

Complaints Policy

Version v21.1

Complaints Policy	
Policy Ref	CS.P.1 v21.1
Date of Issue	03/11/2021
Next Scheduled Review	03/11/2022
Policy Owner	Customer Service Manager
Contact Email	Paul.myall@tquk.org
Contact Phone Number	03333583344
Approved By	Leadership Team
Policy Relates to:	Awarding Provision, End-Point Assessment Provision, Endorsed Provision, Corporate
Policy is for the use of:	TQUK Employees, Third-Parties, Recognised Centres, Training Providers, Learners, Apprentices
Should be read in conjunction with:	Appeals Policy, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, Sanctions Policy
Relevant GCoR	D3, D4, I2

Introduction

This document explains Training Qualifications UK's feedback and complaints procedures and is provided for Recognised Centres, Training Providers, Learners, Apprentices, Employers and all interested parties who encounter a direct or indirect service from Training Qualifications UK. TQUK values feedback, both positive and negative, from all of its partners and our aim every day is to exceed the expectations of our customers.

If an individual feels that they have encountered a level of service that is below their expectations, that concern should be raised with TQUK immediately.

TQUK Internal Responsibility

The Customer Service Department is responsible for the maintenance and compliance of this policy. If the Customer Service Manager is absent, the Responsible Officer will appoint another member of the Leadership Team to ensure all of TQUK's actions and activities are in line with the content of this policy.

Review Arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation process and revise it as and when necessary in response to feedback or requests. We may also update this policy as part of good practice guidance issued by the regulatory authorities (e.g. to align with any complaints processes established by the regulatory authorities such as Ofqual).

The annual review of this policy will be undertaken by the Customer Service Department approximately four weeks prior to the submission of TQUK's Statement of Compliance to Ofqual. Any amendments or updates to this policy will be approved by TQUK's Leadership Team.

If you have any points or feedback regarding this policy, please contact us via the details provided at the start of this policy.

Training Provider / Recognised Centre Responsibility

TQUK suggests that all Training Provider or Recognised Centre staff involved in the delivery, management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications (including End-Point Assessments), and their Learners/Apprentices and Employers, are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

A Recognised Centre must have a complaints handling procedure in place.

Feedback

TQUK welcomes all comments, suggestions and feedback related to its services whether positive or developmental.

TQUK takes all such feedback seriously and is committed to improving its offering wherever shortcomings are identified.

If you wish to provide us with feedback, either positive or developmental, we invite you to do so by contacting us via email to support@tquk.org or epasupport@tquk.org

EOD's (Expression Of Dissatisfaction)

A dissatisfaction is any negative comment made about our business, our products/services and/or our processes/staff.

We aim to engage with all expressions of dissatisfaction and attempt, where possible, to resolve them at the time and in the manner in which they are raised, as part of our one contact resolution strategy. An Expression Of Dissatisfaction can be raised via any communication method that we have available.

The outcome, whether successful or otherwise, of all EOD's will be logged and used as a developmental tool by TQUK. Where appropriate we will notify the complainant of the action taken.

If you are dissatisfied with the offered resolution then your dissatisfaction will be escalated to the Customer Service Team/Manager who will acknowledge your dissatisfaction as a complaint within 3 working days.

Complaints

A Complaint is a statement of dissatisfaction with a service offered directly by TQUK or indirectly by a Recognised Centre or Training Provider involved in the delivery, management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications (including End-Point Assessments) and where previous attempts to resolve the dissatisfaction have been unsuccessful.

We view complaints as a learning tool, and are committed to addressing any concerns raised and learning from any mistakes we make. One way in which we do this is by holding regular meetings with affected team managers to look at the root cause of dissatisfactions and any required remedial action.

Complaints can be made via any communication method that TQUK make available. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days and we will invite you to provide any further information that you feel is relevant. TQUK will thoroughly investigate your concerns and aim to respond within a further 10 working days. If, for any reason, we are unable to respond within this timescale, we will notify you of this in writing along with the reason for the delay and an expected response date. The response time will not exceed eight weeks from the complaint acknowledgment and in the unlikely event that it did we would support your right to escalate your complaint to the executive team.

If you wish to appeal a decision made by TQUK as you have cause to believe TQUK has not followed its procedures and processes correctly, please see the TQUK [Appeals Policy](#). Should a complaint be submitted,

which is in fact an appeal, TQUK will respond to inform the relevant party that the issue is being considered in accordance with TQUK's [Appeals Policy](#).

If an individual has reason to believe malpractice or maladministration may have taken place at a TQUK Recognised Centre, during the delivery of an End-Point Assessment where TQUK is the End-Point Assessment Organisation, or by a Learner or Apprentice registered with TQUK, they should refer to the TQUK [Malpractice and Maladministration Policy](#).

Result of the Complaint

At the end of its investigation, TQUK will inform the Complainant of the outcome.

Where appropriate, TQUK will advise the Complainant, and, if relevant, an associated Recognised Centre, of proposed remedial actions.

Remedial steps may include but are not limited to:

- An apology, where poor service is identified
- An explanation as to how the processes and procedures which delivered the failing are to be improved
- Training and development of TQUK staff.

Who can make a Complaint?

1. A Recognised Centre or other centres who have encountered a direct or indirect service from TQUK

A TQUK Recognised Centre, or a centre offering courses or qualifications that has encountered a direct or indirect service from TQUK, may make a Complaint if it believes that a service has fallen short of its expectations.

2. A Training Provider

A Training Provider involved in the management of Apprentices undertaking End-Point Assessment with TQUK may make a Complaint if it believes that a service has fallen short of its expectations.

Note that if a Training Provider wishes to appeal the assessment decision of an Apprentice, as it believes TQUK has not followed the correct process and procedure, the [Appeals Policy](#) should be used.

3. A Learner undertaking a TQUK qualification or endorsed course of learning

A Learner undertaking a TQUK qualification or endorsed course of learning with a Recognised Centre may make a Complaint to TQUK if they have complained directly to the Recognised Centre and are unhappy with the response received.

A Learner must have fully engaged with a Recognised Centre's complaints process before contacting TQUK and be able to provide TQUK with the details of having done so.

4. An Apprentice undertaking End-Point Assessment with TQUK, or an Employer of an Apprentice undertaking End-Point Assessment with TQUK

An Apprentice or the Employer of an Apprentice undertaking End-Point Assessment with TQUK may make a Complaint if they believe that a service has fallen short of their expectations.

If an Apprentice or Employer believes procedures have not been applied fairly and consistently in arriving at a judgement of attainment, they may instead wish to contest this decision and should consult the TQUK [Appeals Policy](#) on how to do so.

If an Apprentice or an Employer wishes to make a complaint about their Training Provider, they should do so directly to the Training Provider. As an End-Point Assessment Organisation, TQUK is not associated with

the on-programme training of Apprentices, unless they are also undertaking a TQUK qualification, in which case point 3 applies.

The Complainant

For the purposes of this document, the Complainant is considered to be the person or organisation who submits the initial dissatisfaction. If the complainant wishes to change the contact for the EOD/complaint process than they must do so in writing and contact will need to be made with the new contact before any timescale or process is deemed to have commenced.

Confidentiality

Where a Learner wishes to make a Complaint about a Recognised Centre, it is not possible to investigate such a complaint anonymously, as the primary purpose of such a complaint is to investigate if the Recognised Centre has acted fairly and in accordance with its published complaints procedure.

If an individual has reason to believe malpractice or maladministration may have taken place at a TQUK Recognised Centre, during the delivery of an End-Point Assessment where TQUK is the End-Point Assessment Organisation, or by a Learner or Apprentice registered with TQUK, they should refer to the [TQUK Malpractice and Maladministration Policy](#). This policy outlines a process through which an allegation may be made or investigated anonymously.

Unreasonable Communications

Whilst TQUK is committed to thoroughly investigating every Complaint raised, we will not accept vexatious, persistent or abusive correspondence, or communications which do not present new information or evidence once the complaints process is concluded.

In such circumstances, you will be informed of our decision and of any restrictions we wish to impose. These restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

- Limiting contact to a named member of staff
- Only accepting certain types of correspondence, for example written in an email
- Placing a restriction on when contact can be made
- Only responding to correspondence if significant new information is raised.

Consequences of Complaints about Recognised Centres

Where a Complaint identifies serious shortcomings in the processes of a Recognised Centre, or highlight a failure to meet aspects of TQUK's delivery requirements and/or the standards set by the regulatory authorities in respect of regulated qualifications, TQUK may impose sanctions on a Recognised Centre, as outlined in the TQUK [Sanctions Policy](#).

TQUK may review the planned monitoring frequency of a Recognised Centre if a complaint related to a Recognised Centre identifies shortcomings, to ascertain if increased monitoring should be applied and support offered.

TQUK will not update a Complainant where sanctions have been imposed on a Recognised Centre or increased monitoring applied.

Continuous Improvement

In situations where a complaint has highlighted a failure in TQUK processes, appropriate action will be taken to improve the relevant processes. This may include but is not limited to:

- identifying any other Learner who has been affected by that failure
- correcting, or where it cannot be corrected, mitigating as far as possible, the effect of the failure
- ensuring that the failure does not recur in the future
- in extreme circumstances, internal disciplinary procedures may be exercised where the performance or behaviour of TQUK staff members is deemed unacceptable.

Information gathered during the complaints process may also be used by TQUK as evidence to inform and review our approach to the development, delivery and award of qualifications.

Further Avenues

In the unlikely event that a Complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of a Complaint, an escalation may be made, in the first instance, to the executive team who will review all of the available evidence along with the decision made. Then will then notify the complainant of their final decision.

Should this response be unacceptable then the complaint can be escalated to the appropriate regulator. At this stage the Executive team and the Compliance department will be notified that this is the likely outcome. TQUK will provide advice on who to contact and which regulator is applicable to the case.

A Complainant who remains dissatisfied following a complaint to TQUK in relation to a Regulated Qualification delivered by a Recognised Centre based in England can complain to Ofqual using the below contact details:

By Email to public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk

By Letter to:

Complaints - Ofqual
Earlsdon Park
53-55 Butts Road
Coventry
CV1 3BH

A Complainant who remains dissatisfied following a complaint to TQUK in relation to a Regulated Qualification delivered by a Recognised Centre based in Northern Ireland can complain to the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) using the below contact details:

Through the online complaints form via the website www.ccea.org.uk

By Telephone 028 9026 1200

By Email to complaints@ccea.org.uk

In all of these cases the regulator will seek to confirm that TQUK's complaints procedures have been followed correctly. In all but exceptional circumstances, it will also be necessary for the Complainant to have completed the full TQUK Complaints process before a complaint will be accepted by the regulators.

A Complainant who remains dissatisfied following a complaint to TQUK in relation to End-Point Assessment can complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) using the below contact details:

By Email to complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk

By Letter to:

Complaints team
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT