

## Complaints Policy & Procedures

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### Introduction

The Complaints Policy and Procedure provides the framework within which anyone who has experienced dissatisfaction with Best Practice People services can raise their concerns, and how staff should deal with complaints from students.

### Our Goal

Best Practice People is committed to providing a high quality educational experience for students. The intention is for everyone to be satisfied, within reason, with their experience of Best Practice People. It is recognised that from time to time problems do arise and students, staff and others coming into contact with Best Practice People may wish to express concern or dissatisfaction with aspects of Best Practice People or the quality of services provided.

We will:

- Make every reasonable effort to deal promptly and efficiently with all complaints.
- All complaints will be judged on their individual merit and will be dealt with in confidence, unless the complainant has clearly indicated otherwise.
- All complaints will be thoroughly and objectively investigated.
- In accordance with the Best Practice People's Equal Opportunities policy, all complainants will be treated equally regardless of their status and will not be treated adversely as a result of their making a complaint.
- Where at any stage in the complaints procedure a grievance is made the subject of a formal discussion or hearing, complainants may, if they so wish, be accompanied by another person of their choice.
- All complaints will be recorded in writing and will be subject to a monitoring and reporting system.

### Standards of Service

There are separate policies and procedures dealing with Grievances, Equal Opportunities and Whistleblowing. The Centre Handbook sets out the standards and services Students/Learners can expect us to provide, as well as Student/Learner responsibilities.

Anyone not satisfied with the level of service should feel able to approach relevant staff to address their concern promptly and directly. Every attempt should be made to resolve complaints informally through a dialogue with those immediately concerned.

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## Complaints Policy & Procedure

All Best Practice People staff has a responsibility for receiving complaints, treating them seriously, and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below.

Managers at Best Practice People have a responsibility for resolving a complaint, and leading or contributing to an investigation into a complaint when this is considered appropriate.

The Centre Manager at Best Practice People is responsible for resolving complaints which have reached the appeals stage and may nominate a Senior Manager if they have not been previously involved to investigate.

The Chief Executive Officer at Best Practice People is responsible for dealing with referrals after the appeals stage where a complainant remains dissatisfied with how their complaint has been dealt with by Best Practice People.

The Chief Executive Officer at Best Practice People is responsible for ensuring that the complaints policy is operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the Centre Manager.

### Procedures for Dealing with Complaints

It is the right of any student/learner to make a complaint against the policies and procedures of the Best Practice People, or against an individual member of staff.

It is the responsibility of Managers to action any complaint received and retains this information on file.

The following procedure details the actions to be taken both by the complainant and by the Management of Best Practice People. For complaints regarding a Course assessment decision, the Course Appeals Procedure is to be followed (Centre Policies and Procedures).

### Procedure

Students/Learners can make a verbal or written complaint to their tutor, assessor or the Centre Manager about their problem. If the situation is not resolved students/learners have the right to make an official complaint by completing the 'Complaint form' available from the Centre Manager or Human Resource Division. A guide for students is published in all portfolios. The form should be returned to the Centre Manager who will acknowledge receipt within 2 working days and carry out investigations into the complaint.

Once the investigation has been made and an outcome derived, the Centre Manager will provide the complainant with a written response within ten working days. If it is not possible the Centre Manager will inform the complainant of any delay.

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If after the Centre Manager has actioned the complaint, the complainant still feels that the complaint has not been given a satisfactory conclusion they may request a meeting with the Centre Manager to attempt to resolve the situation.

The Centre Manager will investigate the complaint and gather evidence and provide the complainant with a written record of the meeting and the outcome within ten working days. If this is not possible the Centre Manager will inform the complainant of any delay.

### **Appeals**

If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the Centre Manager's response to their complaint, they may appeal in writing to the Chief Executive at Best Practice People.

The Chief Executive nominated representative, who should be a Senior Manager not previously involved in the case, will investigate the complaint and Centre Manager's response and report to the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive will decide to:

- Uphold the original decision / dismiss the complaint as unfounded
- Refer the complaint back to an area and propose an amicable settlement
- Uphold or partially uphold the complaint, offer an apology, recommend appropriate steps be taken to address the issue and to avoid a similar circumstance arising in future

The decision of the Chief Executive is final and the complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome within 10 working days.

A Senior Manager who has not previously been involved with the case will deal with the appeal if the Chief Executive is not available.

If following the above processes, the complainant does not feel that the matter has been resolved effectively, they have the right to apply to the Regulator in assistance to gain a satisfactory resolution.

### **Record Keeping and Reporting**

All Best Practice People staff should maintain a clear record of all complaints dealt with. Issues should be sent to Human Resource Section to be fed into Best Practice People Complaints Log and other quality improvement processes as appropriate. A record of all appeals and outcomes will also be kept on file.

Complainants will be advised that, while confidentiality will be respected as far as possible, it may not be possible to resolve complaints without disclosing details of a complaint to relevant staff in order to allow Best Practice People a fair opportunity to resolve the issue.

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The following details of all complaints will be entered into the complaints log:

- From whom complaint received
- Date
- Nature of complaint
- Responses
- Action
- Conclusion