalties are applied for making a genuine complaint.

- Appoint a senior Investigating Officer.
- Offer resolution points depending on complaint severity.
- Keep complainants informed during investigation.
- Maintain clear and confidential records.

5. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is a statement by a Centre User or external partner regarding poor service and the desire for improvement or redress. Complaints may relate to:

- Staff behaviour.
- Behaviour of other Centre Users.
- Quality of teaching or training.
- Service delivery.
- Condition of buildings, facilities, or equipment.
- Accessibility of information.
- Communication (online, phone, in person).
- Activities or events.
- Any other service level concerns.

6. Complaints Procedure

6.1 Informal Complaint

- If possible, discuss the issue directly with the staff member involved.
- Alternatively, approach a senior staff member or Internal Quality Advisor.
- Apprentices may speak with their Apprenticeship Officer.

6.2 Informal Resolution

- The staff member will try to resolve the matter informally.
- If not resolved, proceed to Stage One.

6.3 Stage One – Formal Complaint

a. Submission:

- Submit a written complaint to the relevant staff member, their manager, or Internal Quality Advisor. Apprentices can request help from their Apprenticeship Officer.
- Staff must escalate the complaint to their Line Manager within 24 hours.
- The Manager must acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and outline:
 - Estimated timescale for investigation
 - Date of next communication
 - Contact details of key personnel
 - Additional support contacts

- Interim arrangements, if necessary

b. Notification of Involved Parties:

- If another individual is involved, inform them within 5 working days, unless it compromises the investigation.
- If under 18 or an apprentice, inform their employer or managing agency.

c. Investigation:

- The Investigating Officer plans and conducts the investigation.
- Interview all relevant individuals.
- Consult with specialists where needed (e.g., Health & Safety Advisor, Recruitment Team).
- Refer to police if a criminal offence is suspected.
- Follow safeguarding procedures if necessary.

d. Report:

- A report is prepared with findings, recommendations, and outcome (upheld or not).
- Share with all parties involved.
- Summarise comments and set a review date if actions are agreed.
- If no agreement is reached, proceed to Stage Two.

6.4 Stage Two – Escalation

a. Investigation:

- The Director assigns a new Investigating Officer independent of the original investigation.

b. Complaint Continuation:

- Complainant submits written intent to proceed and reason.

c. Communication:

- The Director acknowledges receipt within 5 working days.
- Provides contact information for the Investigating Officer.

d. Process:

- Follow the same investigation steps as Stage One.
- Final outcome and report are shared.

e. External Escalation:

- If still unresolved, the complainant may approach external agencies:
 - Local Authority
 - Awarding Body
 - EPAO
 - Managing Agency
 - Ofsted

6.5 Record Keeping

a. Documentation:

- Accurate records are maintained at all stages.
- Reports shared with involved parties.

b. Confidentiality:

- Files related to disciplinary or statutory actions are stored securely.

c. Monitoring:

- Anonymous summaries kept for monitoring and service improvement.

Review Schedule This policy will be reviewed **every two years** or sooner if there is a legislative or operational need.