



Complaints Policy and Procedure

November 2024

Version History			
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V1.0	01/09/2020	Version release	Martin Parnham Head of Learning and Delivery
V2.0	06/09/2021	Annual review and reference to Head of Quality	Martin Parnham Head of Learning and Delivery
V3.0	03/10/2022	Reference to Chief Executive	Martin Parnham Head of Programmes
V4.0	21/11/2023	Updated logo and re-release	Martin Parnham Head of Programmes

Document Approval		
Job Role	Name	Date approved
Commercial Director	Lisa O'Reilly	07/09/2021
Commercial Director	Lisa O'Reilly	03/10/2022
Chief Executive Officer	Lisa O'Reilly	19/11/2023
Chief Executive Officer	Lisa O'Reilly	07/11/2024

Date of Next Review	November 2025
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Statement

The TESS Group (TESS) hopes and expects that all external customers will be satisfied with the services we provide; 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 TESS maintains the highest levels of academic and service standards.

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

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.

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 everyone receives the best possible service. However, sometimes we don't get things right. If anyone is dissatisfied with any element of their 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 does not include appeals about assessment, marking or grading. Please refer to the Appeal Policy and Procedures.

Stage: How to raise an informal complaint:

Any external customer wishing to make a complaint should first discuss their concerns with an employee of TESS. 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 / Skills Coach. If the complainant would prefer to speak to someone else, they can call the TESS office on 01604 210500. The TESS 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 2: How to raise a formal complaint in relation to delivery of training.

Any external customer wishing to make a formal complaint should contact the Head of Operations, Stephanie Richardson: stephanie.richardson@thetessgroup.com.

The complaint should be made in writing to the Head of Operations, 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 Chief Executive Officer.

Please note that if the issue relates to an assessment decision, IQA feedback or End Point Assessment decision, this will be dealt with via the Appeal Policy and Procedures.

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

Complaints not relating to training delivery.

Any external customer wishing to make a formal complaint should contact the TESS Chief Executive Officer, Lisa O'Reilly lisa.o'reilly@thetessgroup.com. The complaint should be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, 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.

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



Stage 3: Review of Complaint

The TESS Managing Director, Rod Doyle can be contacted at 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 the 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 TESS 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 complaints policy has been followed, then it can be escalated to the relevant Awarding Organisation, End Point Assessment Organisation, ESFA or Ofqual details of which will be provided by TESS.

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 Survey Monkey 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 Operations to contact the individual learner and / or employer to discuss the feedback with that person should they request the contact via the Survey. The outcome from this is recorded on the survey analysis held within the Google Drive.



Feedback

We offer several ways for learners to provide feedback, this includes:

- A survey monkey link available after every session
- Feedback forms provided at the midpoint and endpoint of programme
- Exit reviews include a section for providing feedback

A small, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials "LO" or similar.

Lisa O'Reilly
Chief Executive Officer