



Customer Complaints and Compliments

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Dealing with complaints effectively is essential for maintaining customer satisfaction and reputation. Here's a step-by-step guide on how Training for Electricians handle complaints professionally and efficiently:

1. **Listen Actively:**
 - When a complaint is raised, listen attentively to the customer's concerns without interrupting.
 - Allow them to express their grievances fully and empathize with their perspective.
 - Use active listening techniques such as nodding, paraphrasing, and summarizing to demonstrate understanding.
2. **Stay Calm and Professional:**
 - Remain calm and composed, even if the complaint is challenging or emotional.
 - Maintain a professional demeanor and avoid becoming defensive or confrontational.
 - Remember that your primary goal is to resolve the issue and provide excellent customer service.
3. **Acknowledge the Complaint:**
 - Acknowledge the customer's complaint and thank them for bringing it to your attention.
 - Validate their feelings and assure them that their concerns are being taken seriously.
4. **Gather Information:**
 - Ask clarifying questions to gather more information about the nature and specifics of the complaint.
 - Ensure that you have a clear understanding of the issues raised and any factors contributing to the dissatisfaction.
5. **Apologize Sincerely:**
 - Offer a sincere apology to the customer for any inconvenience, frustration, or dissatisfaction they have experienced.
 - Take ownership of the situation, even if the issue was beyond your control.
6. **Propose Solutions:**
 - Offer solutions or options to address the customer's complaint and resolve the issue satisfactorily.
 - Consider the customer's preferences and needs when proposing solutions.
 - Be proactive in finding resolutions and taking corrective action to prevent similar issues in the future.
7. **Follow Through:**
 - Communicate clearly with the customer about the steps you will take to resolve the complaint.
 - Follow through on your commitments promptly and effectively.
 - Keep the customer informed of progress and any updates throughout the resolution process.
8. **Seek Feedback:**
 - After resolving the complaint, ask the customer for feedback on their experience and whether they are satisfied with the outcome.



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1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure fairness and equity for all parties involved in the handling of complaints and to enable a balanced and objective approach to be taken so that a satisfactory conclusion can be reached. Complaints are valuable, welcome, and important to us, and viewed as an opportunity to improve the quality of the student experience, ensuring it meets Training for Electricians high expectations.

2. Scope

Training for Electricians defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction which merits a response.

These guidelines relate to:

- Courses, services, or facilities provided by Training for Electricians (TFE)
- Action or lack of action taken by TFE and its staff

The guidelines do not cover:

- Disciplinary issues
- Matters governed by other separate procedures such as harassment, appeals against exclusion or academic appeals

3. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Directors and Curriculum Managers.

4. Procedure

4.1 Responding to Complaints

- 4.1.1 Every reasonable effort will be made to deal promptly and efficiently with all complaints, to investigate them thoroughly and objectively and to seek to resolve them satisfactorily. Whilst every complaint is taken seriously and investigated fully, every effort is also made to ensure that Training for Electricians staff understand that they have equal rights in the process and that they are treated objectively with fairness.
- 4.1.2 Complaints will be dealt with positively, constructively, and as far as possible confidentially. If a complaint is upheld Training for Electricians will seek to provide a reasonable and appropriate response and will correct any mistakes or misunderstandings and will take any other action as appropriate. Where a complaint is upheld against an individual or group this will be dealt with confidentially. Action will be through internal processes and procedures and specific details not reported to the complainant.
- 4.1.3 Although complaints will be dealt with in confidence this is with the provision that an individual against whom a complaint is made has the right to be supplied with a copy of the complaint made against them.

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- 4.1.4 Complaints against members of staff of Training for Electricians are always classified as formal complaints. The directors must therefore be notified of the complaint.
- 4.1.5 Training for Electricians will treat all complaints seriously and without discrimination. However, where an investigation concludes there are reasonable grounds to believe that the complaint is frivolous, vexatious or motivated by malice, appropriate action will be taken against the complainant. Training for Electricians reserves the right not to investigate where ongoing complaints are made and grounds for complaint have previously not been found. Reasons will be given as to why the complaint is considered to be an abuse of process. Further information can be found in Training for Electricians Vexatious Complaints Policy.
- 4.1.6 The time limits set out in these guidelines will normally be followed. However, where for good reason this is not possible, the complainant will be kept notified of progress.
- 4.1.7 The effectiveness of any complaint's procedure depends on Training for Electricians being able to collect appropriate information from parties involved in order to investigate the matter properly. For this reason, anonymous complaints will not be dealt with under these guidelines.
- 4.1.8 These guidelines comprise of a number of stages. Most complaints can be resolved informally by individuals pursuing matters directly with relevant staff. Only where these informal routes have been pursued and the complainant remains dissatisfied, should the formal complaint be filed.
- 4.1.9 All complaints should be raised **within one month** of the instance which led to the complaint.

4.2 Informal Complaints Procedure

- 4.2.1 Most complaints can be resolved informally and where practical a complaint should be dealt with as close as possible to the point at which it arises.
- 4.2.2 This relates to informal complaints, such as those received verbally and/or those relating to what the complainant views as relatively minor incidents.
- 4.2.3 This also relates to complaints made by student representatives in student feedback or course team meetings. Although all these complaints are classified as “informal complaints” for the purposes of these guidelines, they are all taken seriously and should be investigated thoroughly by the appropriate member of staff.
- 4.2.4 Where an Informal Complaint is received and recorded, an Investigating Officer will be appointed, and the complainant will receive a written response within 10 working days of the complaint being registered. Informal Complaints will be appointed to the appropriate Manager from Training for Electricians Management Team to investigate.

- 4.2.5 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, then a formal complaint in writing should be made within 5 days of the outcome/response.

4.3 Formal Complaints

- 4.3.1 All formal complaints should be made to the senior management. Where formal complaints are received by other staff at Training for Electricians these should be forwarded for logging in the first instance.
- 4.3.2 Formal complaints can be received by letter, email, telephone, or in person by the complainant. Where complaints are received over the telephone or verbally, we will ensure information is recorded detailing:
- The nature of the complaint
 - The informal steps already taken with full details of the response received
 - A statement setting out why the complainant remains dissatisfied

Please note: Complaints made by telephone may be recorded for monitoring purposes.

- 4.3.3 Under normal operating circumstances the complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days of its receipt. Responses to complaints will be acknowledged using the following methods:
- Letter – A letter or an email will be written to the complainant if they have communicated their complaint in the form of a letter
 - Email – An email will be written to the complainant if they have communicated their complaint in an email
 - Verbal – Verbal acknowledgements will be made where the complainant has complained via telephone or face to face

The complainant will be informed:

- Who has been/will be appointed as the investigating officer
- The maximum length of time the investigation can take
- Who to contact with any queries during the investigation

It will be the responsibility of the senior management team to acknowledge written complaints. Complaints made by telephone or face-to-face will be acknowledged at the time by the team member taking the details.

- 4.3.4 Formal complaints once acknowledged will be forwarded to the appointed Investigating Officer, who is trained in complaint handling and resolution, to conduct a full and thorough investigation. Formal Complaint investigations will be appointed to an appropriate Director from the Senior Leadership team.
- 4.3.5 Where appropriate the Investigating Officer may require a detailed discussion with the complainant to agree the terms of reference for the

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investigation, confirm key points of concern or obtain further details of the complaint.

- 4.3.6 The Investigating Officer may wish to convene a hearing involving the complainant and any other persons involved in the matter so they can submit their respective cases. A representative from Human Resources will also be invited where a complaint about a member of staff is being investigated.
- 4.3.7 All parties involved, including students and staff, can be accompanied by a person of their choice to offer support, assistance or advice and any meetings during the investigation. The person can be a friend, recognised trade union member or member of staff but should not constitute legal representation.
- 4.3.8 Where the complaint is upheld, the management team has authority to refund fees or offer small gestures as an apology and to restore goodwill, dependent on the circumstances and nature of the complaint. The management team will also ensure remedial action is taken to ensure similar complaints do not arise in the future.
- 4.3.9 The decision will be communicated in writing to the complainant and all other relevant parties, usually under normal operating circumstances, within 15 working days of the acknowledgement of the complaint. Where the investigation is likely to take longer all parties will be informed and kept up to date at regular intervals subject to a maximum total investigation period of 30 working days. Under extraordinary circumstances, complaint investigations may be paused or extended where the Investigating Officer has limited access to evidence and resources. All parties will be informed of any pause or extension and will be notified when investigations resume.
- 4.3.10 The decision, whether upheld or rejected, along with the reasons for the decision, will be clearly stated in the response letter. The complaint response will be sent in writing to the complainant by email or by post (where Training for Electricians has no email record for the complainant).
- 4.3.11 Complaints may be rejected if the Investigating Officer finds the complaints raised are unfounded and Training for Electricians policies and procedures have been followed and maintained.
- 4.3.12 If the complaint is upheld, Higher Education complainants that remain dissatisfied are entitled to request a Completion of Procedures letter, under OIA rules, within one month following receipt of the complaint response. It is particularly important to do this promptly if the remedy being sought is time sensitive.

4.4 Complaint Review (Complaint Appeal)

The stages of the guidelines set out above have been established to allow a fair and thorough investigation of a complaint and to ensure that it is dealt with objectively. If the complainant, or any party involved in the investigation, believes that a complaint has not been dealt with properly, they may submit a letter of appeal to the directors within 5 days of receipt of the decision.

- 4.4.1 The Director will consider the circumstances of the case based on the documentary evidence and such advice felt necessary, to determine whether there is evidence to support the complainant's appeal that the case was not handled properly or fairly.
- 4.4.2 In exceptional circumstances, where appropriate and should sufficient evidence exist for further investigation, one of the directors may lead a further enquiry.
- 4.4.3 The Director's decision will then be final based on the evidence and advice available or in the case of a further investigation based on the recommendations of the senior management team.
- 4.4.4 The Director's decision will be communicated in writing, normally within 10 working days of the date the request for review was received.
- 4.4.5 The decision will be clearly stated, along with the reasons for the decision. The appeal response letter will be sent to the complainant by email or by post (where applicable). All outgoing posts and emails will be recorded internally.
- 4.4.6 Further Education and Apprenticeship complaints can be escalated to the ESFA within 12 months after the issue happened. You can email or post your complaint to complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk or

Customer Service Team
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

5.5.1 Communication

- 5.5.2 Students will be made aware of this policy at their induction. It is also accessible through the Training for Electricians website.
- 5.5.3 All staff will be made aware of the contents of this policy via internal training. This policy is accessible by all staff via the Training for Electricians Intranet.
- 5.5.4 Management development and staff development will be provided through HR to assist all staff in responding effectively to complaints.
- 5.5.5 If staff or students have difficulty understanding the complaints policy or making a complaint due to the lack of spoken or written English, they will be offered support through an interpreter if required.
- 5.5.6 Staff/students who have difficulty communicating or understanding the complaints policy due to disability will be offered support for example:
1. People who have a Hearing Impairment
 - a. Hearing loop
 - b. Sign language
 2. People with a Visual Impairment
 - a. Documents can be converted to brail
 - b. A reader can be provided
 3. People with Learning Disability
 - a. An easy read version of the complaint's procedure can be made available
 - b. An advocate can assist the person with learning disabilities to make the complaint

5.6 Compliments

Compliments are valuable, welcome and important and when they are received, either verbally or in writing, they will be recorded by the management team.

- 5.6.1 Compliments enable Training for Electricians to:
- 5.6.1.1 understand that the service we provide meets learner and employer expectations
 - 5.6.1.2 provide positive feedback to our staff
 - 5.6.1.3 influence our organizational and service development
 - 5.6.1.4 inform our quality assurance and improvement cycle

6 Monitoring

Ongoing monitoring of complaints received by Training for Electricians is carried out by the directors and management team. As part of the Performance Management Cycle regular reports go to Senior Management for review

Appendix A

COMPLAINTS FORM

The purpose of this form is for individuals to register a complaint.

Complainant Details

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel: Home _____ Mobile

Email address:

Details of Complaint (A brief summary of the complaint including times & dates)

Informal action already taken and details of the response

Signature _____

Date _____

Date received by Quality:

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Equality Impact Assessment

Policy Title:	Customer Complaints and Compliments
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Identify the Key Stakeholders:	Students Parents Employers Staff	
What is the impact on the following:	Key Characteristics	Impact
	Age	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Disability	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Sex	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Racial group	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Religion and belief	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Sexual orientation	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Gender re-assignment	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Pregnancy and maternity	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely
	Marriage and civil partnership	(1) A positive impact is intended and very likely

	Please tick			
Have any additional safeguarding risks been identified?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any major changes or adjustments required:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stop and remove:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Actions to be addressed:

Action	To be completed by	Target Date	Completed (Y/N)