

Local Operating Procedure

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Version Control Sheet

Document Title	Complaints and Appeals Policy
Author	Mike Hampton
Owner	Mike Hampton
Doc version/status	V1.3
Date issued	16/09/2024
Renewal Date	16/09/2025

Version History

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V1.0	13/09/2023	First Issued
V1.1	17/10/2023	Rebranding only, no content changes
V1.2	05/06/2024	Amendment of a job title, no content changes
V1.3	16/09/2024	Annual update

Approval

Name	Job Role	Date	Signature
Mike Hampton	Quality Improvement and Audit Manager	16/09/2024	<i>M. Hampton</i>

Change Control

Any requested changes to this document should be emailed to: mike.hampton@serco.com

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Introduction

The term “learner,” within this policy, is used to describe all learners and apprentices involved with Skills and Training Services (STS), this also includes those learners enrolled with subcontractors.

We believe that all learners have the right to equal and fair access to learning, development, training, and assessment that enhances their career and life opportunities. Any stakeholder, including learners and employers, who makes a complaint, or an appeal can be fully confident that any approaches or disclosures to our staff will always remain private/confidential and treated with the upmost confidence and sensitivity. This policy ensures all complaints and appeals are dealt with in an effective and timely manner.

Any stakeholder who believes that they are being subjected to, or are suffering because of victimisation, discrimination, bullying, harassment or being excluded from equality of opportunity, will be encouraged, and supported to execute these procedures and seek confidential information, advice and guidance and support that is intended to resolve the concerns that have initiated the appeal or complaint.

Responsibilities

The Head of Funding, Registry and Governance (HoFRG) is responsible for the overall control of the complaints and appeals policy. All complaints (appendix 1) / appeals (appendix 2) must be sent to the HoFRG who will either action the complaint/appeal or allocate this out to a relevant person within the team (usually from the STS Senior Leadership Team, or IQA in case of appeals).

The Head of Funding, Registry and Governance contact details are:

Tel: 07718025197 / Email address: joanne.wood@serco.com.

On the occasion that the HoFRG is out of the business, the complaint should be sent by the complainant to the below STS Senior Leadership Team (STS SLT):

- Dean Hooton: 07356 118643 dean.hooton@serco.com
- Rob Matts: 07718195799 rob.matts@serco.com
- Victoria Wickington: 07973717843 victoria.wickington@serco.com

Any person who is allocated the investigation into the complaint/appeal is responsible for taking prompt and effective action.

All complaints/appeals must be formally responded to and resolved within ten working days of receipt.

All complaints/appeals must be documented on the central register including progress and resolution updates.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 - Complaints

Complaints may be raised in several ways, including via email, telephone, letter or in person. All complaints must be formally recorded within the Complaints Form (appendix 1).

All formal complaints must be treated seriously and follow the procedures set out in this policy.

Learners are encouraged to raise any areas of concern with their tutor/listed main contact in the first instance before raising a formal complaint. All complaints should be raised by the complainant within five working days of the concern/incident – or as soon as possible, whichever is sooner. Complaints raised outside of this will still be followed up as outlined in this policy.

The person receiving the complaint must ensure the following details are recorded:

- Name (person & organisation if appropriate).
- Address.
- Telephone number.
- Course attended (if relevant).
- Details of complain.
- Any action/outcome requested.

The formal complaint (as above) must be sent to the HoFRG (or other STS SLT as stated earlier in the policy) within 24 hours of receiving the complaint/appeals. If sending the complaint to the HoFRG is not appropriate, it should be sent to the Head of Continuous Improvement (HoCI) who will determine the course of action and who to allocate the investigation to (and following action points below in this procedure).

HoCI contact details - Tel: 07973717843 / Email: victoria.wickington@serco.com

The HoFRG must ensure the details of the complaint are stored on the central tracking document. The HoFRG will classify the complaint for reporting purposes.

The HoFRG will investigate the complaints themselves or allocate this out to a relevant person within the team (usually from the STS Senior Leadership Team).

The HoFRG will send an acknowledgement letter or email to the complainant within three working days of receiving the complaint details. The HoFRG will provide the complainant with a copy of the complaints and appeals procedure.

If the ten working days cannot be met, the complaint investigator must report this to the complainant and update this on the central tracking.

The investigator must record the following details during their investigation:

- Record the findings of the investigation.
- Agreed action to be taken, and action plan where required.
- Draft response to be sent out to the complainant with the outcome and agreed actions/action plan. This will be sent to the HoFRG, who will review the draft response and send this to the complainant.

The HoFRG will update the central tracking and when appropriate close the complaint.

All complaints must be reported to the STS Senior Leadership team monthly, or more frequently if required. HOFRG will ensure that any complaints activity is reported within the monthly HoFRG / SLT report.

On occasions where the complaint has come about from the STS policies/procedures in place, these will be reviewed to ensure continuous improvement.

Formal Appeal Procedures

On the occasion that a learner is not satisfied with the outcome of an assessment they may wish to follow through with the appeals procedure as stated below.

All appeals must be formally responded to and resolved within ten working days of receipt.

Stage 1 - Appeal

Learners are encouraged to raise any appeals with their tutor, in writing, in the first instance to see if there is a straightforward resolution.

If the tutor is unable to resolve the appeal this must be reported to the Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager, within 24 hours. The details of the Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager will have been shared within induction and/or can be gathered by contacting the HoFRG or HoCI. Any referrals for an appeal to the Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager must be completed on the Appeal Form (appendix 2).

The Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager must provide the learner with a copy of the complaints and appeals policy, and the Appeal Form (appendix 2) which captures the following information:

- Name (person & organisation if appropriate)
- Address
- Telephone number.
- Course attended (if relevant)
- Details of appeals
- Any action/outcome requested.

The Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager must report the appeal to the HoFRG who will record this on the central tracking (as per Stage 1 – Complaints). The HoFRG will classify the appeal for reporting purposes.

The Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager will remain the investigator for the appeal, unless this is not appropriate, then the HoFRG will allocate this to an alternative member of staff within STS.

The Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager must provide a written (letter or email) outcome to the learner within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

On occasions where the Apprenticeship Manager or Adults Manager is unable to resolve the appeal this will then be escalated to stage 2, as below.

All appeals must be reported to the STS Senior Leadership team monthly, or more frequently if required.

On occasions where the appeal has come about from the STS policies/procedures in place, these will be reviewed to ensure continuous improvement.

Stage 2: Referral and Review (Complaints and Appeals)

On the occasion that the complainant (includes appeal) is not satisfied with the outcome they must respond in writing (email or letter) to the HoFRG, stating the reasons for this.

The HoFRG must report this to the Director of Skills (for complaints) or the HoCI (for appeal), who will review the full complaint/appeal and make the decision on the best course of action, within ten working days of the request to review the complaint/appeals.

If the complainant is still not satisfied, they can refer the complaint further. Each funding organisation/awarding organisation will have their own processes and the HoFRG can provide these upon request. These details will also have been provided upon induction onto the programme.

Subcontractors/Partner Providers

All subcontractors/partner providers must have their own complaints and appeals processes in place. These will be reviewed by the STS Continuous Improvement Team during initial due diligence on the subcontractor/partner provider, and annually thereafter, to ensure the process is robust and appropriate.

On the occasion a complaint or appeal is raised by a stakeholder regarding the activity associated to the subcontractor/partner provider this should initially go through the subcontractor/partner provider's processes.

Any complaints and appeals raised by the subcontractor/partner provider must be reported to the Serco HoFRG monthly, or sooner where appropriate.

The Serco HoFRG will record any complaints/appeals on the central tracking, as outlined throughout this policy., and is also responsible for tracking until resolution.

Appendix 1 – Skills and Training Services Complaints Form

Date Complaint Received:	
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PART A - Receipt			
Complaint Received			
Name:		Tel No:	
Position:		Email:	
Complaint Made By:			
Name:		Tel No:	
Company:		Email:	
Address:		Source:	
Course Attended:			
Complaint Details: <i>(Provide details of the complaint)</i>			
Requested action/outcome:			

PART B – Complaint Evaluation & Action Taken	
Details of Complaint Owner:	
Name:	Tel No:
Position:	Email:
Evaluation & Actions <i>(to be completed by Manager/Director dealing with the complaint)</i>	

PART C – Completion			
Complaint resolved with complainant	Yes	No	N/A
Recipient of complaint informed	Yes	No	N/A
Corrective/preventive action required	Yes	No	N/A (if Yes please record details)
Name of Head of Funding, Registry and Governance (or SLT)	Signature		Date

Saved on internal sharepoint:
[Complaints Form_v1.docx](#)

Appendix 2 – Skills and Training Services Appeal Form

Date Appeal Received:	
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PART A - Receipt			
Appeal Received			
Name:		Tel No:	
Position:		Email:	
Appeal Made By:			
Name:		Tel No:	
Company:		Email:	
Address:		Source:	
Course Attended:			
Appeal Details: <i>(Provide details of the appeal)</i>			
Requested action/outcome:			

PART B – Appeal Evaluation & Action Taken	
Details of Appeal Owner:	
Name:	Tel No:
Position:	Email:
Evaluation & Actions <i>(to be completed by owner dealing with the appeal)</i>	

PART C – Completion			
Appeal resolved	Yes	No	N/A
Recipient of appeal informed	Yes	No	N/A
Corrective/preventive action required	Yes	No	N/A (if Yes please record details)
Name of Head of Funding, Registry and Governance (or SLT)	Signature	Date	

Saved on internal sharepoint:
[Appeal Form v1.docx](#)