

## Aims

HIT and C2C<sup>1</sup> regard stakeholder feedback as important to improving service delivery. The complaints policy aims to ensure all stakeholders know how to direct their concerns to the appropriate personnel within HIT, and when addressing their complaint to an external agency is warranted.

## Rationale

In order to suitably investigate and resolve complaints, where such complaints involve HIT/C2C personnel the company will need to provide individuals with the name of the person or persons making the complaint and the details that constitute the complaint. The company will request permission to do this, not to have such information can obstruct a fair and robust investigation and as such there may be good cause to overturn the complaint.

All stakeholders should be advised of the HIT/C2C complaints policy and advised as to where they can locate it on the company website contact us page found [here](#).

Stakeholders should be advised of the company free phone number; the [info@hittraining.co.uk](mailto:info@hittraining.co.uk) e-mail address

If a stakeholder wishes to take a complaint to an external agency such as the funding agency it is important that the company procedure is fully exhausted before the external agency can get involved.

## Complaint handling procedure

**Verbal complaints** received must be forwarded to the respective manager with a note on how it has been resolved, whether it is on-going and what remedial action has or needs to be taken to resolve the complaint. All complaints received on the 0800 number must also be forwarded to [info@hittraining.co.uk](mailto:info@hittraining.co.uk) in order to have a centralised overview of company complaints. These will be added to the customer record on Workbooks.

The line manager will monitor the progress of the complaint until conclusion. They will also decide whether local operating procedures need to be amended or whether the complaint requires a company-wide review and changes. The service resolution should be communicated to the regional management team and Workbooks updated.

Please note that a complaint pertaining to qualification acquisition should use the appeals and disputes procedure and the head of centre should be advised.

A complaint pertaining to the safety and/or wellbeing of an apprentice should be referred to one of the Designated Persons via [safeguarding@hittraining.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@hittraining.co.uk).

If the complaint pertains to senior management or support or head office personnel, the information should be directed to the most appropriate member of the Executive Board and company policies and procedures should be applied to secure a suitable resolution and actions taken noted. As above Workbooks should be updated.

**Written complaints:** If an apprentice, customer or stakeholder wishes to make a formal complaint, this should be made in writing (including email)<sup>2</sup> to the member of staff dealing with the complainant. You should encourage the complainant to provide detailed information to enable a fair investigation to be undertaken: as above Workbooks should be updated.

The written complaint should be forwarded to an appropriate Line Manager.

<sup>1</sup> Where HIT is mentioned in this policy it also relates to C2C

<sup>2</sup> If there is a reason the complaint cannot be communicated in a written fashion the company will consider alternatives to recording your complaint

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Complaints from sub-contractors or from sub-contractors apprentices, employers, and relevant stakeholders should be directed to the Head of Compliance, who will in turn inform the Operations Director.

Complaints from key accounts and clients should be directed to the Operations Director, who monitors complaints on a monthly basis.

Complaints emanating from a supplier, shareholders and the external funding agency or other public or professional bodies or awarding organisations should be directed to Head Office and will be addressed by the relevant Director.

Complaints in relation to appeals and disputes should be directed to Head of Centre.

### Timescales

The appropriate manager will reply to a formal complaint within 48 hours working days acknowledging the complaint. If the complaint can be resolved immediately then the manager should do so.

If the complaint requires more detailed investigation and planning the manager will reply to the complainant in writing or through e mail outlining the investigation to be undertaken with projected timescales.

A full investigation of the complaint must be independently carried out by the appropriate manager or director and a report written and agreed with a Director. The manager will present findings and solutions to the complainant. Where possible this should be completed within 30 working days of the complaint being received.

Where a complaint has been resolved, the outcome should be noted on Workbooks and as required the original person receiving the complaint will check that the complainant is satisfied with the outcome and that the corrective action has been implemented.

The company reserves the right to not uphold a complaint, where the findings of the investigation find HIT/C2C are compliant with their own policies and procedures and in no contravention with external regulations or rules. In these circumstances the company will advise the complainant of their decision and the reasons for this.

In the case of malicious or unfounded complaints the company will seek advice and take any action necessary to protect the company's reputation and assets.

If a complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant then the file will be passed to the Managing Director for all matters who will seek to resolve the matter directly or involve any third party or legal advisor.

### Involving the Education and skills funding agency (ESFA)

Where a complaint is made in connection to a government sponsored programmes the complainant has the right to involve the agency, however there are requirements that all complainants need to be advised of, before they make an approach to the agency.

The following guidance, protocols should be adhered to:

- First try to resolve it with the provider in this case HIT/C2C; the external agency will need to confirm that the company's complaint procedure has been fully exhausted before responding to a complaint (unless the complaint is an allegation relating to irregularity and/or fraudulent practice. In this situation the agency may see it as acceptable for the complaint to go direct to them).

### The Role of the Agency

A complaint will be investigated in accordance with the Agency's procedure for investigating Complaints about Providers, a copy of which can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/641779/Procedure\\_for\\_dealing\\_with\\_complaints\\_about\\_providers\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641779/Procedure_for_dealing_with_complaints_about_providers_2017.pdf)

Email: [complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk)

The ESFA will assess the concerns and decide on the appropriate action. Where necessary, the team will refer concerns to other organisations such as the police or other government departments. If contacting the Agency by telephone, they will explain their process and record information that the complainant is willing to provide. The Agency will also ask the complainant to provide a summary of the concerns in a letter or email.

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Last Review: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Next Review: June 2019

Person Responsible for review: Q&D Administrator

This Policy has been agreed by Jill Whittaker, Managing Director

