

TICA

Complaints Policy and Procedure

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Overview of the policy

This policy is applicable to the delivery of TICA services including the provision of training and assessment, membership of the association, apprenticeships and end-point assessments (EPAs) all of which are subject to quality assurance.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this Complaints policy is to set out the steps to follow when submitting a complaint to us and should the complaint be accepted, the steps we will follow to investigate the complaint and come to a decision.

Who needs to know about the policy?

Learners, apprentices, assessors, anyone who is a recipient of our services or involved in the design, delivery, management, assessment and quality assurance of our products should be aware of, and familiar with, the contents of the policy.

This policy will be available to all interested parties via the TICA website at <https://tica-acad.co.uk/training/>

Reviewing the policy

We will review this policy regularly and where otherwise necessary, we 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, services, and the application of our policies and / or on occasion, the outcome or decision we have made.

In particular, when considering complaints, we examine whether they relate to the following on our part (our complaints criteria):

- mistakes or poor service
- unreasonable delay or failure to take action
- unprofessional behaviour or conduct
- bias or unfair treatment
- failure to follow our published policies or procedures without a reasonable explanation.

TICA has a specific policy regarding harassment and bullying, please refer to this policy if you consider your complaint is in relation to either of these issues.

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.

These types of interactions reduce the amount of time that we can dedicate to delivering our services.

How we deal with complaints

We aim to resolve all accepted complaints as quickly as possible, within 10 working days of receipt. Where this is not possible, we will take a staged approach to complaint escalation and resolution.

Stages 1 and 2 of our Complaints Policy 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 partner's complaint will be addressed.

Stages of a complaint

Stage 1: Informal – initial complaint

Initial (Stage 1) complaints should be submitted by email to hr@tica.uk.com.

The complainant can expect a response to the complaint within **10 working days** of receipt.

Where the complaint specifically relates to End-point assessment the complaint must be made within **10 days** of the final apprenticeship assessment.

Outlining your complaint

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

- the full nature of the complaint (what happened)
- the date(s) the issue you are complaining about came to your attention (when it happened)
- the impact / effects of the issue (what was the result)

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.

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 action and attempt to resolve your complaint within a further **10 working days**.

Any Stage 2 complaint must be submitted within **5 working days** of the receipt of the Stage 1 TICA response.

Stage 3: Formal – escalation to TICA CEO

Where it has not been possible for us to resolve the complaint at Stage 2, we will escalate it to the TICA CEO who will action and attempt to resolve the complaint within **10 working days**.

Any Stage 3 complaints must be submitted in writing, within **5 working days** of the Stage 2 outcome being given. Information must be provided as to why they believe the complaint has not been resolved and / or properly addressed.

The TICA CEO will determine whether we have applied our procedures fairly, appropriately, consistently and in line with our policy.

We will inform the complainant in writing of the decision within **5 working days** of the decision being made.

Stage 4: Formal – escalation to a member of Governing Council

If the complainant followed all of the escalation steps above and the complaint remains unresolved, we will escalate the complaint to a member of Governing Council.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Stage 3 response, they may request the complaint be escalated. They must do so in writing, within **5 working days** of the Stage 3 outcome being given to them. Complainants must outline why they believe the complaint has not been resolved and / or properly addressed.

The member of Governing Council appointed will consider the evidence from all aspects of the complaint to date and the actions we have taken to resolve it, to determine whether we have dealt with the complaint correctly and fairly.

We aim to resolve any complaint lodged with the member of Governing Council within **10 working days**. We will inform the complainant in writing of the decision within **1 working day** of the decision being made.

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

If further escalation is requested in the case of queries or complaints regarding apprenticeships please contact the ESFA Apprenticeship Service Support on 08000 150 600 or helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk

Exceptions to stated timescales

The timescales relating to each stage of the complaints process are outlined above. Please note that in some cases, particularly where the complaint may be complex, the complaint may take longer than the stated working days to investigate and / or resolve. In such instances, we will advise you of the reasons why and of the revised timescale.

Outcome of a complaint

If we uphold the complaint, we will tell the complainant what remedy we propose. The remedy chosen will be proportionate and appropriate to the issue being complained about and may include:

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

Mandatory disclosure and confidentiality

Mandatory disclosures

It is imperative that the integrity of assessment is maintained; for example, by ensuring learners who are awarded a certificate have a legitimate right to that certificate.

Depending on the seriousness of the matter, we may be required to declare to our regulators (e.g. Ofqual) that we are no longer compliant with the requirements of the General Conditions of Recognition, due to an act or omission by our partners which has put us in breach. In this event, we may have regulatory action directed against us, such as Monetary Penalties.

Confidentiality

We may need to access confidential information. We will ensure that such information is kept secure and only used for the purposes of the investigation and in line with relevant data protection legislation. We will not normally disclose the information to third parties unless required to do so, e.g. to our Regulators and / or the Police or other relevant and / or Statutory Bodies.

Approved by Marion Marsland CEO

Date

Review date June 2022