

**Introduction:** This complaints procedure outlines the process for making a formal complaint about the services provided by Shears Academy.

It should be noted that this procedure **does not deal** with appeals against an assessment decision or staff member complaints, for which separate procedures apply. Apprentice candidates and members of staff should use the relevant procedure in place including grievance procedures.

This procedure aims to ensure that all complainants are treated equitably and all complainants receive equally prompt, helpful and professional responses. All formal complaints will be logged and monitored to ensure a timely response. All complaints will be formally investigated and inform our Self-Assessment processes; where appropriate, feedback will be used to improve our services to our employer partners and customers.

**Informal Complaints:** Where possible, a relevant team member will try to reach resolution of the issue directly before it is escalated into a formal complaint. Complainants who do not wish to make a formal complaint should discuss his/her complaint with the team member who is their usual Shears Academy contact, in person or by phone, unless the complaint is about them, in which case it should be referred to the Training Manager. Where the issue is resolved by the team member, there may be no further need for action and the complaint may be considered closed, in which case no formal record will be required. If you are not satisfied with the action taken you can still make a formal complaint following the procedure outlined in the document and sent to: [admin@shearsacademy.co.uk](mailto:admin@shearsacademy.co.uk)

**Formal Complaints:** The complainant must inform an appropriate team member such as their apprentices' Tutor or Assessor, our Learning Co-ordinator or the Training Manager that he or she wishes to make a formal complaint.

The team member will provide the complainant with a copy of the Guide to Complaints Flowchart, and advise the complainant to put their complaint in writing by emailing: [admin@shearsacademy.co.uk](mailto:admin@shearsacademy.co.uk)

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within three working days and assigned to an Investigating Manager who will investigate and formally respond within ten working days. If a new timescale is agreed, the complainant will be notified and it will be documented. A written record of the investigation will be kept on the complaints log. The formal response from the Investigating Manager will outline their findings and any action to be taken as a result, indicating that the complainant should appeal to the Managing Director in writing if not satisfied. The appeal should outline why the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome. All correspondence will be copied and kept by the MD.

**What are these procedures for?** These procedures cover formal complaints about the service and/or your experience provided by Shears Academy. Please note: any complaints about assessment decisions i.e. pass, fail or distinction or marking should be addressed as part of the Appeals Procedure.

Letters and phone calls of complaint addressed to the Managing Director will be treated in exactly the same way as all other complaints, receiving initial and final response

letters from the appropriate member of the management team so that the complainant has the option of making a final appeal to the MD.

All complaints will be logged and monitored and included in the report to the Shareholder(s). All correspondence will be copied, logged and kept in the Complaints file for monitoring, self-assessment purposes and will be checked for resolution. This log will be presented to the Shareholder(s) after the financial year end in August of each year.

**Complaints to Outside Agencies:** Should the complaint not be resolved internally to the satisfaction of the complainant following an appeal, they have the right to raise the matter with the Academy's external Education and Skills Funding Agency (the ESFA).

**What happens when I make a formal complaint?** Making a formal complaint means that:

- Your complaint is taken seriously and dealt with quickly by the Academy
- You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt within **three** working days followed by a formal response within **ten** working days
- You will be given the reasons for our response
- The Academy will take action to improve its service if appropriate.

**Can anyone help or assist me?** Yes. If you are an apprentice or student of the Academy and would like help and assistance in presenting your complaint you may contact Sue Nicholls, Learning Coordinator, or another member of staff for support. Please note that Shears team members are not able to provide any advocacy or representation for candidates as this may lead to a conflict of interests.

**What if I'm not happy with the response I receive about my complaint?** You can appeal in writing to the ESFA or if appropriate an external body such as City & Guilds, stating why you are not satisfied with the outcome.

## [Guide to Complaints Procedure](#)

We hope these procedures will make it as easy as possible for you to register your formal complaint with us.

### **STAGE 1**

Person making complaint emails their complaint to the email address:  
[admin@shearsacademy.co.uk](mailto:admin@shearsacademy.co.uk)



### **STAGE 2**

Acknowledgment of receipt within **three** working days, an investigating manager will be assigned



### **STAGE 3**

The investigating manager investigates the complaint and formally responds within **ten** working days of receipt of the complaint



### **STAGE 4**

The complainant has the right to appeal to the Managing Director within **five** working days

**End**