



Introduction

B-Skill recognises that valuable lessons can be learned from critical feedback from stakeholders. Feedback about programmes and services offered by B-Skill is encouraged, and would not normally be viewed as a complaint unless specific action was requested. In some cases, however, stakeholders may feel they have experienced unreasonable treatment, disadvantage or distress which they may want to make a complaint about. In this context the definition of a complaint is a statement expressing dissatisfaction made to a manager or other person in authority within B-Skill Ltd that requires action or response.

Aim of Policy

To provide a framework and guidance for B-Skill staff on the handling of complaints. To outline the procedures to be followed when a complaint is received to ensure all complaints are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner. B-Skill will aim to resolve any complaint and to find ways to eliminate areas of dissatisfaction.

Principles

- When a complaint is received by a member of staff, that individual must immediately inform the Executive Team and the Quality Assurance Manager by e-mail, including details of the nature of the complaint.
- B-Skill will not usually accept anonymous complaints, possible exceptions include where matters may involve allegations of safeguarding including Prevent, Equality and Diversity or bribery.
- Complaints will be responded to immediately, by a member of B-Skill, and usually by the Quality Assurance Manager or a member of the Quality team; advising that the complaint will be looked into and confirming when they will be contacted again with further information/update.
- Staff will ensure they have no conflict of interest or bias and if they feel this is so they should excuse themselves from any investigation of the complaint.
- Confidentiality will be respected within the constraints of the need to investigate the complaint.



Policy Statement

B-Skill is committed to providing a safe and effective learning and working environment for all learners, staff, associates, partners and subcontractors. B-Skill views complaints as an opportunity to review and improve its policies and practices, and to gain an insight into levels of satisfaction. We will respond to a complaint in a prompt and efficient manner.

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for implementing this procedure shall lie with the Quality Assurance Manager and Executive Team.

Informal Stage

In the first instance the member of staff involved should attempt to resolve the problem informally by talking with the complainant. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally to the satisfaction of the complainant then the formal procedure should be followed.

Formal Stage

- A The complaint will be notified to the Executive Team and the Quality Assurance Manager as soon as possible upon receipt of the complaint, in writing via e-mail, with a brief overview or a copy of the complaint.
- B The Quality Assurance Manager will liaise with the member of staff or manager who has received the complaint, to establish the nature and seriousness of the complaint and to ensure that information has been captured accurately and thoroughly.
- C The Quality Assurance Manager will log the complaint for monitoring purposes, in the B-Skill central record for complaints and chase up progress to encourage a timely and mutually agreeable resolution for all parties.
- D The Quality Assurance Manager will keep the Director responsible for Quality advised on progress of the investigation into the complaint to ensure that adequate resources and support are in place to carry out a full investigation into the matter.
- E The Quality Assurance Manager will also ensure that the manager/member of staff involved is keeping the individuals/learner(s) advised on progress of the investigation so that they are confident that their complaint is being addressed
- F When the Executive team are satisfied that the complaint has been investigated to a satisfactory conclusion and that everything possible has been done to investigate and resolve the issue, the Quality Assurance Manager will formally close the complaint on the central record.
- G The Quality Assurance Manager will make recommendations for the implementation of improvements to prevent re-occurrence of any similar complaint.
- H The Quality Assurance Manager will record recommended improvements on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) as appropriate.



If the complaint is not resolved at this stage the complainant has the right of appeal.

Appeal

- Upon receipt of a notice of appeal by a complainant against a decision made at the Formal Stage, the staff member/manager shall inform the Quality Assurance Manager immediately, who will then notify the Executive Team.
- The Executive Team shall consider the appeal and reply within 10 working days.
- Should the complaint not be resolved at this stage the Executive Team will provide the complainant with information on any further steps which may be taken.

Time Scales

Unless the complaint goes to an appeal the complainant should be informed within 20 working days of the result of the complaint. However, where further extensive investigations are required, the complainant will be kept informed and advised throughout. The result will be notified at the earliest point in time once the matter is concluded.

Follow Up

If the complainant does not write to appeal against the response within 10 working days of receiving a reply, we will assume that the complainant is happy with the response and close the complaint.

Records of Complaints

The Quality Assurance Manager shall ensure that records of every formal complaint are kept securely.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to complaints made by any learner, parent, employer or other stakeholder using B-Skill's services.

This policy does not over-ride the candidate appeals procedure which would normally be followed in relation to appeals against assessment decisions.

Internal complaints, such as B-Skill staff wishing to complain of unfair treatment at work will be dealt with through B-Skill's internal grievance procedure, the details of which are contained in the staff Personnel Rules.

Related Policies

B-Skill Complaints Process Appendix – QSP 028a Flow Chart 'Complaints Policy Process'
Personnel rules - QSP 002
Candidate Appeals procedure – QST 101