

## Complaints Procedure

Version control		
Date of Change	Author	Reason for Change
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This Complaints Procedure relates to the complaints made about the policies, administration or management of the Adult Education in Gloucestershire Assessment Team. It is distinct from the Appeals Procedure which relates to appeals by candidates against judgements made by assessors.

The procedure is based on the expectation that all reasonable efforts will have been made to deal with grievances before they reach the stage of a formal complaint. It is, therefore, the responsibility of all personnel involved in the Adult Education in Gloucestershire Assessment Team: Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers and management to be aware of such issues.

**Procedure:**

- Complaints will be directed to the Centre Co-ordinator who will:
  1. Acknowledge receipt within seven days
  2. Forward the complaint to the appropriate member of the Assessment Team
  3. Monitor that the complaint has been responded to within the time set in the Centre's policy.
- It is the responsibility of the appropriate Team Member to determine how the complaint will be investigated, undertake the necessary action and to respond to the complaint following its investigation.
- The member of the Assessment Team will be able to draw upon any member of the Assessment Team to assist in the investigation of the complaint. The investigation should not be undertaken by anyone who has had prior involvement with the complaint in question.
- Before any full investigation is set in motion those involved in the complaint should have the right to reply to the complaint to see if the complaint cannot be appropriately resolved at this stage. The results at this stage will be passed to the Centre Co-ordinator who will record the outcome.
- The final response to the complainant should be from the appropriate Assessment Team Member on behalf of Adult Education.
- Timetable:

1. Acknowledgement of complaint to be within seven days of the complaint
  2. The response to the complainant outlining the nature of the investigation within twenty-eight days
  3. If the complaint is unresolved within the first twenty-eight days a further twenty-eight days is to be allowed for investigation by the Assessment Team Members.
- It is within the power of the Assessment Team Member to seek the assistance of a person independent from Adult Education in Gloucestershire to assist with the investigation of a complaint.

### **Monitoring Complaints:**

The Centre Co-ordinator will record all complaints and reports of outcomes as part of the Centre's monitoring process. The Assessment Team will be responsible for reviewing procedures and for affecting any required changes.

### **Appeals Procedure**

If a Learner feels that they have been unfairly treated or misrepresented and have a justifiable reason to dispute the Assessor's decision, an appeal can be made. Informal discussion with either the Assessor or Internal Quality Assurer should be used in every case but if that does not produce a satisfactory outcome then the following procedure is to be invoked:

**STAGE 1** The Learner should discuss the decision in question with the Assessor or Internal Quality Assurer within five working days of that assessment.

**STAGE 2** If the Learner is not satisfied with the outcome of this discussion, the Learner should write to Adult Education within a further ten working days of the assessment, clearly stating their grounds for appeal and requesting a consultation with the Lead Internal Quality Assurer. Grounds for appeal can only be on the basis that assessment procedures and / or decisions have not been correctly carried out.

**STAGE 3** If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved the Learner should write within twenty days of the assessment to the Lead Internal Quality Assurer clearly setting out his / her grounds. An Appeals Panel, arranged by the Adult Education Centre Co-ordinator, will hear the appeal within one calendar month.

As stated above the grounds for appeal must be on the basis that the assessment procedure was incorrectly conducted. The Appeals Panel will comprise of two Assessors and an Internal Quality Assurer, balanced as far as possible in terms of gender, race and disability. None of this panel should have been involved in the original assessment decision.

If the Panel recommends that an appeal should be upheld, its recommendation will be that the Assessor should reconsider the decision in the light of evidence or that another Assessor be invited to repeat the assessment procedure. All decisions will be on a simple majority.

Learners will be entitled to be accompanied at any stage by a colleague or Trade Union Representative (not acting in a legal capacity).

If at the end of this process the Learner is still unhappy at the decision they may appeal direct to the awarding body.

The Appeals Procedure will be reviewed regularly and is not intended to preclude the use of existing complaints, grievance or disciplinary procedures within the workplace.

### **Portfolio Policy**

It is the Learner's responsibility to take responsibility for the security of their portfolios. When in possession of the Adult Education in Gloucestershire Centre, it then becomes the Centre's responsibility. This policy has been designed to ensure all portfolios are kept safe and secure.

#### **Learners**

- Do not leave portfolios in your car and in view
- If giving to your Assessor, note down where, when and how it was given
- Do not show to people who 'do not need to know'
- Report any lost or stolen portfolio to Adult Education immediately
- Following External Quality Assurance your portfolio must remain intact for a period of at least three years

**REMEMBER THIS IS YOUR AWARD AND A LOST PORTFOLIO COULD MEAN LOST WORK**

**Adult Education in Gloucestershire**

- Portfolios will be stored in a locked cupboard when not in use
  - Following External Quality Assurance, the Centre will inform Learners when portfolios are available for them to collect.
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## Learner Complaint Monitoring System

### Purpose

The AdEd learner complaints system advises learners to contact the tutor in the first instance. If they are not satisfied with the response they can contact Adult Education directly. We will then investigate the matter. This system works well to provide a prompt response to the learner and Adult Education are able to deal with complaints quickly. However, we also need a central record and integrated overview of all complaints on Adult Education funded provision and the Learner Complaints Monitoring System is intended to provide a straightforward system for doing this.

### How it works

- All the complaints they receive from learners on Adult Education funded courses are recorded in accordance with the categories shown in the report format (see appendix 1).
- At the end of each term the Adult Education Service will request that this report is submitted by email for monitoring purposes. Additional Information may be requested as necessary. NB a nil response is required.
- At the end of the year the Adult Education Service will produce summary reports (one per term – see appendix 2) analysing complaints by category and circulate this to relevant Managers..
- The information from the reports will be analysed to identify themes, trends and to improve the quality of the service we offer to learners. Termly Reports will be considered by the Adult Education Service Senior Leadership Team.

NB All complaints concerning equalities and bullying and harassment issues must be reported directly to the Adult Education Skills, Apprenticeships & Business Development Manager (Contact details below) as soon as possible.

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## Appendix 1

### Ad Ed Learner Complaints Monitoring Report

Provider: .....

Term: ..... Year: .....

Complaint made by	Date Received	Category*	Brief description of the complaint	Action Taken

## Appendix 2

### AdEd Summary of Complaints Received

Provider: .....

Term: ..... Year: .....

Complaint Category	Number Received	Comments
Teaching & Learning		
Accommodation / Equipment		
Fees		
Equality & Diversity Issues		
Bullying / Harassment Issues		
Administration:		
Other (please give details)		

