



Complaints Policy and Procedure

February 2017



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Introduction

3aaa is committed to providing a supportive working and learning environment to enable all to achieve their goals. We strive to provide the highest quality services and to be responsive to concerns or complaints from any of our customers; whether they are of a teaching or service related nature. Both negative and positive feedback is recognised as a valuable resource to enable us to improve the quality of our services and Apprenticeship provision.

In order that 3aaa can learn and improve because of complaints; accurate and complete records of all complaints received, resulting correspondence, interviews and actions taken will be kept. A report on complaints received and their outcomes will be submitted to the Director of Quality on a monthly basis. Complaints relating to issues with a direct impact on Apprentice experience will be passed to the Head of Apprentice Engagement for consideration to help to improve customer service throughout the business. Effectiveness of the complaints procedure will be evaluated on an annual basis by the Head of Apprentice Engagement.

The purpose of this complaints procedure is to enable anyone interacting with 3aaa to raise matters of concern about our services or provision to our attention so that they can be investigated and resolved in the clearest and fairest way possible. In most cases this will be achieved without having to conduct the formal complaints procedure; which should be a last resort in reaching a solution.

What is a complaint?

The complaints procedure covers any expression of dissatisfaction or concern about:

- Provisions of 3aaa affecting customers (Applicants, Apprentices, employers, stakeholders)
- Actions or lack of actions by 3aaa or its staff
- Standards of service, courses or facilities provided by the 3aaa.

The procedure does not cover the following:

- Matters covered by separate policies or procedures; including Appeals Procedure, Equal Opportunities, Grievance procedure.
- Judgement about individual Apprentice performance or awarding organisation assessment decisions
- Requests for new services or provision

This procedure is for use by any existing or prospective Apprentice, employer or customer who seeks or receives a service from us. It also extends to anyone who may be directly affected by our services or activities. Anonymous complaints will be logged and monitored but not investigated under normal circumstances.



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Confidentiality and Support

All complaints will be treated seriously, handled sensitively and with due consideration to all parties involved. In line with our equal opportunities policy, all complainants will be treated fairly and not suffer any recrimination or disadvantage as a result of making a complaint. Any person named in a complaint, however will be informed and have a right of reply as part of the investigative process.

Complaints must be made by complainants themselves, however we recognise that some Apprentices and vulnerable adults may have difficulties with this and so encourage them to use whatever assistance is required from a third party to make their complaint effectively. The Academy Manager within centre can provide general support and advice on procedures; however, it is the complainant's responsibility to seek guidance and support when necessary.

Stage 1- Informal

The complaint should be resolved early and quickly, preferably keeping it as close to the source of the problem as possible and dealing with it by informal means. By encouraging complainants to come forward with concerns at an early stage, matters can be discussed and any misunderstandings resolved by telephone conversation, face to face meeting, email or letter to the appropriate person.

- Informal complaints will be responded to by the appropriate person within 7 days' receipt of the complaint
- If the problem is not resolved satisfactorily at this stage, complainants should raise the matter with the Customer Service Team. They will make enquiries and report back to the complainant on the outcome

Stage 2- Formal

3aaa recognises that informal mechanisms may not resolve all problems and that some problems may be too serious or sensitive to be dealt with by raising the issue directly with the member of staff involved. In these circumstances, the formal complaints procedure should be used.

- A formal complaint should be submitted to the Customer Service Team customerservices@3aaa.co.uk
- The statement of complaint should be as thorough and complete as possible and include any supporting documentation
- The Customer Service Team will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 48 hours
- The complaint will be investigated within 28 days working days of receipt and the findings recorded
- The complainant will receive confirmation of the outcome of investigation

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response received because of Stage 2, the complaint may be taken to Stage 3 of the procedure.



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Stage 3- Appeal

A copy of the complaint (with any supporting evidence) should be sent to the Head of Customer Services within 14 days of receiving the Stage 2 response. The Head of Customer Services will hear the complaint and review the evidence. The Head of Customer Services will investigate the complaint, including all documentary evidence.

- The Head of Customer Services may seek to resolve the complaint based on the documentary evidence alone.
- Following investigation, a written response will be produced detailing whether the complaint is upheld or not and detailing action(s) necessary to resolve the issue.
- The decision of the Head of Customer Services is final.