



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

# Complaints & Compliments Policy

Person responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and reviewed in line the review dates below: <b>Pam Wallace</b>	Job Role: <b>Director of Operations</b>
Policy reviewed : <b>Oct 23</b>	Next Review date: <b>Oct 24</b>

Page	Change	By Whom
Page 5	Reference to GLA Complaints Contact removed	P Wallace

## **1. Introduction & Purpose**

1.1 At London Learning Consortium, we are committed to providing high quality services for all our service users. Taking account of stakeholders' views enables LLC to promote and develop capacity for sustainable improvement. This document details the Compliments, Complaints Policy, and Procedure that will be followed by LLC.

1.2 Complaints will be monitored and administered centrally by the Senior Management Team Team under the direction of the CEO. The complaints procedure is designed to help us gain a clearer view of how learners and other users of LLC perceive us. It sets out to ask for compliments as well as complaints so that we can identify good practice in LLC as well as identifying those areas where we have fallen short of our high standards.

1.3 LLC defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- Standards of service
- Action or lack of action by LLC or its employees
- Actions caused by other learners
- Provisions of LLC affecting learners, visitors or other stakeholders

1.4 A complainant may be a student, prospective student, parent, employer, subcontractor/partner or visitor to LLC.

1.5 Learners may submit a 'group complaint'. Where a complaint is made by a number of learners, LLC may ask the group to nominate one student to act as group representative.

1.6 If the complainant is an employee, they should refer to LLC's Grievance Procedure as a means for ensuring that their issue is dealt with promptly and satisfactorily. For further information, contact the Human Resources department.

1.7 Academic appeals are not part of this policy or procedure. Please refer to LLC's Appeals Policy.

1.8 The objectives of the Compliments and Complaints Policy is to provide:

- A swift, open process, which is fair to all parties.
- A procedure designed to resolve problems quickly.
- A thorough investigation into complaints received.
- Improvements to services for learners and the quality of provision by acting on feedback and the recommendations made following investigations.
- Accurate recording, monitoring and reporting of complaints.

1.9 LLC will identify actions and trends from complaints received to improve and develop its services.

1.10 Learners individually, or in the case of a group of learners, the nominated Student Representative, should follow the procedures as described in Stages 1 - 4 below.

1.11 LLC will investigate complaints thoroughly and objectively using Managers and Senior Managers who are at an appropriate level within the organisation.

1.12 LLC aims to respond to complaints within 21 working days; however, some complaints, especially if the issue is more complex, may take longer to investigate. LLC will contact the complainant to advise them if the investigation is likely to take more than 21 working days and will keep them informed of progress.

1.13 LLC will ask for equality and diversity information (for example, gender and ethnicity) to help to ensure that all people are treated fairly.

1.14 Complaints should ideally be brought to the attention of LLC in writing. The decision to handle complaints made verbally will be at the discretion of the Senior Management Team.

1.15 All complaints received by LLC staff must be brought to the attention of a Senior Manager immediately upon receipt. From this point, an investigating lead will be assigned within 3 working days. They will be provided with details so that they have all of the information required to undertake the investigation. Once the investigating lead has completed their investigation, all records must be sent to the designated Senior Manager overseeing the complaint.

1.16 If the complaint is considered to be an immediate/urgent safeguarding risk, this would immediately become a safeguarding incident and be dealt with in line with LLC's Safeguarding policy and procedures.

1.17 LLC reserves the right not to pursue any malicious, vexatious or abusive complaints (i.e. complaints that are not true or use offensive or abusive language in communication to staff).

1.18 LLC is unable to accept or act upon anonymous complaints.

1.19 All complaints must be raised within 1 month of the original issue so that evidence is available for investigation.

1.20 Compliments received by LLC will normally be passed on to the individual or individuals who are the subject of the compliment. The Quality Team will maintain a central record. LLC will use compliments to motivate staff and, where appropriate support the promotion of LLC's activities. Compliments can be submitted directly to the individual or individuals or via **londonlc@londonlc.org.uk**.

1.21 The policy reflects the Education and Skills Funding Agency guidance relating to the management of complaints and the arrangements for appeals including the right of appeal to the funding agency when LLC's procedure has been exhausted.

## **2. Responsibilities**

2.1 The Operations Director is responsible for the policy, for ensuring that LLC responds to compliments and complaints in accordance with the procedure set out within the policy and for ensuring that analysis of complaints and compliments is reported to the Board of Directors and Senior Management Team.

2.2 A relevant director or manager will be assigned as the investigation lead. The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, and the findings provided in a written response to the complainant.

### 3. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

3.1 LLC monitors complaints carefully. A termly report on complaints against LLC Will be produced and shared with the Senior Management Team. In addition, LLC reports annually to its Governing Body on complaints against LLC and actions arising.

#### Procedure - How to Complain

If you have concerns about any of your experiences with London Learning Consortium, please follow the procedure below in communicating your concerns so that LLC can support you in achieving a satisfactory resolution to your complaint and respond appropriately.

#### Stage 1 – Informal Procedure

LLC anticipates that the majority of concerns raised can be resolved at an early stage through informal discussion. This is referred to in this policy as 'stage 1 – informal procedure'. Therefore, if a concern arises, the first step is to bring it to the attention of the relevant staff member and discuss it with them. It should be noted that a written record or response to issues raised at this early stage would not normally be made if both parties feel satisfied with the outcome.

For learners, in the first instance, please discuss the matter with the person(s) concerned. For example, your Tutor or Assessor. If you are unable to do this, contact the manager responsible for LLC's Local Programmes via LLC's main switchboard **0208 774 4040** and they will be able to provide you with contact details if you do not have this.

For employers, in the first instance, please raise your concerns with the assessor or contact the senior manager responsible for LLC's Workbased Learning Programmes Pam Wallace – p.wallace@londonlc.org.uk . Contact LLC's main switchboard **0208 774 4040** and they will be able to provide you with contact details if you do not have this.

All other stakeholders, in the first instance please contact LLC's main switchboard **0208 774 4040** who will record your initial complaint and pass it on to a member of the Senior Management Team.

If the issue remains unresolved, a formal complaint should be instigated through LLC complaints procedure – see Stage 2 Formal Complaints.

#### Stage 2 - Formal Complaints

If your concerns are not resolved informally at stage 1, you may wish to make a formal complaint. Formal complaints should normally be made in writing by letter or email and addressed to **londonlc@londonlc.org.uk**.

Formal complaints are forwarded to the Senior Management Team for review and acknowledgement. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days of the complaint being received.

The investigating lead assigned to deal with the complaint will be named in the letter. You will also be given a date when you may expect to receive a response which is usually within our agreed service standard of 21 days from receipt of the complaint.

In order to facilitate a full investigation, the complaint may be shared with individuals named or implicated within the complaint.

The findings of the investigation will be considered, and the investigating lead will provide a response to the complaint within 21 working days. Where it is not possible to provide a formal response within 21 working days, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

The Senior Manager Officer will continuously monitor the complaint and the matter will be closed on the complaint system only when the issue has been resolved or at the end of stage 2. Access to the confidential file will be restricted.

### **Stage 3 - Appeals**

Most complaints are resolved promptly and amicably and result in service improvements, however, should the complainant wish to appeal against the outcomes of Stage 2, formal complaint, they should submit this appeal in writing, within 10 days of the stage 2 outcome to: the CEO at LLC – [s.jeffery@londonlc.org.uk](mailto:s.jeffery@londonlc.org.uk) who will acknowledge receipt, review the documentation, the investigation and the resolution to come to a judgement on the validity of the appeal. The possible judgements are:

1. Appeal rejected – the original resolution will be pursued
2. The appeal is upheld – the CEO will propose an alternative solution to the appellant.

Following the outcome of the appeals stage, a formal response will be sent to the complainant within 21 working days of receipt of the appeal.

### **Stage 4 - Final Stage Appeal to the Board of Directors**

If the original complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction after an appeal to the CEO, you may take your complaint to the Chair of LLC's Board. The Chair's decision is final and any resolution that is proposed will be implemented. The Chair will respond within 21 working days of receipt of a stage 4 appeal.

This is the final stage of LLC's complaints procedure

### **Formal Complaints – External Resolution**

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaints process, they have the opportunity to appeal to the relevant external body.

If the complaint relates to a Further Education course funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency or the Greater London Authority and the above complaints and appeals procedure has been exhausted, the complainant can contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency within three months of the complaint decision using the contact details below:

### **ESFA - [complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk)**

Or via: The Complaints Team, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton, Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT