

Complaints Policy

Change history		
Version	Effective From Date	List of Amendments or remarks as applicable
1.	23 October 2017	Complaints procedure separated out from parent policy for easy sharing and publication.
2.	01 November 2018	Updated to reflect company name change
3.	09 April 2019	Added PTS to escalation of complaints section
4.	02 January 2020	Policy checked for accuracy
5.	07 October 2020	Updated to reflect change in LDS and Head of IQA terms to Skills Coach and Quality Manager
6.	15 October 2021	Updated to new document format. Reviewed and updated the whole policy.
7.	1 February 2022	Companywide policy review completed and new version issued
7.1	1 February 2023	Updated Delivery Manager contact details
7.2	30 May 2023	Changed max response to 10 days and minor changes.
7.3	01 February 2024	Annual review, minor changes. Deleted Youth Worker as this now part of The Skills Spot CIC.



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Scope

This Complaints Policy deals with complaints arising from:

- Recruitment and Delivery (or lack of delivery) of services for education and training, including but not limited to teaching, course content, coaching, tutoring, assessment, feedback on progress and Apprentice support during our learning programmes.
- Incorrect or misleading information about services provided by LDN Apprenticeships.
- Delivery (or lack of delivery) of support services provided by LDN Apprenticeships including but not limited to administration of fees, enrolment processes, office accommodation, health and safety and Apprentice resource services.
- Unacceptable actions or behaviour by LDN Apprenticeships staff and apprentices/learners in LDN Apprenticeships.

The Complaints Policy applies to all employees, apprentices, learners, volunteers and contractors.

Purpose

LDN Apprenticeships provides excellence in service to apprentices, learners, and employers. This document sets out our complaints policy and provides information on how apprentices, learners, and employers (referred to in this policy as the “complainant”) can make a complaint and how LDN Apprenticeships will deal with any such complaints. The outcome of any formal complaints will be confirmed in writing to the complainant.

Review Period and Ownership

The policy is owned by the Chief Operating Officer. LDN Apprenticeships will review the Complaints Policy every 12 months to include the following:

- Number of complaints of each type
- Time taken to process complaints
- List of outstanding complaints
- Outcomes to complaints
- Results of appeals
- Analysis of complaints and outcomes by age, gender and ethnicity of the complainant

Any changes to the Complaints Policy and Procedures will be communicated to all staff, external contacts and service users and the Policy updated on the Company’s website.

For audit purposes, LDN Apprenticeships will keep a record of all complaints for a period of 3 years and will make these available to the relevant authorities on request.



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Promotion of Policy

A copy of this policy is publishing on the policies page of the LDN Apprenticeships website. To view the online copy, please visit www.ldnapprenticeships.com/ldn-policies

This policy can be made available on request.

Engagement and Training

This policy can be accessed by employees via the Company's Intranet and also on the Company's website. All relevant staff are required to read and sign this policy as part of our engagement and training, which is undertaken through our HR system, BambooHR and a record of this is kept on the employee's file.

Relevant staff will be issued with this Policy when there are any updates and staff will be required to reread the policy as part of their annual compliance update training. Updates will also be reflected in the version of this policy which is made available on the Company's website.

LDN Apprenticeships will ensure that all relevant staff are given training and instruction to deal with complaints.

General Principles of the Policy

- LDN Apprenticeships will deal with legitimate complaints in a fair, prompt and objective manner.
- Complaints will be dealt with without recrimination and Apprentices/Learners will not be disadvantaged by raising a complaint.
- In accordance with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, LDN Apprenticeships will be fair in the treatment of all those who complain irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion and disability.
- All complaints will be dealt with in confidence but shared with any person who may be the subject of a complaint.
- The outcomes of any complaint will be shared with the complainant and any staff involved.
- Complaints made which, on investigation, turn out to be malicious, may result in disciplinary action.
- The Board of Directors will be responsible for the management of the Complaints Policy.



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Informal Complaints Procedure

LDN Apprenticeships aims to resolve most complaints by carrying out an informal discussion between the complainant and the appropriate member of our staff.

The initial complaint may be made verbally or in writing and the member of staff receiving the complaint should respond within 10 working days either verbally or in writing.

It is expected that staff are tactful and courteous in dealing with any complaint.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received, they should follow the formal complaints procedure.

Complaints Policy for Apprentices and Learners

If an Apprentice or Learner wishes to make a complaint about their experience with LDN Apprenticeships, they should follow the three-stage process outlined below. Each stage must be fully completed before proceeding to the next stage. The complainant is advised to keep copies of all the documents used as part of the complaints process.

Apprentices and learners will be offered support if they wish to make a complaint and will be encouraged to bring a supporter to any meetings held. Vulnerable adults can have the support of their care worker, or a person of their choice to act as their advocate at any meetings held.

Stage 1 (Informal)

If the complainant is currently completing their course or is actively taking part in one of our other training programmes, they must first contact their Skills Coach to raise their complaint. The relevant member of staff will ensure that the issue is dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

The complainant should raise any concerns within 7 days of the matter in question. The Skills Coach will investigate the concerns and address these accordingly or refer the complaint to a relevant member of staff / manager. The complainant will receive a response either verbally or in writing within 7 working days of submission.

Note: If the complaint is about their Skills Coach it may be inappropriate for them to discuss the matter with them and therefore the complainant can proceed directly to Stage 2. If a former apprentice or learner wishes to make a complaint, they should also proceed to Stage 2 of the complaints process.

Stage 2 (Formal Complaint to Management)

If an apprentice / learner is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 they should forward the complaint in writing to the **relevant Delivery Manager** at LDN Apprenticeships who will investigate the matter. This may include:



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- Talking to the complainant about the issue.
- Conducting an investigation into the complaint, which may include interviewing those that the allegations were made against and any other persons involved.
- After the investigation, the Delivery Manager will write to the complainant, confirming the outcome of the investigation. If the complaint is not upheld the complainant has the right to appeal and can proceed to Stage 3.

Depending on the nature and complexity of a complaint, the complainant will receive a response within 10 working days of escalation from Stage 1.

Delivery Manager Contact Details

Delivery Manager Name	Email Address	Standards
Beth Davies	Beth.davies@ldnapprenticeships.com	Business Administrator, Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Practitioner
Howard Trent	howard@ldnapprenticeships.com	Digital Learning Designer, Digital Marketer, Multi-Channel Marketer, Publishing Assistant, Publishing Professional
James Hunter	james.hunter@ldnapprenticeships.com	Salesforce Apprenticeships, Information Communications Technician

Stage 3 (Formal complaint to a Company Director)

If an apprentice/ learner is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 they should forward the complaint, together with the response received at Stage 2, in writing to LDN Apprenticeships to the address below or via email, within 7 days of the notification of Stage 2.

At this stage the complainant is required to substantiate any complaints or allegations with written factual evidence and / or statements from witnesses. This will assist in us in reaching a speedy conclusion to the complaint.

A response to the apprentice / learner complaint will be sent within 7 working days of the receipt of the Stage 3 complaint. Where a case is not backed up by sufficient factual evidence the Directors reserve the right to cease considering the complaint.



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Any Stage 3 complaints should be addressed to:

Matthew Rogers, COO, LDN Apprenticeships, Lansdowne, 278-280 South Lambeth Road, London, SW8 1UJ, or email: matthew@ldnapprenticeships.com

All complaints at all stages will be dealt with fairly and the complainant will not be discriminated against or suffer any detriment based on the complaint. If the complaint reaches Stage 3 and it cannot be dealt with by a Director due to their prior involvement in the matter, another Director will hear and respond to the complaint to maintain impartiality.

We aim to resolve all complaints within 21 days from original submission.

The decision made at Stage 3 will be final, however this does not affect an individual's legal rights and includes the right to complain directly to the Education and Skills Funding Agency, if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Please note: *The Directors will rarely consider complaints if the above complaints process has not been followed. LDN Apprenticeships has absolute confidence in our staff, who are trained to deal professionally with legitimate complaints as they arise. In the unlikely event that the complaint is not dealt with appropriately by a member of our team, then the complaints process above will ensure the complaint is given due consideration and the concern addressed.*

Complaints Policy for Employers

If an employer working with LDN Apprenticeships wishes to make a formal complaint, this should be put in writing. This helps us to ensure that the concerns are fully understood and that an investigation can be instigated. The complaint should be sent to info@ldnapprenticeships.com and include the words "EMPLOYER COMPLAINT" in the email subject line.

This email address is constantly monitored. Any complaints received will be reviewed within 24 hours and will be assigned to a **Delivery Manager** who will respond accordingly.

Timelines

The complaint will be logged and the complainant will receive a call back within 36 hours of us being in receipt of the complaint. This is an opportunity for us to discuss the complaint, gather additional information and set timelines for investigating and resolving the issue.

Within 5 working days of complaint submission, we will contact the complainant to provide an update on our investigation and any actions we have taken.

Commitments

We will always attempt to contact the complainant by telephone where possible.



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For complex complaints we may need longer than 5 working days to provide a robust and effective resolution to the complaint. If our response will be longer than 5 working days, we will inform the complainant in advance.

When investigating a complaint, we will review the specific occurrence or circumstance, as well as consider the likelihood of the situation occurring again.

We will comply with a number of other LDN Apprenticeships policies when considering what action to take in the management of complaints – these include:

- Staff Code of Conduct / Employee Handbook
- Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Once an investigation has been completed, we will contact the complainant to provide feedback on our findings and confirm this in writing.

Appealing the outcome of a complaint

In the unlikely event that the complainant is not satisfied with the way the complaint was handled or the outcome, they may submit an appeal.

The appeal should be submitted to our COO:

Matthew Rogers, COO, LDN Apprenticeships, Lansdowne, 278-280 South Lambeth Road, London, SW8 1UJ, or email: matthew@ldnapprenticeships.com

The decision made at the appeal will be final, but this does not affect an individual's legal rights and includes the right to complain directly to the End Point Awarding Organisation, if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Further Escalation of Complaints

LDN Apprenticeships takes complaints very seriously and will endeavour to deal with them quickly, professionally and resolve any concerns raised.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the way LDN Apprenticeships has dealt with the complaint or the outcome (after following the above complaints process), they are at liberty to forward the complaint to our Funders which are detailed below:

Education and Skills Funding Agency

Complaints to the ESFA must be made by following their procedure, which is available by following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>



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London Borough of Lambeth

Name: Melissa McArthur

Title: Strategic Commissioning Officer, Children's Services

Organisation: London Borough of Lambeth

Address: 3rd Floor, International House, 6 Canterbury Crescent, London, SW9 7QE

Email: mmcarthur@lambeth.gov.uk

Policy Sign Off

The current version of this policy has been signed off by the Chief Executive Officer.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Bozzoli', written over a horizontal line.

Name

Simon Bozzoli

Date

01 February 2024