

Skillsfirst Assess

Complaints Policy

March 2021

v4

Complaints policy

Introduction

This policy is aimed at any individual or organisation involved in the delivery of a standard where Skillsfirst Assess are providing the End-point Assessment (EPA).

This includes employers, providers and apprentices and covers any complaints these individuals or organisations may wish to make.

It does not cover:

- appeals in relation to decisions made by Skillsfirst, which is covered by our Appeals Policy, or
- any complaint about possible malpractice or maladministration, which is covered by our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Review arrangements

We will review the policy and its associated procedures annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary. In addition, we shall review the outcomes of any complaints and make changes to our policies and procedures where necessary.

Approach

We value our customers and endeavour to provide a high-quality service at all times. We would be extremely disappointed if this is not the case.

Therefore, it is important that should you feel you have encountered a level of service that is below expectations, you raise any concerns you may have with us immediately so that we may address them and learn lessons.

How to make a complaint?

Each member of the EPA division has been trained to provide support to our customers. In the first instance, you should try to resolve any problem at the earliest opportunity by speaking to your Lead Independent Assessor (LIEA). If they cannot help, or you wish to speak to someone else, you can ask to speak to the relevant Head of Assessment Services.

If you are not satisfied with the response or you wish to escalate your complaint, you should email the completed form at the end of this policy to enquiries@skillsfirstassess.co.uk. You should do this normally within 20 working days of the event you are complaining about.

If I submit a formal complaint what details do I need to provide?

In order to submit a formal complaint, you will need to include all of the details requested on the complaint form at the end of this policy.

Complaints brought to our attention by an External Quality Assurance (EQA) Body

Where one of the EQA bodies notifies Skillsfirst Assess of a complaint about our assessment arrangements that it has received, we will follow the same process as any other complaint.

If Skillsfirst Assess is notified of a failure that has been discovered in the assessment process of another End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) via a complaint, we will review our procedures in accordance with this policy to ascertain if the same failure could affect our arrangements.

Confidentiality and whistle blowing

Sometimes a complainant will wish to remain anonymous. Although it is always preferable to reveal your identity and contact details to us, if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences, you may request us not to divulge your identity. If it helps to reassure you on this point, we can confirm that we are not obliged to disclose information, if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

Whilst we are prepared to investigate issues which are reported to us anonymously, we shall always try to confirm a complaint by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those to whom the complaint relates. At all times we will investigate such complaints from whistle blowers in accordance with relevant whistle blowing legislation and guidance.

What will happen to my complaint?

Skillsfirst Assess will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days.

We aim to investigate the complaint within 10 working days. If your complaint is more complex, or involves people who are not available at the time, we may extend this and will let you know an expected response date. We may contact you within this period to seek further information or clarification (in some instances we may recommend a meeting). At the end of the investigation, we shall inform you of the outcome of your complaint in writing.

What happens if my complaint is upheld?

If any part of your complaint is upheld, we shall of course apologise and give due consideration as to how we can improve our service and arrangements, for example, by amending our procedures or arranging for staff training.

In situations where a complaint has been successful, or where an investigation indicates a failure in our assessment processes we will, as appropriate, take actions such as:

- informing the relevant quality assurance body/regulator (where required) if an apprentice's assessment has been affected
- identifying any other apprentice who has been affected by that failure
- correcting or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigating as far as possible the effect of the failure, and
- ensuring that the failure does not recur in the future.

What if I am not happy with the reply?

If you disagree with the decision, please write to us explaining the reasons. This will be reviewed by a senior member of staff who will consult with others as necessary. That outcome will be final unless the complaint is about a matter that can be appealed.

If you wish to appeal under the jurisdiction of our appeals policy, please follow the arrangements which are outlined in our [Appeals Policy](#).

Contact us

To submit a complaint, please complete the form in Appendix 1 and email it to the Skillsfirst Assess Support Team at: enquiries@skillsfirstassess.co.uk or post it to Skillsfirst Assess, Suite 416, Fort Dunlop, Fort Parkway, Birmingham, B24 9FD.

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy or wish to give feedback, please contact the relevant Head of Assessment Services on 0121 270 5100 option 3.

Appendix 1

Skillsfirst Assess complaint form

Is this a 'Whistle blower' complaint?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Name of the organisation (if relevant)

Contact details including name, address, telephone number and email address (if applicable)

Which of the following does the complaint relate to?

Results / Grading

☐

Fees

☐

Independent End-point Assessor

☐

Funding

☐

Lead Independent End-point Assessor

☐

Inaccurate / inappropriate advice

☐

Training Provider

☐

Publications / materials

☐

Employer

☐

Customer service

☐

Skillsfirst Website

☐

XAMS

☐

GDPR

☐

Other

☐

If other, please state

Please tick standard your complaint relates to

Customer Service Practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment Resourcer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Years Educator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment Consultant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Years Practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team Leader or Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lead Practitioner in Adult Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operations or Departmental Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leader in Adult Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult Care Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lead Adult Care Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick the statement (s) that best represents you

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| I am a staff member at the training provider | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am a staff member at the employer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am an apprentice | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am complaining on behalf of an apprentice (s) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If other, please specify

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Has this complaint been raised with any other party prior to raising it with us? If so, provide details of the complaint, including who it was to, when it was submitted and what was the outcome.

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Provide details of the complaint (including what it is about and when and where it occurred)

Date: