



Complaints Policy and Process

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Policy Statement:

Total People is committed to delivering the best possible learning experience for apprentices/learners, employers, and stakeholders. Feedback from across our colleagues, apprentices/learners, employers and partners helps us to constantly review and act upon opportunities to improve, to share best practice, and to constantly strive to do better.

Total People is dedicated to creating an open and honest environment where apprentices/learners, stakeholders, visitors and employers are encouraged to provide formal and informal feedback when things go well, and to have clarity on what they need to do when they are unhappy with the service being provided and they want to make a complaint.

Scope:

This policy outlines what any apprentice/learner, employer, stakeholder, parent, or visitor needs to do in order to make a complaint to Total People about the service it or one of its subcontractors provides.

Within the scope of this policy, we will review our delivery or performance of

- The quality, management, or experience on Total People programmes
- Issues with delays in handling or administering learner programmes and / or progress
- How Total People colleagues conduct themselves and / or the approach we take to recruitment, training delivery, or assessment / exams and end point assessment
- Equality and Diversity issues

Separate policies are in place and made available to apprentices/learners and employers covering practice in relation to exams, marking and assessment, behaviour and conduct (learners), Staff Code of Conduct, and Staff Disciplinary. Issues identified or raised relating to these will be handled under the appropriate policy.

This Complaints Policy and Process is published on Total People's website and Total People's internal Hub. The policy is shared with all colleagues through induction training. Updates to policies are also communicated through email communications, monthly newsletters, cluster meetings and all colleague calls.

This policy is reviewed bi-annually, or in response to updates and changes to any relevant legislation and guidance, whichever is sooner.

Legislation, Guidance and Relevant Policies:

This policy is aligned to the guidance issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency 'Complaints about post 16 provision funded by ESFA, published in November 2018.

If you are reading this policy online you can access this guidance by [clicking here](#). Alternatively, if you would like assistance to access this guidance please speak to your Learning Coach, or usual point of contact at Total People.

Total People colleagues must read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below and ensure that they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities within each of these:

- Staff Code of Conduct

- Exams Policy
- Malpractice Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Marking, Assessment and Appeals Policy
- Plagiarism and Collusion Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Capability Policy

Roles and Responsibilities:

Managing Director

- Receives the Quarterly Complaints Report, providing scrutiny and reassurance
- Reports to the Executive Board in line with Governance requirements
- Ensures adherence to this policy at Organisational level

Deputy Managing Director & Senior Leadership Team

- Reviews the Quarterly Complaints Report, instigating the relevant and appropriate improvement activities at organisational level
- Ensures that the appropriate support (e.g. CPD) and relevant policies (e.g. disciplinary) are enacted to ensure that all issues relating to complaints are fully resolved
- Accountable to the Managing Director for quality of the service and provision
- Reports to SLT informal complaint activity

Complaint Manager / Quality Manager

- Oversees implementation of this policy at an operational level
- Ensures that complaints are being effectively resolved, and escalates any issues with complaint handling to the appropriate Director / Deputy Managing Director
- Provides support and guidance to the Corporate Services Team on administering the complaints process
- Produces a quarterly report on complaints for the SLT
- Supports cluster managers to develop CPD and improvement plans for Learning Coaches
- Produces the complaint tracker and shared folders for complaint correspondence, and manages access in line with GDPR policies
- Supports managers to articulate responses to complaints and creates standard templates, to help managers to respond to complaints effectively and efficiently

Corporate Services Team

- Receive complaints via email, telephone or in writing and allocate to both a complaint handler, and notify the complaint manager
- Updates the central complaint tracker
- Ensures that all complaints are acknowledged
- Ensures that all complaint correspondence is stored in the central complaints management folder

Cluster Managers

- Reviews handling of informal complaints and feedback received via Learning Coaches
- Ensures that the appropriate support (e.g. CPD) and relevant policies (e.g. disciplinary) are enacted to ensure that all issues relating to complaints are fully resolved

- Reviews the Quarterly Complaints Report for their cluster, instigating the relevant and appropriate improvement activities at organisational level
- Accountable to the Deputy Managing Director for quality of the service and provision

All Total People Employees

- Read, understand and fully implement responsibilities within this policy, and all related policies
- Promote professional conduct/behaviour in all working practices
- Be able to advise a learner or employer in how to raise a complaint should they so wish
- Challenge conduct/behaviour, which is not aligned to this Policy, escalating concerns to your line manager where appropriate

Subcontractors:

Total People's partnership team are responsible for completing required due diligence checks and for the on-going monitoring of quality & compliance. Subcontractors will have their own policies and procedures in relation to complaints but are also expected to comply with Total People Policy.

Subcontractor roles & responsibilities:

- Complaints Policy and procedures in place and available to learners through their induction programme, the partners website, and visible in physical centres
- The policy should detail:
 - The policy review cycle, including who is responsible for update and sign off
 - The last and next review date, and the version number
 - How implementation of the policy will be monitored and continuously improved

Data Collection, Analysis, and Continuous Improvement:

Total People understand that continuous improvement is vital to effective practice. We do this by:

- Ensuring that sufficient data is captured to enable identification of best practice
- Gathering learner feedback, including complaints, which enables the identification of best practice and drives decision making relating to our offer and delivery
- Gather feedback from employers, subcontractors and stakeholders which enable improvements to be made
- Reviewing the quarterly report on complaints and acting on recommendations

Complaint Process:

Stage 1 (Informal)

If you have an issue with some aspect of Total People's delivery, please raise this in the first instance with the person you deem to be your main contact. In most cases, for example, this will be your Learning Coach.

At this stage, your complaint could be raised as part of a discussion, an email exchange, or a comment card in one of our centres. It will usually be handled by your learning coach or usual contact, unless the complaint is about them.

If you do not have a usual point of contact, or the complaint relates to your usual point of contact, it should be submitted to Total People in writing or over the telephone using the following details:

- Email: enquiries@totalpeople.co.uk
- Phone: 0161 674 6000
- Post: Total People, Group House, King Street, Middlewich CW10 9LZ

The time for responding to complaints at Stage 1 is 5 working days, but should usually be less.

Stage 2 (Formal Complaint)

If the complaint is unresolved through following the steps at Stage 1, then a complaint should be submitted in writing, or given over the phone to:

- Email: enquiries@totalpeople.co.uk
- Phone: 0161 674 6000
- Post: Total People, Group House, King Street, Middlewich CW10 9LZ

Please include details of:

- Your full name
- Apprentice/learner number (where known)
- Contact details
- What the complaint is about
- Details of how you have raised the complaint informally (to whom, in what format, and what response you got)
- What solution to the issue do you see
- Any documentary evidence

Your complaint will usually be reviewed at this stage by your cluster or operations manager, depending on the nature of the complaint.

Your complaint at this stage should be acknowledged within 2 working days and investigated and responded to in writing within 10 working days. If the handling manager requires further time to fully investigate your complaint, they will write to you to advise you of this prior to the end of the 10-working day period.

Stage 3 (Appeal)

If you wish to appeal the complaint response at Stage 2 then you must write (or email) to inform Total People of this within 10 working days of the issue of the Stage 2 response. The appeal request must clearly explain the reason(s) for appeal and will only be considered if the complainant can evidence one or more of the following:

- Any aspect of the original complaint was not investigated
- The investigation findings do not match the outcome
- There is new evidence which was not reasonably available at the time of the original complaint investigation

- Total People's complaints process was not followed

At appeal stage, the Complaint Manager will appoint an Appeal Manager, which will usually be an Operations Manager or Director, depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint.

Your complaint at this stage should be acknowledged within 2 working days and investigated and responded to in writing within 10 working days. If the Appeal Manager requires further time to fully investigate your complaint, they will ensure that you are written to you to advise you of this and a new deadline prior to the end of the 10-working day period.

If you are unhappy with an apprenticeship and have not been satisfied with the outcome of following Total Peoples complaints procedure above, then you can contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) directly and raise your concerns with them.

How to complain to the ESFA

- The ESFA will only accept complaints in writing, by email or letter.
- If you have difficulties in providing details in writing or if you are under 18, they will consider complaints made on your behalf by a third party. You will need to confirm that they can communicate with that third party on your behalf. If the complaint is on behalf of more than one person, the ESFA will need written permission from everyone.
- You should email complaints to complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk, or put them in a letter to:
Customer Service Team,
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT

The ESFA will acknowledge the complaint within 5 days.

If you are still unsatisfied after the ESFA has responded, then you can write to the complaints adjudicator to decide on the case.

Complaint Conduct

Complaints should be raised within twelve months of the original issue so that evidence is available for the investigation. Any complaint received after this period will not be investigated.

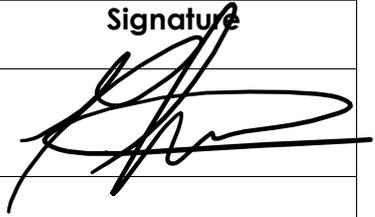
Learners should be aware that malicious complaints received in any form will result in disciplinary action (i.e. complaints that are not true, use of foul language in any communication that are sent to colleagues).

All complainants should be aware that colleagues have the right to work in a pleasant and safe environment and any violent or abusive behaviour towards colleagues will not be tolerated.

Signatures & Review:

This policy is published on Total People's website and Total People's internal Hub. The policy is shared with all colleagues through induction training and mandatory annual refresher training. Updates to policies are also communicated through email communications, monthly newsletters, cluster meetings and all colleague calls.

This policy is reviewed annually.

	Name	Position	Signature
Approver:	Melanie Nicholson	Managing Director Total People	
Version:	Version 2.1		