Skillnet Automotive Academy

Complaints/Appeals & Compliments Procedure

A customer complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.

1. Introduction

This procedure is the mechanism for customers to raise concerns or complaints about Skillnet services or partner organisations. The aim is to prevent unnecessary delay whilst ensuring a full and fair assessment of the particular circumstances of an individual complaint.

A formal complaints procedure should be seen as a last resort in the search for a solution to a problem. Before using the Complaints Procedure, each customer should normally raise the issue with his or her line Manager if possible.

The following procedure applies to any of our customers. These can be applicants, learners, colleges, employers and parents.

2. Operating Principles:

2.1.1
Skillnet acknowledges that there are two sides to every dispute. The procedure intends to provide both parties with the opportunity to provide evidence to substantiate their version of the issue/incident. Full disclosure of any allegations or evidence will be made to both parties.

2.1.2
Where issues cannot be resolved informally, The Line Manager will consider the evidence of the complaint.
The Line Manager is from outside the area of the complaint and will have had no previous involvement in the issue or concern.

2.1.3
All information supplied by customers will remain confidential for use within the complaints process. Only staff directly involved with the complaint / investigation / resolution will be given access to the facts of the case. Complaints provide an important source of feedback on the performance of Skillnet services. Skillnet monitors the registration of each complaint and the progress towards reaching a satisfactory resolve.

2.1.4
Complaints will be monitored to ensure they are dealt with promptly and efficiently. Skillnet will not reveal the identification of any complainant.

2.1.5
Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

2.1.6
Customers can normally receive an immediate response from Skillnet either written or verbal.

2.1.7
Any party involved in a complaint has the right to be accompanied and represented by a person of his or her choice at every relevant stage of the procedure.

2.1.8
Skillnet staff have the right to be accompanied by their immediate line manager or colleague.

2.1.9
All staff that are dealing with complaints shall where appropriate, seek guidance and advise from internal/external sources in order to resolve a complaint. The identity of all parties will be protected, wherever possible.

3. Complaints Process Informal (Stage 1)

3.1.1
All complaints shall be dealt with within a two-week time limit (10) days of the alleged incident, matter or concern. To support any allegation that is made the complainant shall provide evidence. Where supportive evidence is not provided, Skillnet reserves the right not to progress with the complaint to the formal stage of the procedure.

3.1.2
Where, in the complainant's opinion, the matter is too sensitive, personal or confidential to discuss with the Assessor or their immediate Line-Manager, the issue(s) can, in the first instance, be presented directly to the Operations Director.

3.1.3
Details of each complaint shall be kept in the personal files especially where repercussions are likely to occur.

3.1.4
All communications relating to a complaint shall be submitted in writing where reasonably practicable.

3.1.5
Where a matter is not resolved within the two-week period, of the informal discussions the complaint may progress to the formal stage.

4. Formal (Stage II) Complaints against Skillnet staff members

4.1.1
Where a customer makes a complaint against a Skillnet staff member, full written details shall be presented to the Operations Director immediately. The Operations Director will submit full details to the appropriate line-manager and track the progress.

4.1.2
The Line Manager in the case of an employer / learner or parent complaint where applicable, may be required to conduct an investigation to consider the facts of a case. Supportive evidence shall be provided along with related documentation to substantiate the allegations. A summary of the complaint and details of any witnesses at the time shall also be submitted to the region for further action to be taken where applicable.

4.1.3
The Line Manager will as an independent body, interview all parties relevant to the complaint seeking guidance from the Operations Director to ensure that the procedure is being adhered to.

4.1.4
All staff that are interviewed are entitled to be accompanied by a representative of their choice at all stages of the process.

4.1.5
Once all of the evidence has been collated and the facts of the case have been identified, the Line Manager will present the necessary recommendations to the Operations Director. The complainant will be notified of the decision.

4.1.6
If the complaint is upheld, the case will then be referred to the Chief Executive, for possible action under the company's disciplinary procedures. The Line Manager will determine if there is a case against the staff member and where appropriate recommend that the case should proceed to a disciplinary hearing. The Line Manager will present the case to the hearing. The Customer Complaints Procedure does not form any part of the disciplinary procedure. If the complaint is upheld it is the decision of the Director involved to determine the appropriate action.

4.1.7
Customers shall note that the decision whether to initiate disciplinary action against a member of Skillnet staff, is a management decision and does not impact upon the outcome of the complaint. The outcome of any disciplinary action will remain confidential and is a Skillnet management decision.

4.1.8
If disciplinary action is taken the complainant may be required to attend a formal disciplinary hearing in the capacity of a witness to substantiate allegations.

4.1.9
If the staff member is disciplined and they wish to challenge this decision, they may do so under the appeals stage of their respective procedure. The complainant is a witness to the case and as such has no right of appeal over any sanction imposed at this stage under these procedures.

5 Appeal

5.1.1
If a customer feels that the procedures have not been followed or a decision is unreasonable, they have the right to appeal to the Chief Executive within (21) days of the announcement of the decision.

5.1.2

The grounds for the appeal should be clearly stated and evidenced in writing and sent, in the first instance, to the Chief Executive. Supporting papers should be included with the submission at this stage.

5.1.3
The appeal will not consider new evidence, including witnesses, at this stage.
In the event that new evidence, including witnesses have come to light, which was not available at the first hearing, then the first hearing/investigation will be reconvened for the original "Investigating Officer" to consider the implications and effects of the new evidence.

5.1.4
The documentation will be submitted to a Director who will decide if the appeal can be considered on the paper evidence submitted or a hearing is required.

5.1.5
If it is deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive, an appeal hearing may be convened with the Chief Executive in the Chair. The Line Manager will support this function. The complainant and appropriate respondent will be required to attend any hearing convened under this appeal stage.

5.1.5
Where an appeal hearing is deemed appropriate, it should normally be held within (21) days of the request being made. Notes, not verbatim minutes, of the hearing will be taken and made available to the complainant.

5.1.6
The Chief Executive decision will be final.

SKILLNET KEY ETHICS

- The Line Manager is the appointed person for dealing with complaints.
- Skillnet shall take into account its duty to promote equality and diversity throughout this process.
- Skillnet shall endeavour to deal with all complaints informally in the first instance, aiming for a quick and satisfactory resolution.
- All information that you give will be treated fairly and in the strictest confidence in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Any information relating to a third party will also be treated in confidence and in accordance with the Act. The information provided will only be used for the purpose of dealing with complaints and for monitoring.
- All complaints that are submitted to Skillnet will be dealt with in accordance with this procedure.
- Once your complaint has been received, Skillnet will:

1. Acknowledge receipt of your complaint by telephone or in writing.
2. Tell you who will be dealing with your complaint.
3. Tell you what action will be taken.
4. Tell you when you can expect a resolve.
5. Keep you informed of the advances being made with your case.

SKILLNET

COMPLAINTS RECORD			
COMPLAINTS REF.	DATE:	RECEIVED BY:	TELEPHONE/LETTER:
Learner Name:		Employer Name:	
DETAILS OF COMPLAINT:			
DETAILS OF CORRECTIVE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT:			
DETAILS OF PREVENTIVE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT:			
CORRECTIVE & PREVENTIVE ACTION BEEN TAKEN AND BEEN EFFECTIVE			
Signed :		Date :	

COST TO THE COMPANY

Compliments Procedure

As a company we are always encouraged when clients, customers, dealers and learners are pleased with the service that we provide. We encourage any positive feedback or comments as this gives is an insight into the way we work with our clients and how well we deliver on our programmes and projects. It also helps us to consistently maintain our high level of customer service and satisfaction.

Testimonials
Testimonials are the greatest compliment we can receive. We usually receive testimonials verbally, in the form of letters and also in the form of an email. The testimonials are conveyed to the rest of the Company via the Company newsletter and correspondence is also placed on the noticeboard.

Comments Slips
There is a comments and suggestions box in the learner breakout area in Unit for and also at Croxley. This is emptied on a regular basis. We will always endeavour to take learners comments seriously and will consider suggestions and improvements. This also gives learners a chance to see that we have listened to their comments and suggestions and that changes have occurred as a result.

Have you been given a Compliment recently about the service you have provided?

If that's the case then ask the client, customer or learner if they wouldn't mind putting it in writing. If they are hesitant, assure them that it can be anonymous if they wish.

A folder has also been set up that holds all testimonials and any letters that contain positive feedback. The folder is for all to access and is currently held in the main office at Croxley. We also may include any particularly impressive comments in the company Newsletter or potentially to go onto the Skillnet website

Please pass any testimonials, comments or written compliments to Carolann Whitney or email on cwhitney@skillnet.org.uk