

Complaints Policy, Procedure and Process - Learners

Introduction

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School (WDFITS) is committed to providing high quality education and services to all its learners. We value their views and will be responsive to concerns when they are raised. The purpose of this Procedure is to create a supportive environment for learners to raise and manage complaints in a way which is sensitive to the needs of each specific case and to the benefit of the learner.

Learners are encouraged to raise any concerns with us immediately so that we can discuss them at an early stage and prevent matters from becoming more complex. We aim to deal with complaints in a timely and consistent way to ensure that you are not disadvantaged and the learner's learning programme is not unnecessarily disrupted.

Purpose

WDFITS is responsible for resolving issues and disputes with learners. All concerns and complaints will be monitored to ensure that they are dealt with promptly and efficiently and any action may be used to help us improve our apprenticeship provision.

WDFITS will be unable to investigate any complaints or concerns which are made anonymously.

This policy addresses the requirements upon WDFITS by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)/Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) and sets out a framework for addressing and resolving complaints relating to Apprenticeships/qualifications.

General Complaints Procedure

Prior to submitting a formal complaint (Stage 1), it is recommended that the learner raise any concerns with WDFITS informally. This provides the opportunity for WDFITS and the learner to discuss the concerns in good faith in an attempt to bring about an early resolution. The learner should, in the first instance, make contact with the WDFITS trainer who will arrange to discuss the issues of concern directly with the learner on an informal basis.

Stage 1

Should the learner be dissatisfied following informal discussions with the WDFITS trainer, or feels that their concerns have not been adequately resolved, the learner may refer their concerns, in writing, to the Operations Manager at:

email: operationsmanager@54northmaritime.co.uk

Phone: 01947 825871

The written complaint should include:

- Details of the nature of the concerns/dispute or complaint;
- Copies of supporting documentation (if any);
- Details of any discussions undertaken with the trainer and the reasons why the complaint has not been adequately resolved; and
- Any further information (such as any circumstances that WDFITS need to be aware of).

The Operations Manager and the learner shall discuss the dispute/concerns within 5 (five) working days of receipt of the written complaint in an attempt to resolve the issues raised or agree further steps required to enable the parties to come to an agreed solution.

Confirmation of the outcome of the complaint (including any action points), shall be provided to the learner in writing.

Stage 2 (Apprentices Only)

Where the parties are unable to agree a satisfactory resolution, or the learner is not satisfied with the resolution offered by WDFITS at Stage 1 above, the learner may escalate the complaint with the ESFA by contacting the ESFA Apprenticeship/awarding body helpline:

email: nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk

Phone: 0800 015 0400 (8am to 10pm, 7 days a week)

Stage 2 (Non Apprentices)

Where the parties are unable to agree a satisfactory resolution, or the learner is not satisfied with the resolution offered by WDFITS at Stage 1 above, the learner may escalate the complaint with their employer/awarding body (e.g. SQA). WDFITS will then work with the employer/awarding body to identify a satisfactory resolution to the learner complaint. If the candidate remains dissatisfied, they can further escalate their complaint to Ofqual, the regulator.

Access to Assessment Centre Policy

Awards offered by WDFITS on behalf of the awarding body are available to all those who are capable of achieving the required National Occupational Standard (NOS), by whatever assessment methods are appropriate and approved.

The process of assessment will be free from any discriminatory practices in regard to gender, ethnicity, culture and language. WDFITS will take into account the special needs of learners, including those with learning disabilities or those who may require additional support to participate in the assessment. Learners will have access to assessment, even when hours of work and the place of work create difficulties.

Communication of the access to assessment policy

- Takes place at time of initial training for the learning programme.
- Takes place when staff are training to become assessors.
- The policy is reiterated to assessors at WDFITS meetings.
- The policy is explained to learners when they commence their learning programme, and a copy of this document is issued to them.

Responsibility for implementation and monitoring of the policy rest with the Operations Manager. We make all employers aware of their need to provide assessment opportunities appropriate to the individual needs of each learner. Employers also

confirm their intention to work within an equal opportunities framework, and to adhere to the requirements of the WDFITS policy on Access to Assessment.

Assessment Complaints Procedure

Grounds for complaint include the following:

- Failure to provide suitable assessment opportunities
- Failure to provide the learner with awarding body guidelines and procedures of the assessment process.
- The assessment process, including length of time taken to achieve qualifications.

Should you have any issues or complaints to make about the assessment process, you should contact the Operations Manager as soon as possible.

Operations Manager
Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School
Haggersgate
Whitby
YO21 3PP
Tel: 01947 825871

Assessment Appeals Process

If you are dissatisfied with assessor judgements made about your performance, you have the right to appeal. All appeals will be dealt with as swiftly as possible and the times given below are the maximum allowable.

The appeals and complaints procedure comprises three stages:

Stage 1

The learner should appeal/ raise a complaint with their assessor who has five days in which to respond to their complaint. The assessor will inform the Operations Manager of the appeal/ complaint. The assessor will fully document all relevant details and both the learner and the assessor must sign and date all the paperwork. Outcomes must be recorded.

If the learner feels unable to appeal or make a complaint directly to their assessor they should contact the company Operations Manager directly. WDFITS has five days in which to respond as above.

Stage 2

If the learner is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1, the centre Internal Verifier (IV) will review all the relevant documentation and discuss the issues with both the learner and the assessor. The IV will guide both parties towards resolution and plans for continuing the assessment process. The IV must respond within five days.

An audit trail of all communication will be made and signed by the relevant people. In the event of an appeal meeting taking place, the learner can be supported by a friend or work place colleague.

Stage 3

If the learner is still dissatisfied, they should contact the Operations Manager. After exhausting the above procedure, the candidate can escalate their appeal to the awarding body. If the candidate feels that the centre and/or the awarding body has not dealt with the appeal appropriately, they can contact the regulator, Ofqual.