

Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

Commercial Operator Training Solutions Ltd believes that if a service user wishes to make a complaint or register a concern, they should find it easy to do so. It is each establishment's policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by service users are taken seriously.

The policy is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation. It is NOT part of each establishment's disciplinary policy.

Our establishment believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints will lead to an aggravation of problems, service user dissatisfaction and possible litigation. Our establishment supports the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted out at a local level between just the complainant and our establishment. If this fails due to either the establishment or the complainant being dissatisfied with the result, the complaint will be referred to the Managing Director. Legal advice will be taken as per necessary.

Aim

The aim of our establishment is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that service users feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

Goals

The goals of our establishment are to ensure that:

- Service users, and their representatives are aware of how to complain, and that our establishment provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints
- A named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure
- Every written complaint is acknowledged within two working days
- Investigations into written complaints are held within 28 days
- All complaints are responded to in writing by each establishment
- Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both staff and service users

Complaints Procedure

Oral Complaints

- All oral complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, should be taken seriously. There is nothing to be gained by staff adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude
- Front line training staff who receive an oral complaint should seek to solve the problem immediately if possible

- If staff cannot solve the problem immediately, they should offer to get the manager to deal with the problem
- All contact with the complainant should be polite, courteous and sympathetic
- At all times staff should remain calm and respectful
- Staff should not accept blame, make excuses or blame other staff
- If the complaint is being made on behalf of the service user by an advocate it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the service user, especially if confidential information is involved. It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the service user when they may not. If in doubt it should be assumed that the service user's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate
- After talking the problem through, each manager or the member of staff dealing with the complaint should suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (ie through another meeting or by letter)
- If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant then the member of staff or manager should ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to the establishment and give them a copy of the complaints procedure and form for completion
- In both cases details of the complaints should be recorded on a complaints form and handed to the Manager

Written Complaints

- When a complaint is received in writing it should be passed on to the Director who should record it in the complaints book and send an acknowledgment letter within two working days. The Director will be the named person who deals with the complaint through the process
- If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the service user but on the service user's behalf, then consent of the service user, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the complainant
- If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice should be sought from the Managing Director who will take legal advice on behalf of Commercial Operator Training Solutions Ltd. If legal action is taken at this stage any investigation by the establishment under the complaints procedure should cease immediately
- Immediately on receipt of the complaint the establishment should launch an investigation and within 28 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned
- After a meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation should be sent to the complainant
- The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting should be recorded on appropriate documentation and any shortcomings in the establishment's procedures should be identified and acted upon
- Each establishment should discuss complaints and their outcome at a formal business meeting and the establishment's complaints procedure should be audited by the manager every six months

Appealing after an initial complaint has been received

In the unlikely event that you remain unhappy after your complaint has been investigated and a decision reached, and the complaint refers to services you received relating to your course and achieving your qualification, then you may contact the specific Awarding Organisation directly (a list of organisations and numbers is available on request). Candidates on regulated qualifications also have the right to escalate their complaint to the Qualification Regulator once they have exhausted both the establishment's internal procedures and the awarding body's procedures.

Training

The Manager is responsible for organizing and co-ordinating training. All staff should be trained in dealing with, and responding to, complaints. Complaints policy training should be included in the induction training for all new staff and in-house training sessions on handling complaints should be conducted at least annually and all relevant staff should attend.

This policy will be reviewed by February 2025