

LEARNER & CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS POLICY PROSPECT TRAINING SERVICES



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Mandatory User Notes

The requirements in this document are mandatory. A controlled copy of the current version of this document is located in Staff Essentials:

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Before using or referencing this document, it is the User's responsibility to ensure that the hard or electronic copy in his/her possession is current. The Document Owner should be contacted for assistance and any feedback.

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24/10/2024	02	Quality Manager	Abbey Wicks	

Revision Details			
Revision	Changes	Page	Date of changes
24/10/24	Removed reference to Apprenticeships	6	24/10/24

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1. Introduction

1.1 Policy Statement

This policy provides details of how we, Prospect Training Services, will deal with complaints made by individuals or organisations about us. This policy will tell you:

- What sort of complaint does this policy cover?
- How and when should you make a complaint to us?
- Who will deal with your complaint?
- How will we deal with your complaint?
- What can you expect from us in response to your complaint?
- What if you're not happy with our response?
- What principles will we apply when dealing with your complaint?

2. Policy Scope

This policy is intended to offer advice and guidance to people who wish to make a complaint to us or those that may be advising others on our complaints policy.

This policy should also be read and followed by any PTS staff who are receiving, investigating, or responding to complaints.

This policy covers formal complaints about us, Prospect Training Services

3 Policy Elements

We define a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction with what we do that cannot be dealt with quickly or easily by our customer support team. (By 'quickly and easily' we mean where a specific issue can be put right straight away, and you have no further issues or concerns.)

These might be complaints about:

- Our failure to carry out our statutory functions
- Our failure to provide a service, poor service, or avoidable delays on our part
- The conduct of our staff (such as rudeness, unhelpfulness or incompetence)

Our complaints team will also deal with any request for compensation or claims relating to losses that you feel we are responsible for.

We will consider every complaint on a case-by-case basis. If we're not able to deal with a complaint, we will explain why and tell you what we will do instead. If appropriate, we will offer advice on where else the complaint could be submitted.

If your complaint relates to matters that have become the subject of legal proceedings, that are under police investigation, or that relate to an ongoing PTS investigation, we may defer the investigation of your complaint until these matters are complete. We will always tell you if we are deferring your complaint and explain our reasons for doing so.

The best ways to make a complaint are explained on our website at:

www.prospect-training.org.uk

Ideally, complaints should be submitted through the 'Contact Us' link on our website using the phrase 'Formal Complaint' so that it reaches our complaints team promptly.

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Complaints can also be made by post to:

Complaints Manager
Prospect Training Services
C4 Brunel Court
Waterwells Business Park
Brunet Ct
Quedgeley
Gloucester
GL2 2AL

Complaints made through social media will receive a response directing you to the contact details on our website.

Complaints should be made by or on behalf of a named individual or group of individuals (this includes companies and other body corporates). We may not agree to investigate a complaint that is made anonymously.

Complaints should be made within six months of you becoming aware of the incident or problem, so we have the best chance of being able to investigate the facts. We can't promise to be able to resolve a complaint submitted more than six months after the incident or problem occurred.

4 Who will deal with your complaint

If our staff, for example Employment Advisor (EA) or Learning Support Officer (LSO, or your tutor/assessor, are not able to resolve the problem quickly and easily, your complaint will be dealt with by our Quality Manager

The Quality Manager is responsible for:

- acknowledging complaints
- co-ordinating any investigation that may be required and ensuring that it is carried out in line with this policy.; and
- responding to complaints (or making sure appointed colleagues respond to complaints) in line with this policy

Sensitive complaints (for example, complaints involving senior staff or allegations of corruption) may be handled at a more senior level.

Senior PTS staff (senior managers, deputy directors, or the Managing Director) will be responsible for carrying out internal reviews (see **What if you're not happy with our response?** below). The person conducting the internal review may appoint review officers from anywhere within the organisation.

5 How will we deal with your complaint ?

All complaints are different, but this is the basic procedure we will follow once we have received your complaint and confirmed that it should be dealt with in line with this policy:

1. We will send you an acknowledgement telling you what we will do next. We aim to do this within three working days of your complaint reaching our complaints team.

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2. We will then check to see if there are any urgent or immediate issues that need resolving. If there are, we will do our best to deal with these straight away.
3. We will then investigate your complaint to find out what went wrong and what else needs to be done to put things right.
4. We will provide a full written response to your complaint within **20 working days (four weeks)** of the date we send our acknowledgement.

6 What can you expect from us in response to your complaint?

If we find that we have made mistakes or that there have been errors or avoidable delays on our part:

- We will apologise.
- We will explain what went wrong and what we have done to put things right.
- Where appropriate, we will tell you what we have done to stop the problem occurring in the future.

If we find that we are not at fault, or that the problems were not caused by us:

- We will explain what we have done and why we have done it.
- We will explain how the problem occurred as far as we can tell.
- We will tell you anything that you can do to resolve the problem or avoid it happening in the future.

7 What if you're not happy with our response?

If you're not happy with our response you can ask for an internal review by contacting us as detailed previously in Section 3.

You should make clear why you are dissatisfied with the response we have provided. This will help us to make sure we address your remaining concerns during our review.

The review will be carried out by a senior member of PTS staff.

We aim to provide our reviewed response within **20 working days (four weeks)** of the date we acknowledge your request for a review.

If you are still not satisfied following an internal review, you will be able to take your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman (PHSO) by speaking to your local MP. The PHSO will expect you to have completed our internal complaints process before they will accept your case.

You can find the contact details for your local MP here:

<https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons>.

More information about the PHSO can be found here: www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint.

If you are a customer attending one of our DWP programmes and are unhappy with the way that your complaint has been dealt with, you can contact the Independent Case Examiner by using one of the following methods.

The Independent Case Examiner

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PO Box 209
Bootle
L20 7WA

Email ice@dwp.gov.uk

Telephone 0800 414 8529

Fax 0151 221 6601

Telephone from outside the UK +44 151 221 6500

NGT text relay – if you cannot hear or speak on the phone 18001 then 0800 414 8529

8 What principles will we apply when dealing with your complaint?

When we investigate and respond to complaints, we will use the following principles:

Fairness: complaints will be handled fairly, objectively and in confidence. PTS staff who are the subject of a complaint will be given an opportunity to respond. We will provide a balanced response and, when we have done something wrong, we will say so.

Promptness: We will make sure that urgent issues are looked into as soon as possible. We will provide you with an update once a problem is resolved. We will then aim to provide a full response to your complaint within 20 working days (four weeks).

Transparency: We will tell you the outcome of any investigation and give our reasons for the decision to uphold or dismiss your complaint. If we can't tell you something, we will explain why and refer to any relevant legislation (e.g., Data Protection Act).

Helpfulness: We will give you clear information about anything that you need to do to resolve your issue and about your options if you are dissatisfied with our response.

Responsiveness: When possible, we will do all we can to make sure that any problems you encountered won't happen again. We will tell you about any actions we have taken to improve our processes, procedures, or services as a result of your complaint.

9 Persistent or unreasonable complaints?

We welcome any feedback about the quality of our service, and we are committed to offering a fair complaints process.

We may consider a complaint to be unreasonable in some circumstances. This may be:

- When a complaint is persistently pursued after our complaint's procedure has been fully exhausted and the person making the complaint has been advised to seek a referral to the Parliamentary Ombudsman.
- Where the complaint is identical or substantially similar to a previous complaint made by or on behalf of the same person.
- When the complaint has the effect of harassment, or when the behaviour of the person making the complaint can be fairly characterised as obsessive or manifestly unreasonable.
- When the subject matter of the complaint is, or has been, the subject of legal proceedings.

The decision as to whether a complaint is considered unreasonable will be made by a senior manager.

We reserve the right to deal with complaints that are considered to be unreasonable by:

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- Limiting communication with the person making the complaint to just one form and to one point of contact.
- Confirming to the person making the complaint in writing that the investigation/review is complete, that continued correspondence will serve no purpose and that no further action in response to their complaints.
- If there is continued contact by telephone, the member of staff receiving the call will be authorised to bring the conversation to an end by explaining that the case has been closed and, if necessary, by terminating the call.

10 Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed every 2 years

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