

# Complaint Policy & Procedure

## **Purpose and scope of the procedure**

Prometheus security and safety solutions ltd. is committed to providing all its learners with a high-quality educational experience fully supported by various training facilities. Securing feedback from learners on their experience training is an integral part of Prometheus security and safety solutions' approach to developing and enhancing the quality of all aspects of its services and is achieved by various means, including using learner questionnaires at the end of the training.

The policy's purpose is to resolve complaints informally by discussing them between aggrieved learners and staff as far as possible. Complaints are concerns or problems raised by a learner or learners and may be made in writing or orally. (There is a separate procedure for learner assessment appeals.) Before using the complaints procedure, a learner is expected to try to resolve the complaint informally. The formal stage of the procedure should only be used when the informal stage has failed to resolve the issue or is not progressing reasonably. This procedure applies to all learners.

## **Principles of Procedure**

### **The procedure is based on the following principles:**

- A learner has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or friend at every stage of the formal procedure.
- Any complaints, to become formal, must be made in writing as soon as possible
- In all cases, reference to informal resolution in advance of a formal complaint is recommended
- All proceedings, whether informal or formal, should, so far as is practicable, remain confidential
- A formal record of any hearing will be available to the learner. The hearing will be recorded, and a copy given to the learner.
- The timescales set out may be extended with the agreement of the parties. Where more than one learner has lodged a complaint relating to the same, or substantially.

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the same, issue, the complaints may be dealt with together in the interests of fair and consistent decision-making.

- Where a complaint concerns an apparently trivial issue, the relevant staff member will discuss this informally with the learner to determine whether there is a real need to pursue the matter through the complaint's procedure.
- Suppose the learner and member of staff are unable to agree. In that case, the learner will be entitled to submit the complaint formally together with any further evidence or explanation that throws new light on it, and demonstrates that a substantive complaint is, in fact, being made.
- If the learner's complaint restates a complaint that has been dealt with in the past, the learner will be asked to explain how the new complaint differs from the previous one and either what new incident has occurred or what new evidence has come to light. Where there is nothing new being raised, the centre can reject the complaint without a hearing or committee meeting.

**The two-stage complaints procedure is as follows:**

## Informal Stage

If a learner has a complaint involving another learner or other learners, they should first try to resolve the matter by directly approaching the learner or learners involved. The learner representatives and centre manager may intervene if the situation demands their intervention.

If the matter relates to training, general welfare, tutors or staff or facilities provided by the Prometheus security and safety solutions, the learner may request a meeting with a relevant staff member and efforts made to resolve the issue. Any informal meeting with staff should be held within ten working days of the submission of the request. Usually, learner complaints are likely to take the form of suggestions for improvement (e.g., more Teaching & learning resources) and can be dealt with either informally or formally based on the nature of the issue.

If, after any action to resolve the complaint taken by staff, the learner is not satisfied with such actions, they may proceed to the formal stage of the procedure.

## Formal Stage

If the complaint has not been resolved at the informal stage and the learner wishes to proceed to the formal stage, the learner may do so, and the centre manager will hear the complaint. The learner must set out in writing the nature of their complaint and the reasons why they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal stage. The learner should explain how they think it should be settled. This must be submitted to the centre manager. The record of this written complaint will be kept in a specified Complaints File for three years, whatever decision is made and the issue is resolved.

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Should the complaint relate to a process or decision, the centre manager will appoint another person as investigating officer who will be asked to provide a full written report together with any relevant documents. The investigation should be conducted as quickly as possible while allowing for all relevant information and evidence to be gathered. The learner and the centre manager will agree on a timescale for this.

Should the complaint be against a named individual or individuals, the centre manager will give them a copy of the complaint at the earliest opportunity. The individual will present their response at the hearing, and it would not normally be necessary to investigate.

Every attempt will be made to ensure that the hearing will be held within ten working days of receipt of the investigating officer's report or within ten working days of the complaint being received if it is against an individual. The learner will be given five working days' notice that the hearing is to be held. The learner may request an alternative date for up to five working days if their representative is unavailable. If, following a reasonable attempt to rearrange the hearing, the learner is still unable to attend, they may send a representative, or the hearing may be held in their absence.

The complainant should ensure that they attend the meeting at the specified time. If they are unable to attend because of circumstances beyond their control, they should inform the centre manager as soon as possible. If they fail to attend without explanation, or it appears that they have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the hearing may take place in their absence. A copy of any decision will be given in writing to the complainant within three working days of the hearing.

## **Right of Appeal**

Should the complainant wish to appeal against the decision of the centre manager, they must do so, in writing, within five working days of being informed of the decision.

A request for an appeal must specify the grounds of the appeal, preferably under one or more of the following headings: the nature of any redress, the finding of the hearing on the point of fact which is pertinent to the decision of the hearing a failure to adhere to the published procedure.

The appeal will be considered by an external independent adjudicator who has not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and is independent of the management and running of the centre. All details of the complaint will be made to the external adjudicator, including findings and reasons for the decision.

The independent external adjudicator will hear the appeal. The learner will be given five working days' notice that the hearing is to be held. The complainant may request an alternative date to allow up to an additional five working days if their representative is unavailable. If, following a reasonable attempt to rearrange the hearing, the learner is still

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unable to attend, they may send a representative, or the hearing may be held in their absence.

The complainant should ensure that they attend the meeting at the specified time. If they are unable to attend because of circumstances beyond their control, they should inform the centre manager as soon as possible. If they fail to attend without explanation, or if it appears that they have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the hearing may take place in their absence. The appeal is not a rehearing of the original complaints but rather a consideration of the specific areas with which the learner is dissatisfied in relation to the original complaints. The adjudicator may therefore confine the discussion to those specific areas rather than reconsider the whole matter afresh.

The adjudicator will hear all or part of the previous hearing depending upon the nature of the appeal. The adjudicator has the scope to:

- Uphold all or part of the previous decision
- Not uphold the previous decision.

Suppose the adjudicator decides either to uphold only part of the previous decision or not to uphold the previous decision. In that case, he/she may, at their discretion, substitute an appropriate remedy of their own choosing.

Within three working days of the appeal, the adjudicator will record the decision and give it to the learner. Any recommendations made by the adjudicator will be notified to the appropriate individuals and will be time-bound. The decision of the appeals adjudicator is final. Written records of this complaint will then be kept in the Complaints File for three years and destroyed.