



TICA

Complaints Policy and Procedure 2023



COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Overview of the policy

This policy covers the delivery of TICA services including the provision of training and assessment, 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. TICA welcomes all feedback, both positive and negative, as we view this as an opportunity to inform and shape service delivery.

Who needs to know about the policy?

Learners, apprentices, staff, employers and assessors who are either 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.

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
- standard of our facilities or resources
- failure to follow our published policies or procedures without a reasonable explanation.



Who can make a complaint?

Learners are encouraged to make a complaint personally. Complaints can also be made by a third party on behalf of a learner. This includes parents or employers. In these circumstances, to comply with GDPR, a complaint will only be considered if express written permission is provided by the learner authorizing the third party to act on their behalf.

If an issue affects a number of individuals, a complaint can also be made by a group of learners. Names of all learners affected and involved in the complaint must be given. A nominated person from the group is required to act as a spokesperson for the group and all correspondence will be communicated via the spokesperson who will be required to liaise with the other parties involved.

Frivolous, meritless, anonymous or vexatious complaints

We will treat every complaint fairly, impartially and in a timely manner. Investigations will be conducted with transparency.

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.

Anonymous complaints will not be considered. Our policy requires the full name and contact details of the complainant to be provided to allow us to comprehensively investigate and respond to issues raised.

Abusive or threatening behaviour towards staff when making, or during the investigation of, a complaint will not be tolerated.

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

How we deal with complaints

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days and advise you of who is dealing with your complaint. 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 and keep the complainant apprised of the new deadline, explaining the reasons for the delay.

Complaints regarding safeguarding matters will be dealt with in accordance with IETT Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Stage 1 is classed as an informal stage. Complaints escalated to Stages 2, 3 or 4 are classed as formal complaints.

Please see each stage below for information on how complaint will be addressed.



Stages of a complaint

Stage 1: Informal – initial complaint

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

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

Where the complaint specifically relates to the End Point Assessment, the complaint must be made within **10 working days** of the final apprenticeship assessment. Appeals relating to the assessment grade must be made within **5 working days** of receipt of the grade.

Outlining your complaint

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

- the full nature of the complaint (what happened), including any relevant evidence to support the complaint
- 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)
- the resolution you would like to achieve

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.

If a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, the formal complaints procedure will be followed.



Stage 2: Formal

Where it has not been possible for us to resolve the complaint at Stage 1, or if the complaint is of a complex and serious nature, we will escalate it to an appropriate Manager who will investigate and respond to your complaint **10 working days** from the escalation date. The complainant will receive a response in writing.

Any Stage 2 complaint must be submitted, in writing (email), within **5 working days** of the receipt of the TICA response to the Stage 1 complaint.

Stage 3: Formal – escalation to an appointed Senior Manager

Where it has not been possible for us to resolve the complaint at Stage 2, we will escalate it to an appointed Senior Manager who will investigate and resolve the complaint within **10 working days**. The complainant will receive a response in writing.

Any Stage 3 complaints must be submitted in writing (email), 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 Senior Manager will determine whether we have applied our procedures fairly, appropriately, consistently and in line with our policy.

Stage 4: Formal – escalation to the TICA Head of Learning

If the complainant followed all of the escalation steps above and is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage 3 response, we will escalate the complaint to the TICA Head of Learning.

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

The TICA CEO 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 Stage 4 complaint within **10 working days**. The complainant will be informed of the decision in writing.

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.



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 write to you to advise 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

Complaints will be handled with confidentiality. The information shared within the complaint will only be disclosed to people required to be aware of it in order to investigate the complaint.

As part of our investigation, 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.