

Complaints Policy (EPA)

Complaints Policy



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Date of issue 01/07/2017
Review date 01/12/2021

1. Policy Statement

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by Smart Awards whether justified or not. Smart Awards welcomes feedback about its EPA services and seeks to identify opportunities to improve where there is dissatisfaction with any of these. This policy outlines how Smart Awards deals with complaints in relation to end-point assessments.

2. Scope

The policy applies to those involved with Smart Awards as an end-point assessment organisation.

3. Responsibility

Smart Awards Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

4. Policy and implementation

Our policy principles are to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use
- Publicise our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us
- Make sure everyone at Smart Awards knows what to do if a complaint is received
- Make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- Ensure complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- Gather information which helps us to improve what we do
- All complaint information will be handled confidently.

What this policy covers and how it will be implemented

How to make a complaint

Complaints must be made in writing to Smart Awards – this can be via letter or email – outlining the cause for complaint, any relevant dates and person(s) involved. The identity of the complainant is not disclosed.

Smart Awards response to complaints

Smart Awards will ensure that the complaint is fully and independently investigated. This may involve reviewing records and/or contacting others such as the employer or other apprentices. Information gathered relating to the complaint is reviewed by Smart Awards and a decision taken as to whether the complaint is upheld and what actions if any need to be taken.

Complaints process

Step 1 - the complaint information will be passed to Smart Awards Quality Manager within 3 days of receiving the complaint

Step 2 - the information will be added to the complaints log

Step 3 - a letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within one week of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this policy, a contact name and date of expected reply.

Step 4 – the complaint will then be investigated

Step 5 - we will write within 28 days of receiving a complaint, confirming our final position - Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at this stage, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by a different person at and the following process applies:

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Step 6 - a letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within one week of receiving it

Step 7 – the complaint will then be investigated

Step 8 - write within 28 days of receiving the complaint confirming our final position - Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint

Step 9 - The decision taken at this stage is final, unless it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

Any opportunities to improve are recorded and Smart Awards aims to implement any improvements arising which are monitored by the Smart Awards Management Team.

Due regard is given regarding the outcome of any complaint in relation to Smart Awards processes around the end-point assessment, the assessment tools and personnel involved. Appropriate preventative and/or corrective action will be taken. Where a complaint relates to a potential 'adverse effect' for example by identifying a failure in an assessment process, Smart Awards will ensure that:

- Any other apprentice who has been affected is identified;
- Any effect is corrected or mitigated as far as possible;
- Action is taken to avoid a re-occurrence

5. Monitoring

Management Reviews

Smart Awards management team will review customer issues/complaints at all meetings.

- To review all complaints
- To ensure necessary improvement plans are put in place to mitigate any major issues that may be identified
- To report at Management Review Monthly complaints exceeding KPI within the month
- To ensure that Smart Awards is proactive in relation to all customer issues
- To ensure that all complaints are dealt with efficiently and effectively
- To ensure that all responses are complete and within time

Monitoring

Complaints are regularly reviewed to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action. All records of complaints will be held for 7 years. This policy is reviewed regularly and updated annually or as and when required.

Smart Awards will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, regularly considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible. Internal control systems and procedures will be subject to regular audits to provide assurance that they are effective in dealing with complaints.