

# The TESS Group Complaints Policy and Procedures

## **Statement**

The TESS Group hopes and expects that all external customers will be satisfied with The TESS Group; however, we recognise that there may be circumstances where this is not the case. In such circumstances, a complaint should be made, knowing it will be fairly investigated.

To this end, this complaints policy and procedures has been designed to be as fair and straightforward as possible. This will ensure The TESS Group maintains the highest levels of academic and service standards.

The purpose of this document is to set out The TESS Group policy for anyone wishing to make a complaint about any aspect of their interaction with The TESS Group.

There are three stages in the complaints policy and each stage must be exhausted before proceeding to the next one. All parties are advised to keep their own copies of all relevant documents.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Doyle".

Mr Rod Doyle, Managing Director

**Reviewed November 2022. Renewal November 2023**

## **Scope: What is a complaint**

A complaint is a written or spoken statement in which someone says that somebody has done something wrong or that something is not satisfactory.

This policy covers all external customers including learners and employers. We do everything we can to make sure you receive the best possible service. However, sometimes we don't get things right. If you are dissatisfied with any element of your experience with us, have an issue, concern or problem please get in touch using the procedures outlined in the stages within this document.

This policy doesn't include appeals about assessment, marking or grading, please refer to the Appeal Policy and Procedures.

### **Stage one: How to raise an informal complaint:**

Any external customer wishing to make a complaint should first discuss their concerns with an employee of The TESS Group. In many cases, this will be the person they regularly have contact with i.e. for an employer, this will be their account manager, for a learner, this will be their trainer, and for a supply chain partner, this will be their contract manager. If the complainant would prefer to speak to someone else, they can call The TESS Group office on 01604 210500. The TESS Group employee will make every attempt to resolve the complaint and will inform the complainant of what steps (if any) will take place.

At this stage responses are given to the individual making the complaint within 5 working days of the complaint being made, so that additional investigation/exploration can take place.

If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, the complaint is resolved. If not, then the complainant should make a formal complaint.

*Timeline: We aim for all informal complaints to be resolved within 7 working days.*

### **Stage two: How to raise a formal complaint**

#### **Complaints in relation to delivery of training**

Any external customer wishing to make a formal complaint should contact The TESS Group Head of Quality – Peter Dignam. [Peter.dignam@thetessgroup.com](mailto:Peter.dignam@thetessgroup.com) The complaint should be made in writing to the Head of Quality, who will investigate the complaint and arrange a meeting with the complainant and anyone else involved. The complainant will receive a written response, which will explain any action to be taken to resolve the complaint or explain why it is considered that no action is necessary.

At this stage responses are given to the complainant within 5-7 working days of the complaint being made, so that additional investigation/exploration can take place.

If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, the complaint is resolved. If not, then the complainant can have the complaint reviewed by the Managing Director, Rod Doyle.

Please note that if the issue relates to an assessment decision, IQA feedback or End Point Assessment decision, you should refer to our Appeal Policy and Procedures.

*Timeline: We aim for all formal complaints to be resolved within 14 working days.*

#### **Complaints not in relation to training delivery**

Any external customer wishing to make a formal complaint should contact The TESS Group Commercial Director Lisa O'Reilly [lisa@thetessgroup.com](mailto:lisa@thetessgroup.com) The complaint should be made in

writing to the Commercial Director, who will investigate the complaint and arrange a meeting with the complainant and anyone else involved. The complainant will receive a written response, which will explain any action to be taken to resolve the complaint or explain why it is considered that no action is necessary.

At this stage responses are given to the complainant within 5-7 working days of the complaint being made, so that additional investigation/exploration can take place.

If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, the complaint is resolved. If not, then the complainant can have the complaint reviewed by the Managing Director, Rod Doyle.

*Timeline: We aim for all formal complaints to be resolved within 14 working days.*

### **Stage three: Review of Complaint**

The TESS Group's Managing Director, Rod Doyle can be contacted at [rod.doyle@thetessgroup.com](mailto:rod.doyle@thetessgroup.com). The request for a complainant review must state the grounds for the review. If the Managing Director is satisfied that a review is necessary and justified, he will formulate a review panel comprising of the one of our Governance Advisors, and a lay person not associated with the company to hear your concerns and come to a decision.

At this stage responses are given to the complainant within 5-7 working days of the complaint being made, so that additional investigation/exploration can take place.

This panel is the ultimate decision-making body and The TESS Group has no further means of dealing with the complaint therefore the findings must be accepted or escalated externally.

### **External escalation**

If the complaint is in relation to any aspect of apprenticeship delivery and all stages of The TESS Group's complaints policy has been followed, then it can be escalated to the relevant Awarding Body, ESFA or Ofqual.

### **NCFE**

0191 239 8000 / [service@ncfe.org.uk](mailto:service@ncfe.org.uk) / NCFE Q6, Quorum Business Park Benton Lane Newcastle upon Tyne NE12 8BT

### **Skillsfirst**

0121 270 5100 / Suite 416, Fort Dunlop, Fort Parkway, Birmingham, B24 9FD

### **SFJ**

0114 284 1970 / [info@sfjawards.com](mailto:info@sfjawards.com) / Consult House, 4 Hayland Street, Sheffield, S9 1BY

### **City and Guilds**

020 7294 8444 / [feedbackandcomplaints@cityandguilds.com](mailto:feedbackandcomplaints@cityandguilds.com) / Feedback and Complaints team City & Guilds, 1 Giltspur Street, London, EC1A 9DD

### **ILM**

01543 266867 / [customer@i-l-m.com](mailto:customer@i-l-m.com) / 1 Newlands Court, Attwood Road, Burntwood, WS7 3GF

## **ESFA**

[complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk) / Complaints team, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

## **OFQUAL**

0300 303 334 / [public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk) / Spring Place, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB

## **Record Keeping Procedures**

Complaints are required to be recorded in a written format for the purpose of the review stages of the policy. These will be kept within the google drive with any outcomes stored alongside this. Access is only granted under GDPR guidelines and with those who require the access as per the policy.

Should a complaint be made through survey routes then this will be stored within SurveyMonkey and analysed on the survey tracker by the Quality Team again stored within the Google Drive. The findings are then escalated to the Head of Quality to contact the individual learner on programme and/or employer to discuss the feedback with that person should they request the contact via the Surveys. The outcome from this is then recorded on the Survey analysis held within the Google Drive.

## **Feedback**

We offer a number of ways for learners to provide feedback, this includes:

1. A survey monkey link available after every session
2. Feedback forms provided at the midpoint and endpoint
3. Exit reviews include a section for providing feedback