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Complaints Policy & Procedure

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| Policy owner | Head of Quality & Compliance |
| Policy approved by | Director of Education |
| Date policy update approved | April 2025 |
| Next review date | April 2026 |
| Version number | 2.2 |
| Classification | External |

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Overview

FuturU is committed to excellence, providing a quality service that meets or exceeds its internal and external customer and stakeholder expectations. To ensure that our service meets this expectation, we actively encourage and welcome any comments our internal and external customers may care to make. We have a clearly defined complaint-handling procedure, which is reviewed regularly. We monitor and review all our complaints and outcomes to ensure we continually develop and improve our services.

Scope

This Complaints Procedure covers the delivery of both EPA and RQF provisions at FuturU. This also includes awards that are subject to external quality assurance by Ofqual. This also include SQA qualifications.

We have separate Policies for complaints about healthcare services provided in England, Scotland and Wales.

This policy supports compliance with Ofqual Conditions of Recognition. For our customers, including learners, employers, and training providers, it supports the contractual agreements and does not replace any of the requirements contained within them.

Please note that non-adherence to FuturU policies may constitute Maladministration, Malpractice and/or a breach of Contract. Please ensure all policies are read and implemented carefully.

Purpose

The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to set out the process by which a complaint can be raised and the steps we will follow to investigate and respond to the complaint.

The procedure is designed to ensure that complaints are heard and responded to in a manner that is timely, fair, transparent and based on consideration of the relevant evidence. It will safeguard, as far as reasonably possible, the interest and well-being of the learner or person making the complaint and the staff member who may be named or otherwise involved in the complaint.

We define complaints further below. We appreciate some areas in which the customers may be dissatisfied but which are better addressed by other specific policies. In particular, anyone wishing to appeal against an assessment result or decision should refer to our separate Appeals Procedure.

Please speak to our FuturU Education Team for more information and to explore which route best relates to the circumstances resulting in the dissatisfaction.

Obtaining copies of the policy

Customers can download copies of the policy from our platform or request copies from our FuturU Education Team.

Reviewing the policy

We will review this policy regularly and where otherwise necessary and may revise it as required in response to the findings of any review.

What is a Complaint?

We consider complaints as expression(s) of dissatisfaction regarding our actions or lack of action, products, services, the application of our policies and, on occasion, the outcome of a decision we have made.

Who can make a Complaint?

The customer is directly informed of or affected by our action or decision, or a customer acting on behalf of and with the explicit written permission of the apprentice or learner.

Some people may feel more comfortable making anonymous complaints. We will note these complaints and, depending on the nature of the complaint, may refer to them in support of our ongoing risk analysis and review.

Does the FuturU Educational Experience Team have to accept my complaint?

We will always listen to our customers and see if we can put things right if they have gone wrong.

If we do not agree with our customers' complaints or believe that your dissatisfaction does not constitute a complaint based on the definition set out above, we will let you know the reason(s) why.

Frivolous, meritless or vexatious complaints

We will treat every complaint fairly. We will not engage with frivolous, meritless or vexatious complaints. We will not accept persistent and repeated contacts from complainants without being presented with new information or evidence. Importantly, if complainants become abusive when corresponding with us or persistently and repeatedly contact us without pertinent new evidence or information, we will class this as vexatious correspondence. These interactions reduce the time we can dedicate to supporting our other customers. In such cases, we will advise the complainant of our decision and the action we intend to take, such as no longer corresponding with them and/ or taking any required action to protect our staff and reputation.

Making a Complaint

Outlining your complaint

The following information will help us understand the reason for your dissatisfaction:

- The full nature of the complaint (what happened);
- The date(s) the issue they are complaining about came to their attention (when it happened);
- The nature of the service affected and/or the title and number of the standard affected if relevant; and
- The contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by the Training Provider or the learner(s) relating to the issue, if relevant.

We appreciate some complaints are best submitted to us and dealt with by telephone. Please note that all of our calls are recorded and that we may review the telephone recording of your complaint for quality and training purposes.

To ensure we fully address the points in your complaint and to have a clear record of your views on what happened, it is helpful to receive the complaint in writing.

If you wish to make a formal complaint (as defined below) regarding End Point Assessment, you must do so via EPAPro. This can be done by finding the learner's assessment and clicking manage. At this stage, you must select opens for an appeal and then select complaint under the drop-down menu. A detailed guide will be provided.

All complaints relating to our Regulated Qualification Framework can be made by following the process in the Learners and Employers handbooks.

If a complaint is being raised with no access to EPAPro or the RQF process, please contact via hello@futurU.ai. However, if relating to the two provisions please follow the processes to ensure a faster response.

Where we consider a complaint to be unspecific, excessively long and/or complex, we may require a written summary of the key aspects of your complaint to make sure we understand the points to be covered.

So that we can focus on the issues you have raised, we do not normally accept changes or expansions to the complaint after submission unless we are satisfied that the information was not available at the time of the complaint. To be considered, any new information must be material to the outcome of any review or investigation we may undertake.

If, at any point our customers or apprentices wish to be legally represented in relation to any aspect of a complaint, this must be discussed with us. We reserve the right to be legally represented and to act upon legal advice.

How to Deal with Complaints

We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. Where this is not possible, we will take a staged approach to complaint escalation and resolution. Stages 1 and 2 of our Complaints Procedure are classed as informal stages. Complaints escalated to Stages 3 or 4 are classed as formal complaints.

Please see each stage below for information on how our customer's complaint will be addressed.

Stages of a complaint

Stage 1: Informal – initial complaint

The FuturU Education Team will listen to the complaint and aim to resolve it as quickly as possible. Customers can expect a response and resolution to the complaint to be conveyed by the FuturU Education Team, either by phone or in writing, within ten working days of receipt.

Where applicable, complaints should be made within ten days of the final apprenticeship or qualification assessment.

Stage 2: Informal – escalation to a Line Manager

Where it has not been possible for us to resolve the complaint at Stage 1, we will escalate it to an appropriate Line Manager, who will take action and resolve your complaint within 10 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the FuturU Education Team's response to the complaint at Stage 1, you may request that the complaint be escalated to Stage 2.

Any Stage 2 complaint must be submitted within five days of receiving the FuturU Education Team's response.

Stage 3: Formal – escalation to the Head of Quality & Compliance

If you are not satisfied with the response from the Line Manager at Stage 2, you may request the complaint be escalated to Stage 3.

Any Stage 3 complaints must be submitted in writing within 5 working days of the Stage 2 outcome. You must explain why you believe the complaint has not been resolved and/or properly addressed.

The Head of Quality & Compliance will investigate the formal complaint. If the complaint concerns the Head of Quality & Compliance, it will be escalated to the Head of Learning and Innovation

During the complaint investigation, additional information or evidence may be requested. In such cases, you will be notified in writing and given at least five working days to respond.

We will inform you in writing of the outcome of your complaint within 15 working days of receiving your formal complaint. However, in some cases where complaints are complex and require detailed investigation, it may not be possible to meet this timescale. In such cases, you will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay, and a revised time frame for a response will be provided.

If there is a genuine need for a response to be provided in a shorter timescale, you should make this clear, including the reasons, when submitting your formal complaint.

The outcomes available are as follows:

- The complaint is upheld, in whole or in part
- The complaint is rejected

You will be issued with a response in writing confirming the outcome of the investigation. We will tell you what remedy we propose if we uphold the complaint. The remedy chosen will be proportionate and appropriate to the issue being complained about and may include

- an apology and/or
- an explanation of any poor service you have received and/or
- an explanation of how a matter has been or may be rectified and/or
- recommendations to change or improve our processes or procedures.

Stage 4: Review of Outcome

If you have followed all of the escalation steps above and the complaint remains unresolved you may request a review of outcomes within ten working days of the written confirmation received following Stage 3.

We will consider Stage 4 Review of Outcome on the following grounds:

- There is evidence of procedural irregularity at Stage 3
- There is new material information available which, for valid reasons, was not provided earlier in the process
- The outcome or resolution of Stage 3 was unreasonable

The Director of Education will review the request to determine whether we have dealt with the complaint correctly and provide a response within five working days.

This stage in the complaints process is final and will complete FuturU's EPA internal complaints procedures. No further complaint on the same matter will be accepted.

Taking it Further

We hope that we can always solve the issue for our customers. However, if you are unhappy with our final response, you can refer the complaint to Ofqual.

Please note that Ofqual will only consider your complaint if you have already gone through all stages of this Complaints Procedure and remain dissatisfied with the outcome or the way in which we handled your complaint.

Ofqual will deal with complaints about

- The awarding organisation's alleged failure to comply with Ofqual regulations.
- The award of a regulated qualification by a recognised awarding organisation.
- Issues that could undermine public confidence in regulated qualifications.

Ofqual will not deal with

- Where there is an appeal process to challenge an assessment decision or a candidate's results for a qualification regulated by Ofqual.
- A school or college is appealing against an assessment decision or a candidate's results for GCSE, A level or diploma principal learning and projects.
- Matters which have already been fully investigated through their complaints policy.

To make a complaint you can use Ofqual's portal found <https://complaints.ofqual.gov.uk/>

Revision History

| Revision date | Version | Author | Revision Summary |
|---------------|---------|--------|---|
| July 2024 | 2 | HoQ&C | Updated to new template. Updated to reflect RQF/EPA/SQA. Updated with new job titles. |
| Jan 2025 | 2.1 | HoQ&C | Updated with new application process. |
| April 2025 | 2.2 | HoQ&C | Updated to new format. |

