

Feedback, Complaints and Compliments Policy



Policy Date: June 2022

Reviews

Date	Key changes (if any)	Next review
July 2023	No changes	July 2024
August 2024	IQA details added	August 2025
August 2025	No changes	August 2026
September 2026	Escalation routes added	September 2027

Policy Overview

Community Matters strives for excellence and aims to continually improve its standards of provision. To support this, we actively seek feedback from learners and employers regarding our trainers, delivery materials, and course content. Your feedback is vital to our ongoing quality assurance processes.

We recognise that, on occasion, standards may fall short of expectations, and learners, employers, or external stakeholders may feel they have cause to raise a complaint regarding the service received.

When issues arise, Community Matters is committed to resolving them promptly, fairly, and effectively. We aim to maintain a supportive learning environment that maximises the academic, social, and personal opportunities of all learners by keeping all parties fully informed throughout any investigation.

Any concerns regarding our standards of service will be treated with the utmost seriousness and utilised constructively to drive continuous organisational improvement.

Policy Objectives

Community Matters seeks to ensure that:

- All complaints are investigated and handled seriously, fairly, impartially, and consistently.
- Lessons are learned from every complaint to enhance future organisational performance and service delivery.
- Clear performance targets are established and monitored for responding to complaints.
- Customers, learners, employers, and stakeholders are fully informed of their right to appeal if they remain dissatisfied after exhausting the internal Complaints Procedure.

Feedback, Complaints and Compliments Policy



- All learners, employers, and external stakeholders are aware of the formal mechanisms for lodging a complaint.
- Staff are fully trained and aware of the correct operational procedures to follow should a complaint arise.
- All complaints are handled sensitively and in strict accordance with the Community Matters Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

Grounds for Complaint

Community Matters will thoroughly investigate complaints concerning:

- Allegations of unsatisfactory, incompetent, arbitrary, or unfair treatment.
- Failure to meet published timeframes or deadlines for decision-making.
- Non-compliance with published procedures, contractual obligations, or statutory requirements under the Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Complaints generally fall within the following operational categories:

Candidate/Learner Concerns

- Access to assessment, learning resources, or scheduled tutorials.
- The quality, conduct, or fairness of the assessment process.
- Access to Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) procedures.
- The formal handling and administration of an appeal.
- General administrative or operational issues.

Assessor Concerns

- Access to necessary professional support, guidance, and resources.
- Access to Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) processes.
- Administrative or systems-related issues.
- Insufficient allocated time or resources to carry out assessment duties effectively.

Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) concerns

- Access to appropriate strategic support and guidance.
- Insufficient allocated time to perform quality assurance functions thoroughly.

Exclusion from This Policy

Community Matters will not investigate under this procedure:

- Commercial or contractual business disputes.

Feedback, Complaints and Compliments Policy

- Matters that are currently subject to, or have previously been resolved by, a court of law or similar legal body.
- Complaints where established internal appeals procedures have not yet been fully exhausted.
- Complaints submitted more than 28 calendar days after the relevant event, incident, or decision occurred.
- Issues deemed to be frivolous, vexatious, or malicious.

Our Commitments

Community Matters pledges to:

- Be open, receptive, and responsive to genuine expressions of dissatisfaction.
- Address and resolve all complaints promptly, transparently, and equitably.
- Embed organisational learning from complaints to implement corrective and preventative actions.
- Actively promote equality, diversity, inclusion, and human rights throughout the complaint process.

Where possible, we aim to resolve straightforward, minor concerns informally and swiftly at the point of delivery without necessitating a formal investigation.

Complaints Procedure and Resolution Stages

Information Distribution and Accessibility

All candidates, employers, and staff members receive a copy of this complaints policy during their induction. The policy remains permanently accessible via the e-portfolio system (Aptem).

2. Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- **Procedure:** Learners should initially attempt to resolve concerns informally through a direct, verbal or written discussion (via face-to-face meeting, phone, or email).
- **Recipient:** The assigned Trainer / Assessor.
- **Objective:** To reach an immediate, amicable resolution without formal escalation.

3. Stage 2: Formal Complaint Investigation

- **Procedure:** If an issue cannot be resolved informally, the learner must submit a formal complaint in writing.
- **Recipient:** The Internal Quality Assurer, Pinar Engin (pinar.engin@communitymatters.co.uk).

Feedback, Complaints and Compliments Policy

- **Logging and Tracking:** The complaint will be logged on the official Complaints Report Log within 48 hours of receipt.
- **Acknowledgement:** Community Matters will issue a formal written acknowledgement to the complainant within 48 hours of receipt.
- **Panel Review:** A formal complaint panel—comprising the Internal Quality Assurer and the Apprenticeship Delivery Manager—will review and investigate the complaint within 4 weeks of receipt.
- **Confidentiality and Data Protection:** All proceedings are conducted in strict confidence, fully aligned with UK GDPR and Data Protection principles. A copy of our Data Protection Policy will be supplied upon request to inform complainants of data-handling protocols while protecting individual anonymity where required.
- **Formal Notification:** The complainant will receive written notification of the panel's decision within 48 hours of the conclusion of the panel meeting. The notification will set out a detailed summary of the findings and full reasoning behind the decision. All documentation, evidence, and timeframes will be logged electronically prior to the formal closure of the complaint file.

Escalation Routes

Internal Escalation (Stage 3: Centre Appeal)

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, they reserve the right to lodge a formal appeal within **28 calendar days** of receiving the Stage 2 outcome notification.

- **Recipient:** Director of Apprenticeships, Murat Ozcelik (murat.ozcelik@communitymatters.co.uk).
- **Process and Response:** The Director of Apprenticeships will review the complete investigation file, panel decision, and new evidence supplied, issuing a final written determination within **14 working days** of receipt.

External Escalation Routes

If the complainant has fully exhausted the internal complaints process (Stages 1–3) and remains dissatisfied with the final outcome, they may escalate their complaint externally to the relevant regulatory and awarding bodies:

1. Relevant Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation (AAO)

- If the complaint concerns end-point assessment delivery, gateway readiness, or apprenticeship assessment-specific decisions, the learner may escalate the matter directly to their designated AAO.
- **Timescale:** Appeals to the AAO must typically be lodged within **28 days** of receiving the final internal appeal outcome from Community Matters. Specific contact details

Feedback, Complaints and Compliments Policy



for the learner's allocated EPAO are documented within their induction pack and e-portfolio.

2. Qualification Regulators and Funding Bodies

If the issue remains unresolved following EPAO escalation, or relates to statutory qualification compliance, delivery quality, or provider conduct, the learner may escalate to the appropriate external oversight body:

- **Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation):** Oversees regulated qualifications and EPAOs in England.
- **Department for Education (DfE):** Handles complaints regarding the quality, management, or funding of apprenticeship training provision.
- **Timescale:** Regulators will review whether Community Matters adhered to its published policies and legal duties, responding in accordance with their standard published investigation frameworks.

Quality Assurance, Monitoring, and Review

Where a complaint is substantiated (in whole or in part), Community Matters will take immediate, reasonable steps to rectify the issue and prevent reoccurrence.

The Internal Quality Assurer systematically logs, tracks, and analyses all complaints to evaluate operational trends, identify root causes, and drive systemic improvements across our apprenticeship provision.

This policy is monitored continually by the Internal Quality Assurer to address emerging trends proactively, and undergoes a full formal review annually.