



# **Complaints Policy & Process**

**February 2021**

## AMENDMENTS

Serial	Authority/Reference/Detail	Date Amended	By Whom Amended
1	Amended to reflect new Pearson TQ branding	17/3/17	Neil Saunders
2	Re-write policy and procedure	27/03/2019	Tina Hutchinson
2.1	Amended as part of annual review	28/03/2019	Neil Saunders
2.2	Amended as part of annual review	23/04/2019	Tina Hutchinson
3	Review by independent Advisor	27/09/2019	Olga Bottomley
4	Annual review – hyperlinks updated where appropriate	18/02/2021	Neil Saunders
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# Contents

1.	Policy Statement	4
2.	Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation	4
3.	Objectives	4
4.	Scope of Complaint Procedure	4
5.	Definitions	5
6.	Guide to making a complaint	5
6.1	Informal resolution of complaints	5
6.2	Formal Procedure	5
6.3	How to Complain	6
7.	Review of the Complaints Policy and Procedure	7
8.	Other related policies, procedures	7
	ANNEX A	7
	ANNEX B	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

# Complaints Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed by apprentices and staff, undertaking a Pearson TQ<sup>1</sup> Apprenticeship Scheme who have an issue or dispute with the services outlined herein. This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

## 2. Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

At Pearson TQ we are committed to providing a high quality service to our apprentices and staff. We will deal with legitimate complaints in a fair, prompt and objective manner. Complaints will be dealt with without recrimination and no individual will be disadvantaged by raising a complaint. It is the overall responsibility of Pearson TQ Senior Management Team for the effective operation of this policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Senior Quality Manager.

We will be fair in the treatment of all those who complain irrespective of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics and whilst socio-economic background is not a legally protected characteristic, Pearson TQ is committed to combating any discrimination on this basis and recognises the harm that discrimination has in terms of an individual's access to equality of opportunity). Complaints will be dealt with promptly and constructively. All complaints will be dealt with in confidence but shared with any person who may be the subject of a complaint. The outcomes of any complaint will be shared with the complainant and any staff involved. Complaints made which, on investigation, turn out to be malicious, may result in disciplinary action. Pearson TQ's Senior Quality Manager will be responsible for the management of the Complaints Policy and all apprentices will be informed whom the Senior Quality Manager is.

## 3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to provide a process to resolve individual complaints in a way which is as fair, prompt and constructive as possible.

## 4. Scope of Complaint Procedure

The procedure deals with complaints arising from:

1. Delivery (or lack of delivery) of services for education and training including teaching, course content, tutoring, assessment, feedback on progress and apprentice support during their Apprenticeship Scheme facilitated by Pearson TQ.

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<sup>1</sup>TQ Education and Training Limited's brand is 'Pearson TQ' as it is part of Pearson plc Group.

2. Incorrect or misleading information about the services provided by the Apprenticeship Scheme facilitated by Pearson TQ.
3. Delivery (or lack of delivery) of support services provided by the Apprenticeship Scheme facilitated by Pearson TQ including administration of fees, enrolment processes, accommodation, health and safety and learner resource services.
4. Unacceptable actions or behaviour by staff and/or apprentices running the Apprenticeship Scheme.
5. Unacceptable actions or behaviours by assessment centre staff and/or apprentices in the Assessment Centres.

## 5. Definitions

An 'Informal complaint' is defined as an issue which the complainant wishes to raise with the appropriate member of staff, without using the formal complaints process. Informal complaints are typically quick to resolve and unlikely to require an in-depth investigation.

A 'Complaint' is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction which the complainant wishes to raise with the Quality Manager (See section 4 - Scope of Complaint Procedure).

An 'Appeal' is a request for a review of a decision made by a member of staff, Pearson TQ or an awarding body charged with making decisions about an assessment decision, the conduct or outcome of external quality assurance visits that they regard as unfair or inadequate. The procedure for Appeals is detailed in Pearson TQ's Appeals Policy.

## 6. Guide to making a complaint

The process for raising a complaint is detailed below:

### 6.1 Informal resolution of complaints

Most complaints should be able to be resolved by discussion between the complainant and the appropriate member of staff. The initial complaint may be made orally or in writing and the member of staff receiving the complaint should make a response within 10 working days, orally or in writing. It is expected that staff are tactful and courteous in dealing with a complaint. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received, they should then be guided to using the formal procedure.

### 6.2 Formal Procedure

A formal complaint should be made in writing within 15 working days of an incident or action from which the complaint arises, or from the date when the complainant received an oral or written reply to an informal complaint (see above). In exceptional circumstances, a longer period will be considered. The complaint should be sent to Pearson TQ's Senior Quality Manager. If the complaint involves the Senior Quality Manager an alternative senior manager will be appointed to manage the process. The complaint will be logged, and its receipt will be acknowledged to the complainant within 5 working days.

The Senior Quality Manager will carry out an initial assessment of the complaint within 5 working days. In most cases, complaints will be referred to the appropriate staff for investigation and report. More serious or unusual complaints will be investigated personally by the Senior Quality Manager.

An appropriate Apprenticeship Scheme manager will carry out an investigation of the complaint and may interview the complainant; the respondent; witnesses to the matter or events; and anyone they believe may have a role in establishing or disproving the complaint, as necessary. They will prepare a summary and report back to the Senior Quality Manager within 10 working days of the initial assessment.

The Senior Quality Manager will record the outcome of the complaint and either arrange a meeting to deliver the outcome or notify all those involved in writing as appropriate. All outcomes will be confirmed in writing to all those involved.

If the complaint involves an apprentice, they will be offered support at the meeting. All apprentices will be encouraged to bring a supporter to the interview. Vulnerable Adults and those under 16 years of age must have the support of their care worker, or a person of their choice, who can act as their advocate and the Senior Quality Manager must be informed.

The formal complaint should be resolved within 25 working days of the receipt of the original formal complaint. If it appears that a decision will not be reached within the due period, those involved will be advised of the need for a longer period.

The decision made will be final but this does not affect an individual's legal rights.

Complaints about an awarding body or its representatives are to be submitted by the Pearson TQ Quality Manager in accordance with the policies and procedures of the awarding body concerned.

In the event of any queries or complaints remaining unsolved, an Apprentice may seek assistance from the National Apprenticeship Helpline which can be contacted by telephone – 0800 015 0400 or via email to: [nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk).

## 6.3 How to Complain

Complaints must be made in writing to Pearson TQ's Senior Quality Manager, Neil Saunders.

Pearson TQ  
80 Strand  
London  
WC2R 0RL

Support can be made available for all those involved in a complaint including:

1. Representation: parent, guardian, friend or supporter
2. Help with completing the Written Complaint

Induction will provide further details regarding this process.

## 7. Review of the Complaints Policy and Procedure

Once a year the Pearson TQ's Senior Management Team will review the Complaints Policy and Procedure to include:

1. Number of complaints of each type
2. Time taken to process complaints
3. List of outstanding complaints
4. Outcomes to complaints
5. Results of appeals

Analysis of complaints and outcomes by age, gender and ethnicity of complainant if changes are required the Complaints Policy will be rewritten and all staff and learners will be informed. A record of all complaints for 3 years will be available to the relevant authorities for audit purposes.

## 8. Other related policies, procedures

This policy is in addition to other Pearson Policies and best practice documents:

1. [Pearson plc's Global Code of Conduct](#) (Annex A)
2. Pearson TQ Appeals Policy
3. Learner Discipline Process

# Annexes

## ANNEX A

[Pearson plc's Global Code of Conduct](#)