

APPRENTICE AND EMPLOYER COMPLAINTS POLICY 2022-24

Our Vision

“To inspire a new generation of Engineers.”

Our Mission

“LRTT’s Apprenticeship Centre’s Mission is to provide exceptional management for the education, training and assessment for every student through an organisation wide commitment to an application of four core values.”

Our Values

Four core values	
<p>C1 Excellence Apprentices and staff are dedicated to great learning; learning that is consistently high quality, relevant and focused on outcomes.</p> <p>Everything we do is designed to deliver what both apprentices and employers need.</p>	<p>C2 Ambition Ambition is part of our DNA as an organisation. We are always looking for ways to grow and develop what we do for the benefit of our apprentices.</p> <p>All our apprentices receive support to develop and achieve their ambitions.</p> <p>Our staff have high aspirations for every apprentice and for themselves.</p> <p>They are encouraged to be bold and creative in their work.</p>
<p>C4 Collaboration Apprentices and staff work together to achieve success.</p> <p>We work closely with employers and other partners; drawing in outside expertise to help us secure better outcomes for apprentices.</p>	<p>C3 Opportunity Everyone is given the best possible opportunities to learn and be successful.</p> <p>Each apprentice and every member of staff is treated as an individual and with respect.</p>

Introduction

LRTT is committed to delivering a high quality service and takes feedback from both apprentices and employers very seriously. It is the aim of LRTT to settle complaints promptly, fairly and courteously in the best interest of all parties, and to address areas where improvement is needed. LRTT is keen to ensure that the interests and well-being of all those associated with a complaint are properly safeguarded. LRTT aims to handle complaints in a manner which:

- encourages informal conciliation nearest to the source of the complaint,
- is efficient and fair,
- treats complaints with appropriate seriousness, sympathy and confidentiality,
- facilitates early resolution,
- where relevant, ensures that LRTT practice improves as a result.

For effective oversight of processes and provision, LRTT SMT will monitor the complaints received to check for evidence of trends in failure of provision or delivery.

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed by apprentices and employers, undertaking the apprenticeship programme, who have an issue or dispute with the services of LRTT in relation to apprenticeship training and/or assessment and the actions LRTT will take to resolve complaints to a satisfactory conclusion.

Scope

The policy covers all employers and their apprentices and staff involved in the delivery of our apprenticeship programme.

Responsibilities

The apprentice centre team have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant standards.

Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

Complaints from Apprentices to LRTT

When an Apprentice has an issue or dispute relating to the provision of the delivery of services undertaken by LRTT, the Apprentice shall make the matter known to LRTT in writing by email to business administration at ATTAdmin@ResourceGroup.co.uk – ensuring the phrase Apprentice Complaint is clearly visible within the title of the email.

The apprentice should fully document the complaint and provide evidence, if appropriate.

LRTT will thoroughly investigate the complaint(s) raised and notify the apprentice in writing within 10 working days.

If necessary, an independent investigator will undertake a full review of the complaint and detail its findings to both parties upon the conclusion of the investigation.

If the Apprentice is dissatisfied with the processing of, or response received, in relation to any complaint submitted, the Apprentice has the right to escalate the complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency [ESFA].

Any complaint, concerns or enquiries regarding the apprenticeship may be escalated to the ESFA via the apprenticeship helpline on 0800 015 0400 or 0247 682 6482, or by email at nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeship.gov.uk.

Another route to resolve complaints is via the British Accreditation Council:

<https://www.the-bac.org/bac-complaints-procedure/>

Complaints from Employers to LRTT

When an Employer has an issue or dispute relating to the provision of the delivery of services undertaken by LRTT, the employer shall make the matter known to LRTT in writing by email to The Apprentice Centre Manager

The employer should fully document the complaint and provide evidence, if appropriate.

LRTT will thoroughly investigate the complaint(s) raised and notify the employer in writing within 10 working days.

If necessary, an independent investigator will undertake a full review of the complaint and detail its findings to both parties upon the conclusion of the investigation.

Definitions

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

A 'Complaint' is defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction about LRTT's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of LRTT.

An 'Appeal' is 'a request for a review of a decision taken by an individual or academic body charged with making decisions about an apprentices' progression, assessment, and awards'. Procedures for Appeals are dealt with through a different process, as detailed in the Appeals Guidance Notes.

Guide to making a complaint (employer)

The process for raising a complaint by an apprentice or an employer with LRTT is detailed below.

Stage 1: Informal complaints

Where possible, complaints should be raised immediately with relevant departments at the source of the complaint, or via the apprentice centre team.

The aim is to resolve the problem directly and informally at the earliest opportunity.

It is anticipated that the vast majority of complaints will be resolved in this manner.

Although Stage 1 is informal, the member of staff involved should provide a written outcome to the employer complainant, copying in the Director of Apprenticeship Services who will record the details of all informal employer complaints.

Acknowledgement of the complaint will be provided within 48 hours, and a full response given within 4 weeks.

If the employer is unable to raise the complaint at the source, or is dissatisfied with the outcome, they should make a formal complaint (see next stage).

Stage 2: Formal complaints

To make a formal complaint an employer should put the matter in writing to LRTT by email to the Apprentice Centre Manager, ensuring the word 'complaint' is in the title.

The email should set out the details of the complaint in full and what would be an appropriate resolution.

Apprentice centre staff will log the complaint on the internal data system.

LRTT will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days, and the complaint will be forwarded to an 'Investigating Officer' who has not been previously involved with the complaint.

The Investigating Officer will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Investigating Officer will review all information submitted, and meet with relevant members of staff to review the complaint.

The Investigating Officer will also speak with the employer complainant to clarify facts where required.

As part of the process, mediation may be offered to resolve the complaint.

If mediation is offered, revised timescales for the resolution of the complaint will be agreed in writing between LRTT and the complainant.

A written response relating to the findings of the inquiry will be issued by the Investigating Officer within a maximum of four weeks from the date of receipt of the original complaint.

If the employer complainant is not satisfied with the action taken, he/she may proceed to Stage 3 of the procedure.

Stage 3: Review

Where employers are not satisfied with the response provided by LRTT at Stage 2, the complaint can be escalated for investigation by an independent reviewer.

The reviewer will not re-investigate the complaint unless new evidence is presented.

The independent reviewer will ensure that appropriate procedures are followed, the decision was reasonable, as well as considering any new evidence submitted.

Stage 4: Complaints Adjudicator

If after exhausting this process the employer complainant is still not satisfied, they can escalate their complaint to the Complaints Adjudicator at the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Email: nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk

Phone: 0800 015 0400 or 0247 682 6482

Please note that the ESFA will not usually investigate complaints more than 12 months after the original decision or action has been taken.

This policy will be reviewed biannually.