

AYTUN VOCATIONAL COLLEGE LONDON

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURES

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Appendix 4

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1. OVERVIEW

1.1 Aytun Vocational College London (AVCL) welcomes comments and suggestions from students about the services it provides. Students wishing to make a suggestion or comment about the College's policies or services, either academic or non-academic, can do so informally:

- at the point where the service is provided, or
- by contacting the person in charge of the relevant area, or (where it seems appropriate)
- by raising the matter with a student union representative
- with their College Tutor/Assessor.

1.2 AVCL's complaints procedure is designed to ensure that any questions and problems you may have in connection with the College are aired quickly, and resolved fairly and consistently. We therefore encourage you to use the following procedure to facilitate this. Complaints may relate to a wide range of issues, including health and safety, the physical environment, and the standards, performance, decisions or actions of one or more of our members of staff or of the College as a whole.

1.3 The procedure is designed to be accessible and transparent, and to indicate how such matters should be dealt with within AVCL, although we reserve the right at our discretion to vary, replace or terminate the procedure at any stage. It cannot be used to deal with an anonymous complaint as it would be difficult to accurately determine the particular circumstances relating to such a complaint.

1.4 The College welcomes comments and suggestions from students about the services it provides. Students wishing to make a suggestion or comment about the College's policies or services, either academic or non-academic, can do so informally:

- at the point where the service is provided, or
- by contacting the person in charge of the relevant area, or (where it seems appropriate)
- by raising the matter with a student union representative
- With their College Tutor.

2. MAKING A COMPLAINT

2.1 A complaint can be made in a variety of ways although in all cases a complaint form (a copy is attached to this policy) should be completed. This can be completed by the complainant or on their behalf by a member of staff or complainant's representative. This form ensures that we collect relevant information in a standard formant and enables the person to tell us what they like us to do.

§ **By telephone or in person**

2.2 If the caller, visitor or student is unhappy with the service they have received, and it is not possible to immediately resolve the issue to their satisfaction, we should offer them the opportunity of making a formal complaint.

2.3 If the caller, visitor or student wishes to make a formal complaint they should be asked whether they wish to complete a complaint form or whether they would like a form complained on their behalf.

2.4 If they wish to complete a complaint form they should be sent or given a copy of this policy with the Complaint Form attached.



2.5 If they would like a form completed on their behalf the officer dealing with the complainant (or another officer if the complainant requests this) should complete the complaint form with the complainant and then explain what happens next in the procedure. The officer should not attempt to deal with the complaint at this stage.

2.6 A copy of the complaint form should be returned to or given to the complainant.

§ In writing

2.7 Students may also express dissatisfaction with a service in writing. Where such a letter is received it should not generally be treated as a formal complaint in the first instance. Normally, the officer responding to the letter should attempt to resolve the matter in their reply, as this is assumed to be the equivalent of trying to “immediately resolve the issue to the customer’s satisfaction” as applied to telephone or personal complaints.

2.8 The reply to the letter should always explain to the complainant that if they are not satisfied with the response they are able to submit a formal complaint and should explain to the complainant how to do so.

§ Through a representative

2.9 At any stage of the complaints process a student may make a complaint through a representative or an agent authorised to act on their behalf. These may include, for example, customer representative, solicitor or Citizens’ Advice Bureau staff.

2.10 The student’s representative can either advise the customer about the complaints procedure or take up the complaint on the students’ behalf, acting as their advocate. In the latter case, the representative should help the student complete the complaint form and refer the complaint to the appropriate person according to the stage the complaint has reached. Any response should be copied to the representative as well as the complainant.

3. RECEIPT AND LOGGING OF COMPLAINTS

3.1 All complaints forms should be passed to the Centre Director. Details of the complaint are logged onto the complaints database, after checking that the stage is correct. A standard acknowledgement letter to the complainant (and their representative, if applicable) will be sent within one working day. This will detail who is dealing with the complaint and when they are due to receive a full reply. The target date is for a response to be sent within ten working days. For example, if the complaint was logged on Friday then a reply should be sent first class before the Friday in two weeks time.

3.2 The officer logging the complaint will then be instructed by the Director to distribute it to the appropriate officer to investigate and respond according to the stage.



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4. STAGES OF COMPLAINT

4.1 There are three stages in the complaint policy, and each complaint should start at the first stage and progress through until it has been resolved. However, the Director has the discretion to bypass stages if it is warranted. For example, a complaint concerning an Assessor could be investigated by the Internal Quality Assurance and start at stage 2.

4.2 Complaints from students with special needs could also start from stage 2. In this case, the receiving officer will pass the complaint to the Director, clearly stating the student's situation.

§ **Stage 1 - Team leader**

4.3 A stage 1 complaint begins as soon as we have received notification of it. After logging, the complaint is passed to the Team Leader who will investigate and respond within the Target Date.

4.4 There may a few occasions where a full investigation is not possible within the timescale. In this instance a reply should still be sent within ten days explaining why and giving a definite date for a reply.

4.5 Investigating the complaint: At stage 1 the Team Leader will investigate the complaint. This should involve finding out what happened and what can be done now. It can involve talking to staff, looking at files and records, checking whether policies and procedures were inadequate and drafting a response to the complainant.

4.6 This response should address the points raised by the complaint. It will explain whether or not AVCL felt the complaint to be justified or not. Even if it was not justified the complaint will still be investigated because the complainant had felt aggrieved. It will detail what investigation was undertaken and the outcome of this. The complainant will be offered compensation or an apology where appropriate.

Satisfaction:

At each stage in the process, the person responding to the complainant should ask them to state whether or not they are satisfied with the response to their complaint. They should advise the complainant of the next stage in the procedure if they are not satisfied and wish to take the complaint further.

§ **Stage 2 - Director Level**

4.7 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response at stage 1, they should then submit a stage 2 complaint, which will be responded to by the Director. The registration of the complaint at this level will be acknowledged by letter on the same day. The relevant person will then investigate the complaint and respond within ten working days.

§ **Stage 3 - Complaint Panel**

4.8 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response at stage 2, they should submit a stage 3 complaint. A complaints panel will be established, to which the complainant will be invited. The panel should meet within one month of the complaint reaching stage 3.



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4.9 The complainant panel will consist of four people: a senior member of staff, a senior member of an external/impartial organisation empathic to the service the Centre provides, a management committee member and one student representative. The senior staff member should be the Director. The customer representative should not be from the same address in which the complainant lives.

4.10 One of the four panel members will then be elected as Chair, the role of whom will be to ensure that the complaint is fully re-investigated, and the response is not just a reproduction of previous response.

4.11 When the Panel has discussed the complaint, they will respond to the complainant within 7 days.

4.12 If the complainant feels that the Centre has discriminated against them on the grounds of race or gender they can take the complaint to the county court at any time. If there are number of complaints presented together then the person investigating should decide whether to log it as one complaint or many. Regardless of this decision each issue will still be investigated thoroughly.

External Escalation:

AVCL hopes to resolve all complaints in a satisfactory manner. However, if you are still unhappy with the resolution, you have the opportunity to appeal to the appropriate external bodies.

Complaints, concerns or enquiries from AVCL apprentices can be escalated to the ESFA using the following contact details:

0800 015 0400 or 0247 682 6482

nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeship.gov.uk



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Appendix 1

Appeals Procedure Flowchart

Any Candidate has the right of appeal if they disagree with any assessment decision at any stage of the process.

The following procedures should be followed:

APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION OF AN ASSESSOR



Request for further clarification from the Assessor: Within fifteen days of the feedback from the Assessor. (If not satisfied)



Lodge an appeal with the Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and/or Centre Manager within twenty days of being notified of the assessment decision.



IQA/Centre Manager will re-assess your evidence, attempt to find a solution e.g. through another assessments or reconsideration of the evidence/work and provide written feedback of decision. (If not satisfied)



If IQA /Centre Manager upholds original determination and decision is still in dispute, appeal in writing to the Appeals Panel within 20 days of being notified of the IQA/Centre Manager's decision.



The panel will be small and made up of one Assessor (not connected to the centre), one IQA (not connected to the centre), one candidate (not connect to the candidate making the appeal) the Awarding Body's External Quality Assurance will also be notified stating the reason for the appeal and how it will be heard.



The panel will meet within 20 days of the receipt of the written request for the hearing. The Candidate and the IQA will be notified of the Panel's decision.



The Panel's decision will be final.

(Unresolved appeals will be referred to the Principal)

All of the above must be carried out in writing and copies sent to Aytun Vocational College London



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Appendix 2

Complaints and Appeals Contacts

Principal

Yetunde Majek

Email: **yetunde@aytuncollege.com**

Contact: **07908708424**

Lead Internal Quality Assurer/ Internal Verifier

Sam Akande

Email: **sam@aytuncollege.com**

Contact: **07956875712**

Contracts & Compliance Manager

Kamel Hachouf

Email: **kamel@aytuncollege.com**

Contact: **07943855000**

Head of Administration

Joseph M

Email: **joseph.m@aytuncollege.com**

Contact: **07568273552**



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Appendix 3

Complaints Form



Please use this form if you wish to make a complaint about a service provided by Aytun Vocational College London.

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____

Full Name: _____

Contact Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Are you currently studying with us? YES / NO ?

If yes, What course/subject? _____

Who is your complaint about? _____



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Appeals Follow through Form



Making an Appeal

Name of Candidate:

Programme :

Name of Assessor(s):

Name of Internal Verifier(s):

Cause of Appeal:

Action Taken:

By whom:

Appeal concluded: Yes/No

Referred to next stage: Yes/No

I fully understand the action taken and agree with the follow up action:

Signed:

Date:

.....
(Candidate)

Signed:

Name:

.....
(Responsible Officer)

Position in Centre

Date:



