



Complaints

Policy and Procedure

Reviewed by:

Maureen Askew, Head of Quality

V4

Last review Date:

1 September 2021

Next review Date:

30 August 2022

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the NA College's procedures for:

- bringing matters of dissatisfaction to the attention of NA College
- investigating and responding to those concerns
- improving services as a result of the concern raised

Scope

The Complaints Policy is open to all people served by NA College including students, parents, customers, employers, contractors, local residents, visitors and others and is available on the NA College website: <https://www.nacollege.ac.uk/>

Policy Statement

The Complaints Policy is intended to enable any person(s) to bring matters of dissatisfaction or concern to the attention of NA College, so that those concerns can be investigated with the aim of reaching a satisfactory resolution and instigating changes which lead to improved services.

NA College will respond to any complaint fairly and promptly:

- An acknowledgment response will be provided within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- A further more detailed response will be made within 10 working days.
- A meeting may be offered between the parties involved if appropriate.
- An appeal may be made to the Head of Quality within 10 working days if the complainant (person making the complaint) is dissatisfied with the outcome they receive.
- The appeal will be forwarded to the Senior Management Team if appropriate for final investigation.
- Information on how to take the complaint further will be provided if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the SMT's final findings or response.

This Policy does not replace NA College procedures for academic appeals or disciplinary action; those procedures should be applied where appropriate.

NA College employees must use the internal Grievance Procedure where the complaint is about another member of staff, but can use this Policy where the complaint is about a service that NA College is responsible for.

Effective complaint handling can provide key benefits to NA College such as:

- Providing information that can lead to improvements in service and curriculum delivery.
- Resolving issues raised by a person who is dissatisfied in a timely and cost-effective way.

Roles and Responsibility

Staff:

All NA College staff have a responsibility for receiving complaints and treating them seriously, and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below. Staff are also expected to provide any assistance to support a complainant when making a complaint.

Managers:

Heads of Department, members of the Senior Management Team have a responsibility for resolving a complaint, and leading or contributing to an investigation into a complaint when this is considered appropriate.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for resolving complaints which have reached the appeals stage and may nominate any member(s) of the Senior Management Team who has not previously been involved in the investigation. The members of the Board are responsible for ensuring that the Complaints Policy is operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed at the Managing Director, Chief Operating Officer and members of The Board.

Liaison with external agencies:

If the investigation uncovers serious criminal behaviour or activity (i.e. theft, racism, and homophobia, physical or verbal abuse, threats of radicalisation or violent/non-violent acts of extremism) then the investigation may be passed over to the Police and/or other appropriate external agencies

PROCESS /PROCEDURE

Refer to Appendix A and B

Stage 1 (Frontline resolution)

In the first instance the learner should have an initial discussion with their tutor/assessor, Course Lead or Senior Manager. Other complainants should have an initial discussion with the Head of Department. NA College will try and resolve any difficulties quickly, if this can be achieved and all parties are in agreement with the outcome of the frontline resolution is possible. A decision must be made within 5 working days and all details recorded on the complaint's log.

Stage 2 (Investigation)

If the learner (or other complainant) is not happy with the initial discussion, they must state **in writing** the reasons for their dissatisfaction. This should be sent to the NA College Quality Manager within 10 working days of the initial approach to the member of staff.

The Quality Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 working days and consider in detail the contents of the complaint. The Quality Manager will notify the complainant within 10 working days, in writing giving details of the outcome of their investigation.

Where there does not appear to be a cause for the complaint, the NA College Quality Manager will arrange for the complainant to be interviewed by a senior member of the management team (i.e. Head of Quality or Head of Department) to determine a resolution to the complaint. Any recommendations

should be adopted immediately.

Stage 3

In the instance that stage 2 does not resolve the issue, the Quality Manager may involve the Head of Quality and take advice from a relevant professional in order to resolve the issue. The Quality Manager should try to resolve this complaint within 28 days of the original complaint.

Stage 4

Referred to the relevant external agency
(ie for Apprentices only - <https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>)

Recording and Monitoring Complaints

All formal complaints are recorded by the Quality Department and are scrutinised on receipt for any element of actual or potential discrimination. Any such findings are recorded and reported to the Senior Management Team.

The complaints received are analysed and actions monitored through NA College Performance Review meetings.

Recommendations resulting from investigations will be formally recorded and monitored by the Quality Department to ensure that all actions are clearly owned and fulfilled. Where actions have not been fulfilled by the person responsible, these will be escalated to the relevant line manager.

Appeals procedure

The complainant will be advised of the right to appeal if they are dissatisfied with the outcome or response. The appeal to the Head of Quality is the final stage of the Complaints Procedure within the College and must be done in writing, by emailing maureen.askew@nacollege.ac.uk within 10 working days of receiving the final written response.

To lodge an appeal against the decision following a complaints investigation, there must be evidence of one or more of the following:

- NA College has not followed the formal procedure as described in this Policy
- Incorrect evidence has been used during the investigation of the complaint or new evidence has arisen
- The Investigating Officer did not fully consider your personal circumstances
- The circumstances of the complaint were not fairly considered


The Head of Quality will make the decision as to whether an appeal meets the criteria as set out

above. If the appeal does meet the criteria then the appeal is forwarded to the Senior Management Team to consider. If it does not, the appeal will be rejected and the complainant will be informed in writing with details as to the reasons why not. If at this stage the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be advised as to which external agency is most appropriate for the complaint to be referred to.

This Policy should be used in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- PREVENT Policy
- Harassment and Bullying
- External Speakers Policy
- Data Security Protection Policy
- Grievance Procedure

This Policy is approved by:

Position: Chief Operating Officer	Name: Lisa Snaith	Signature: 	Date: 01/09/2021
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Appendix B



Complaint Record

Complaint No: _____

Complaint made to (NA College Staff Member): _____

By:

Name	
Position/Role	
Company	
Date	

Brief outline of complaint:

Action taken (when and by whom):

Outcome:

Date:

Signature:

Please ensure that this record is filed in our "Complaints File" with Centre Manager and that the Complaints Log has been updated and all relevant evidence and documents are stored in the following folder:
<M:\NAC Centre\Compliments and Complaints Log>