

# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

## 1 Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear statement of intent with regards to the recording, assessment, handling, and investigation of all expressions of dissatisfaction and complaints received by Lifetime. Lifetime Training's complaint handling policy and procedure has been created to meet the standards and requirements of the relevant regulating bodies.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all expressions of dissatisfaction, regardless of how they are received (verbal or written), are documented and handled in a consistent and regulated manner and that further incidents are mitigated against and prevented.

## 2 Purpose

Lifetime Training is committed to delivering a fair, open, and clear process for complaints and to ensure a satisfactory outcome for anyone who raises a complaint. We provide thorough staff training in our internal complaint handling procedures and support staff in how to handle complaint situations in a face-to-face, written and/or telephone environment.

This policy sets out our intent and objectives for how we handle complaints, from offering a clear and approachable system for individuals to complain, through to conducting root cause analysis on all complaints received, to identify the how and who of the complaint and to implement measures to prevent reoccurrences where applicable.

## 3 Scope

The policy relates to any expression of dissatisfaction with Lifetime Training, regarding a service (or lack of service) provided or a member staff (*meaning permanent, fixed term, and temporary staff, any third-party representatives or sub-contractors, agency workers, volunteers, interns and agents engaged with Lifetime Training in the UK or overseas*). This policy has been created to ensure that staff dealing with the area that this policy relates to, do so in accordance with legal, regulatory, contractual, and business expectations and requirements.

Where an expression of dissatisfaction has been received from or on behalf of a Self-Funded Learner regarding a Student Loan, this policy does not apply. Please refer to the FCA regulated complaint handling policy: Lifetime Training Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure Regulated.



# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

## 4 Objectives

Lifetime Training's objectives are laid out below regarding handling of all expressions of dissatisfaction and complaints.

### 4.1 EXPRESSION OF DISSATISFACTION

For the purposes of this policy, an *"expression of dissatisfaction"* is defined by the use of high-emotive words or tone of communication from anyone with regards to action or inaction by Lifetime Training. High-emotive words include (but are not limited to) *"appalled/appalling"*, *"disappointed/disappointing"*, *"horrified/horrifying"*.

#### ***Lifetime Training's objectives for internal handling of expressions of dissatisfaction are: -***

- To resolve an expression of dissatisfaction informally, where possible (e.g. by phone) within three working days;
- To record and resolve all expressions of dissatisfaction regardless of how they are received, including phone, e-mail, face to face, survey response;
- To record all expressions of dissatisfaction to identify trends and to prevent reoccurrence or escalation;
- To escalate expressions of dissatisfaction to a complaint where:
  - A specific request has been made to raise a complaint;
  - The concern relates to the handling of dissatisfaction or complaint;
- To always provide the person expressing dissatisfaction with the means of raising a formal complaint, should they wish.

### 4.2 FORMAL COMPLAINT

For the purposes of this policy, a *"complaint"* is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction where it is clear the individual expects us to identify the cause of the problem and provide a resolution. The individual does not have to formally address their communication as an official/formal complaint for Lifetime Training to treat the incident as a complaint and to follow the related procedures.

#### ***Lifetime Training's objectives for internal complaint handling are: -***

- Complaints will be investigated and responded to within a maximum of two weeks from the initial customer contact;
- Complaint responses will always be provided in writing;
- Complaint procedures and forms will be available via the Lifetime Training website as well as via written or verbal request;
- All complaints will be investigated by a trained member of staff and a full outcome summary provided to Senior Management;



# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

- All dissatisfaction and complaint records will be used to revise company procedures and to improve communication and business practices where applicable;
- All dissatisfaction and complaint records will be reported to senior management monthly to identify trends and mitigate reoccurrence or escalation.

## 4.3 Handling Process

***Lifetime Training's objectives for the expressions of dissatisfaction and complaint handling process are: -***

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- To ensure that our complaints procedure is fully accessible so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- To ensure everyone at Lifetime Training understands the definition of, and difference between, an expression of dissatisfaction and complaint;
- To make sure everyone at Lifetime Training knows what to do if an expression of dissatisfaction or complaint is received and how to escalate a complaint;
- To gather and record information which helps us to improve what we do;
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.

## 5 Procedures & Guidelines

### 5.1 RAISING A COMPLAINT

Individuals who request Lifetime Training's complaint handling procedure will be provided a copy of the procedure and online form and will be asked to raise their complaint in writing as soon as possible after the incident.

Complaints can be raised in any format or media (e-mail, letter, phone etc).

### 5.2 HOW TO RAISE A COMPLAINT

Individuals can make a complaint in whichever way is easiest for them, for example by telephone, e-mail, or letter. There is also a simple online form which is located on Lifetime Training's website.

<https://www.lifetimetraining.co.uk/information/complaints/>

or you can e-mail: [support@lifetimetraining.co.uk](mailto:support@lifetimetraining.co.uk)



# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

Customers who would prefer to make a verbal complaint can telephone Lifetime Training on 03330 143 669 and speaking to our reception team by selecting the option for 'any other queries'. Lines are open 09.00-17.30 Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays and between Christmas and New Year).

Customers who would prefer to submit a complaint in writing should send to Customer Care, Lifetime Training, Clifton Heights, Triangle West, Bristol, BS8 1EJ.

## **5.3 RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT**

Where a complaint has been received, a written acknowledgement must be sent to the individual within three working days. The response should detail the complaint handling procedure and provide approximate timelines and expectations for the investigation and future responses.

## **5.4 INVESTIGATING THE COMPLAINT**

A trained staff member will be assigned the role of investigating complaints and will gather all necessary documents, recordings, and information to make an independent review of the incident.

If internal interviews are to be conducted, a note taker will be present alongside the investigator and interviewee and a copy of the interview notes will be written up and signed by the interviewer and interviewee prior to them being added to the complaint history.

All investigation must take place within one week of the initial complaint being received.

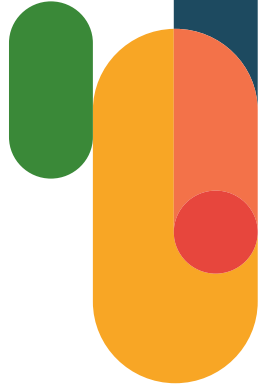
Investigations must utilise all the facts and any previous, related information to produce an unbiased outcome and an expected course of action. A complaint reference should be assigned and all documents relevant to the complaint should have the reference written on them for continuity. The reference will also be added to the Complaints Register so that complaint and documents can be audited and traced back in the future.

Lifetime Training reserves the right to pass on relevant information to a third party where there is a valid legal reason to do so and any request for information will be investigated prior to any personal information being passed on.

## **5.5 DECISION LETTER (FINAL RESPONSE)**

After the complaint, has been investigated in full and an outcome and action decision has been arrived at, the investigator will draft a final response letter to the customer with both their findings and their decision on any action to be taken.

The final response must be sent within two weeks of the initial response being raised and should also contain the below information (sections 7 through 8) should the customer be unhappy with the decision received.



# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

## 6 Complaint Recording

All expressions of dissatisfaction and complaints, whether formal or informal, are recorded on CRM. The fields within CRM consist of the below information and should be audited on a frequent basis to ensure that incidents are not being repeated and improvements are being made.

- Date
- Nature of Complaint
- Department(s) Involved
- Complaint Reference
- Lead Investigator
- Root Cause and Action Taken
- Decision Letter Sent (Y/N)
- Date Complaint Resolved/Closed

All complaints must be kept and be available for three years following resolution.



# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

## 7 Escalating a Complaint

In the event you are still not fully satisfied you should first raise an appeal in writing via e-mail or letter.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your appeal you can escalate your complaint to the relevant Governing Body.

### 7.1 AWARDING ORGANISATION

If you are a learner and wish to make an appeal against an assessment decision, please refer to the Learner Appeal policy provided at the start of your course.

### 7.2 FUNDING AGENCY

#### 7.2.1 EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

If you are an Apprentice or studying a work-based learning programme based in England who receives funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) please follow the complaints procedure as set by the governing body.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>

#### 7.2.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND

If you are an Apprentice or work-based learner based in Scotland who receives funding from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) please follow the complaints procedure as set by the governing body.

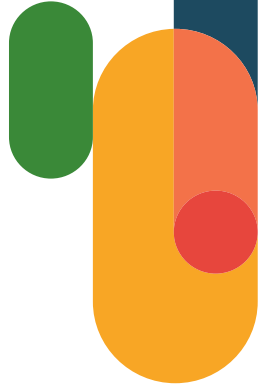
<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/about/policies/complaints/>

Candidates on regulated qualifications also have the right to complain to SQA Accreditation, Ofqual, or Qualifications Wales once they have exhausted their centre's complaints procedure and the SQA Awarding Body's complaints procedure.

## 8. Responsibilities

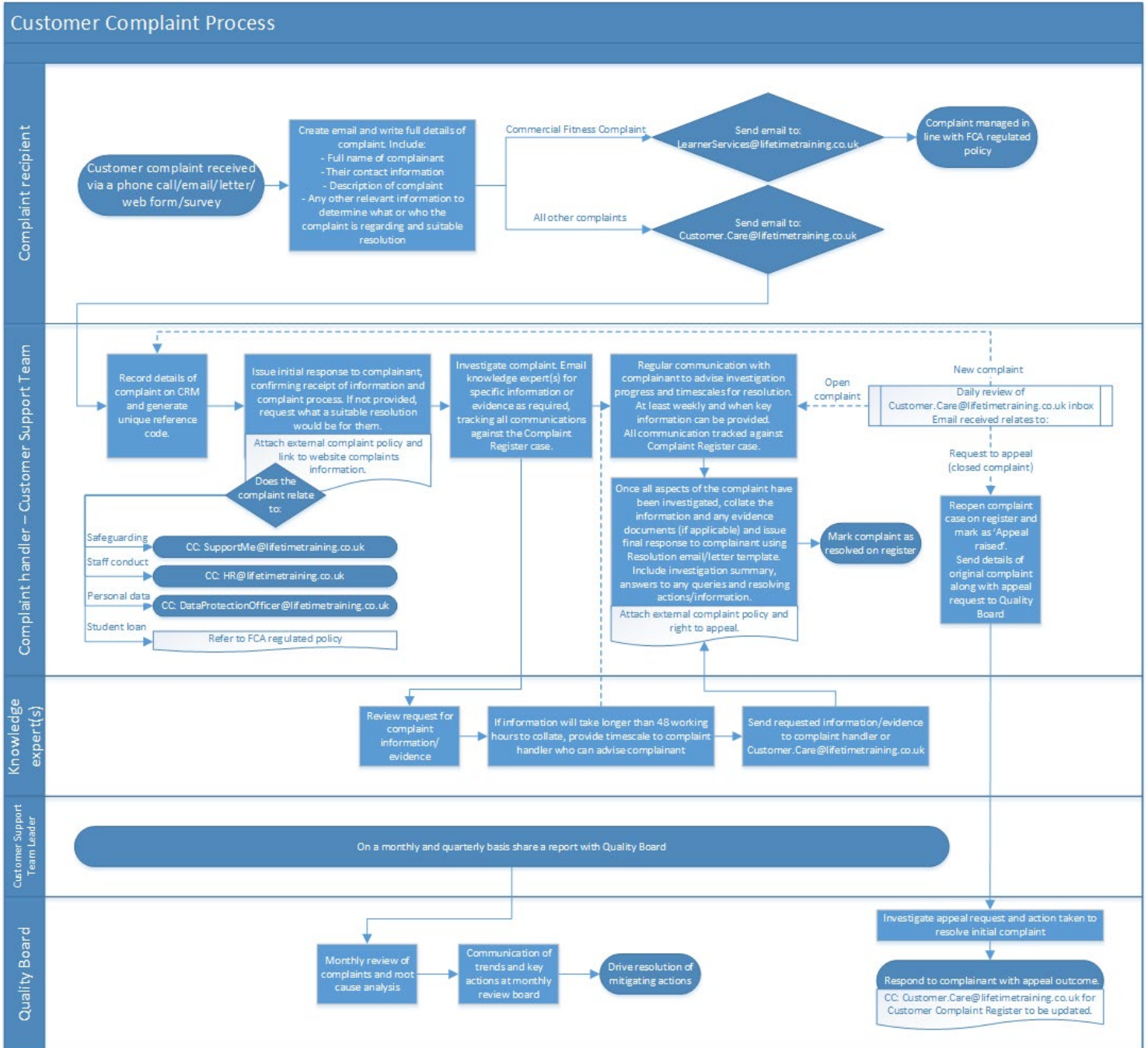
Lifetime Training will ensure that all staff are provided with the time, resources and support to learn, understand and deal with customer complaints and that full training will be provided for new and existing employees on the complaint handling policy, procedures and expectations.

The staff member handling the complaint will be appointed the role of overseeing the investigation and recording of all customer complaints and is responsible for regular auditing of the complaints log to ensure mitigating actions and improvements are put into place where possible.

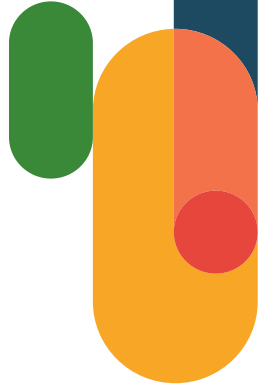


# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

## 9 Internal Process



## 10. Associated Policies



# Customer Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure

Lifetime Training Complaint Handling Policy & Procedure Regulated

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Khan'.

Alex Khan. Chief Executive Officer

Lifetime Training Group Limited 1/11/2021

Date for next Policy review: 1/11/2022