


HEATHERCROFT TRAINING ACADEMY LTD

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Statement of Policy	<p>As is widely acknowledged, an excellent business reputation takes years to build but seconds to lose. One of the keyways to lose a reputation is to respond inappropriately, offhandedly, or rudely to complaints. HTA Ltd is privileged to enjoy an excellent reputation and is anxious to maintain it.</p> <p>Complaints provide a valuable opportunity to identify shortcomings in the service provided and thus to improve performance and strengthen relationships with clients.</p> <p>All staff are our ambassadors and are expected to respond politely and courteously to any complaint made to us or against us, regardless of whether the complaint is justified. An apology is not an acknowledgement of fault but can go a long way to ameliorate the situation. Failure to respond in a polite and helpful manner may result in disciplinary action.</p> <p>Complaints may be made directly in person, by telephone, in writing or by email.</p>
2. Scope	<p>This policy outlines the procedure to be followed if a complaint is received. It applies to all staff within the organisation.</p>
3. Aims	<p>The aim of this policy is to ensure that all complaints are received and responded to in a manner which satisfies the person making the complaint and creates and reinforces the complainants, positive image of the company.</p>
Making a complaint	
What is a complaint?	<p>Any expressed dissatisfaction with the following will be treated as a complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure by the centre to meet obligations including those outlined in the learner/apprentice handbook • Concerns about the delivery of the apprenticeship/course, quality of teaching or administration • The quality of facilities, learning resources or services provided directly by the centre • Complaints involving other organisations or contractors providing services on behalf of the centre
Staff	<p>Staff wishing to make a complaint should follow the procedure in the Staff Handbook.</p>
Learners/Apprentices and Employers	<p>Learners/Apprentices and Employers should follow the guidance contained in their respective Comments, Compliments and Complaints Leaflets which are distributed to learners/apprentices at the sign up and initial assessment meeting and to employers when new placements are vetted for suitability. Copies of these leaflets can be found in the appendix to this policy.</p>
Complaints by Disabled students	<p>In the first instance disabled students should follow the procedure outlined above; however disabled students should be made aware that Post-16 education and training are now covered The Equality Act 2010so disabled students now have additional legal rights and can take their complaints further.</p> <p>All disabled students should be advised of the leaflet relating to complaints by students with disabilities produced by Skill: the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities which provides specific guidance for learners/apprentices with disabilities (available from the Skill website www.skill.org.uk).</p> <p>Under The Equality Act 2010 disabled learners/apprentices may also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approach the Disability Rights Commission, who can offer legal advice and arrange conciliation between the Training Provider and the student.

	<p>or</p> <p>go directly to the county court (in England and Wales) or a sheriff court (in Scotland). The outcomes of this may include compensation for injury to feelings, an injunction (in England and Wales) or an interdict (in Scotland) to prevent further discriminatory practices by the institution.</p>
Receiving a complaint	
By Telephone	<p>Complaints made by phone are generally of an informal nature and every effort should be made to sort the complaint out quickly.</p> <p>The receptionist taking the call should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ascertain the nature of the call • refer the call to the General Manager, if available or if this is not possible enquire whether the call could be dealt with by someone else. If this is not possible advise the individual that the matter will be passed on to the General Manager at the earliest opportunity and that the General Manager will contact them. Ask the individual for the best way for the manager to contact them and record details. • be polite and friendly at all times. • log the call in the Complaints Log. Note: date & time of call, name of the person making the complaint. • Pass the complaint to the General Manager at the earliest opportunity <p>The General Manager should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the complainant at the earliest opportunity • Ascertain the circumstances of the complaint • Respond appropriately
In writing (letter, fax, email)	<p>The person opening the letter should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stamp it with the date received • Record the complaint in the Complaints log • Pass the letter to the General Manager at the earliest opportunity
Responding to the Complaint	
	<p>The General Manager should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure a letter acknowledging the complaint and outlining the steps which will be taken is sent to the complainant immediately (specimen letters 1 and 2 - appendix 1) NB depending on the nature of the complaint the General Manager may choose to telephone/ meet with the complainant to discuss the details before proceeding to any investigation 2. Initiate an investigation to ascertain the facts. This task may be delegated to a more appropriate individual. 3. Respond to the complainant with details of the outcome of the complaint within 5 working days of receipt of the initial letter. NB If the case is complex or requires more time the complainant should be informed that the investigation is in progress but will take longer than the 5 working days and informed of the revised timescale. 4. Initiate appropriate action in response to the complaint. 5. Details of the investigation and its outcome should be recorded in the Complaints log

	<p>6 The complaint and any lessons learned from the investigation should be reviewed at</p> <p>a) The next Board Meeting</p> <p>b) Operational meetings</p> <p>to ensure any shortcomings in our service are identified and remedied.</p> <p>NB - in any situations where the complaint relates to an allegation of ill treatment of a child or Vulnerable Adult the Safeguarding Policy should be followed.</p>
Cross reference	<p>Whistle Blowing Policy</p> <p>Sign Up and Initial Assessment Policy</p> <p>Learner leaflet: Comments, Compliments and Complaints</p> <p>Employer leaflet: Comments, Compliments and Complaints</p> <p>Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>Anti Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Policy.</p>

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Signed		General Manager/Director	Jo Cronin

Appendix 1: Employers Leaflet

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure (A guide for Employers and Work Placement Managers)

Heathercroft Training Academy (HTA) is committed to delivering a quality service at all times. However, we do accept that occasionally things can go wrong. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service you receive from HTA we would like to hear from you. Equally, if you are pleased with the services offered, or have a suggestion on how we might improve our services, do let us know.

If you are making a complaint we need to know its exact nature in order to investigate and respond to it as promptly and effectively as we can. Please provide as much information as possible about the service provided, the individuals or department involved and why you felt the service we offered did not meet your expectations.

How to lodge a complaint

You can make your complaint in whatever form is most convenient to you. You can telephone and speak to the appropriate member of staff. If you do not know who you should talk to, our receptionist will help. Alternatively, you can write to, fax or email the complaint to:

The General Manager
HTA Ltd
142 Whitley Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN22 8LY

Tel: 01323 411517
Fax: 01323 647377

Email: enquiries@hts.ac.uk

Please be assured that we view complaints very positively and are grateful that you feel able to complain. We will deal with your complaint in a polite and helpful manner

If you telephone us, the complaint will be logged and our receptionist will, if possible, pass the call directly through to the General Manager who will attempt to resolve the issue for you. Should the General Manager be unavailable, the receptionist will take your contact details and ask the Manager to contact you at the earliest opportunity. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive at this stage please submit a formal complaint in writing.

If your complaint is in writing (including fax or email) we will acknowledge it in writing by return of post. The General Manager will initiate investigations into the complaint and respond to you with full details of what has been found and an apology if the matter is due to any negligence or action on our part.

It is our intention that complaints will be responded to within five working days. If a full response cannot be given within this time (e.g. when a matter is very complex or where we have to consult a third party on the matter) you will be informed of the progress being made with your complaint.

In all cases we will treat your correspondence in strict confidence, with fairness and objectivity.

What to do if you are still unhappy

The Company Directors accept full responsibility for effective complaints handling. If you feel your complaint has not been satisfactorily dealt please write to Janet Matthews (Director) who will contact you to discuss your concerns.

Appendix 1: Specimen Letters

Specimen Letter 1: If looking into concern yourself.

Dear ,

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your complaint concerning

I am very sorry that you feel that the service you have received from Heathercroft has not met your expectations and would like to assure you that I shall be looking into your concerns as a matter of urgency and will contact you with regard to my findings and any actions taken in respect of these, as soon as I have investigated the matter to my satisfaction. This will normally be within five working days of receipt of your complaint; however, if the matter is complex or if I am unable to discuss the issue with the relevant staff, for example if they are on leave, this can sometimes take longer. In this event I shall write to you to let you know the revised timescale.

As you will be aware from our Complaints leaflet, we view complaints very positively and regard them as opportunities to improve our service. I would like to thank you for taking the time to draw your concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Specimen Letter 2: If delegating the investigation to someone else

Dear ,

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your complaint concerning.....

I am very sorry that you feel that the service you have received from Heathercroft has not met your expectations. Given the nature of your concerns I feel it most appropriate to ask (name and position), to look into your complaint (explain why) and to report their findings back to me within five working days.

Please be assured we will be looking into your concerns as a matter of urgency.

I will contact you with regard to the outcome of (>>>>'s) investigation and any actions we feel need to be taken in respect of these, as soon as the matter has been investigated to my satisfaction. This will normally be within five working days of receipt of your complaint; however more complex investigations can sometimes take longer In this event I shall write to you to keep you informed of progress and the revised timescale.

As you will be aware from our Complaints leaflet, we view complaints very positively and regard them as opportunities to improve our service. I would like to thank you for taking the time to draw your concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Specimen Letter 3 – Revised Timescale

Dear ,

I am writing to keep you informed of the progress of our investigation into the complaint you made to us on (insert date) concerning (insert details). I had hoped to be in a position to respond to you by this time. Unfortunately, it is taking longer than expected to investigate the matter as (explain what and why) and I am not yet able to do so. Please be assured we are dealing with your complaint. I expect to be in a position to respond to you by (insert. date)

Yours sincerely.

Appendix 2: Learner/Apprentice's Leaflet

HEATHERCROFT TRAINING ACADEMY LTD
Comments, Compliments and Complaints: A guide for learners/apprentices.

1. Introduction	<p>Heathercroft Training Academy Ltd (HTA) aims to offer high standards of education and training to its learners/apprentices and a high degree of efficiency in the administration of all related services. Feedback on the quality of the services we provide is welcomed, whether they are comments, compliments for a job well done or complaints where something has gone wrong.</p>
2. Compliments	<p>If you would like to provide feedback or a compliment regarding the service you have received, please contact the General Manager, who will share the compliment or comments with the appropriate staff.</p>
3. Informal complaints	<p>If you, your parents if you are under 18 or your employers are unhappy with a programme or a service provided by HTA, please talk to a member of staff about your concerns. If you are still not satisfied, then please let us know.</p> <p>If it is clear to you that your complaint could be dealt with 'on the spot' by an obvious person, please discuss your concerns directly with that member of staff. If you are satisfied with the outcome then, of course, there is no need for any further action</p>
4. Making a formal complaint	<p>In cases where an immediate course of action is not apparent, or if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your initial complaint, please write to the General Manager giving full details of your concerns</p>
5. Responding to your complaint	<p>You will receive a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within 5 working days of its receipt at the General Managers office.</p> <p>The General Manager, or designated member of staff, will instigate a full and fair investigation of your complaint. If this is likely to take longer than two weeks you will be informed of the reasons for this. In the majority of cases, you will have received notification of the outcome of the investigation and the resulting action or proposed redress within two weeks of receipt of your complaint.</p> <p>In certain circumstances it may be necessary for the General Manager to talk to you to find out further details about your complaint.</p>
6. Continuing Concerns	<p>If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you should write again to the General Manager, explaining the reasons for your dissatisfaction. Your letter will be passed on to another senior member of staff, who was not involved in the handling of the original complaint. This member of staff will investigate your complaint and concerns about the handling of the case and will meet with you to discuss your concerns.</p> <p>The Company Directors accept full responsibility for effective complaints handling. If you feel your complaint has not been satisfactorily dealt, please write to Janet Matthews (Director) who will contact you to discuss your concerns.</p> <p>If you are still not satisfied you should write to the Awarding Body responsible for</p>

	<p>monitoring the delivery of your programme. Learners/apprentices funded by the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) can complain to the ESFA or to the Awarding Body for the programme. Contact details can be found in your portfolio.</p>
<p>7. Confidentiality</p>	<p>Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality in respect of your complaint and only those directly involved will normally be made aware of the details.</p> <p>Your letter(s) of complaint will be kept in your personal file together with any documents pertaining to the investigation of the complaint and letters recording the outcome. Your personal file is stored securely and is accessible only to designated personnel.</p> <p>As part of our quality assurance programme and to help us to continually improve our performance we may discuss the issues arising out of your complaint with relevant members of staff. In this instance no personal details which could identify an individual will be disclosed.</p>
<p>8. Assistance to make your complaint</p>	<p>If you need any help to make your complaint, please approach any member of the tutorial staff with whom you feel comfortable and ask for help. They will be pleased to assist you.</p> <p>As an organisation we view complaints positively as a method for improving our service. Please be reassured that you will not be treated adversely because you have complained – on the contrary, your complaint will be dealt with positively and with respect.</p>

I acknowledge the receipt of the procedure and will be guided by it.

Name of Learner/Apprentice: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____