

## **Cherith Simmons Learning and Development**

### **Complaints policy**

**Partner responsible for the Policy: Jerry West**

**Date of renewal: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

#### **Who does this Policy apply to?**

The complaints policy is open to all people served by Cherith Simmons Learning and Development including participants, clients, managers and venue staff.

#### **Policy statement**

The complaints policy is intended to enable any person(s) to bring matters of dissatisfaction or concern to the attention of Cherith Simmons Learning and Development, so that those concerns can be investigated with the aim of reaching a satisfactory resolution and instigating changes which lead to improved services.

Cherith Simmons Learning and Development will respond to any complaint fairly and promptly:

- An acknowledgement response will be provided within 2 working days of the receipt of the complaint.
- A further, more detailed response will be made within 10 working days.
- A meeting may be offered between the parties involved if appropriate.
- An appeal may be made to Cherith Simmons within 10 working days if the complainant (person making the complaint) is dissatisfied with the outcome they receive.

#### **Why do we need this policy/background information**

Complaints are an important way for the organisation to be accountable to our participants, clients, managers etc. They also provide valuable prompts to review our organisational performance and the conduct of staff who work for Cherith Simmons Learning and Development.

Effective complaint handling can provide key benefits to Cherith Simmons Learning and Development such as:

- Providing information that can lead to improvements in service and delivery.
- Resolve issues raised by a person who is dissatisfied in a timely and cost-effective way.
- Improve reputation and strengthen public confidence in Cherith Simmons Learning and Development's administrative processes where complaints are handled properly

### **Internal procedure**

#### Stage 1 (Informal complaints)

1. Check with the participant/client that they wish their complaint to be dealt with formally. They may just be letting off steam.
2. If the participant/client wishes just to make an informal complaint direct it to the relevant partner who is "in charge" of that area of work:
  - Mike - invoicing and finance
  - Jerry – marking, accreditation, schedules, quality
  - Peter - marketing
  - Cherith – trainingAll partners should be copied into any correspondence.
3. The complainant should be advised that informal complaints will take up to 5 working days to investigate.
4. Add the participant to Informal complaints list on Maximiser ensuring all emails are saved from each party.
5. Head any documentation "Informal complaint."
6. Carry out an investigation to find all the evidence regarding the circumstances and respond to the complainant within the agreed 5 working days.

## Stage 2 (Formal complaints)

1. If the participant/client wishes to make a formal complaint the complainant should be advised that it must be put in writing (email will suffice)
2. Any formal complaint should be directed to the relevant partner “in charge” of that area of work e.g.
  - Mike - invoicing and finance
  - Jerry – marking, accreditation, schedules, Quality
  - Peter - marketing
  - Cherith – trainingA copy should be sent to Senior Partners
3. The complainant should be advised that formal complaints will take up to 10 working days to investigate.
4. Add the participant to Complaints list on Maximiser ensuring all emails are saved from each party.
5. Head any documentation “Formal complaint.”
6. Carry out an investigation to find all the evidence regarding the circumstances.
7. Send an ‘acknowledgement of receipt’ email to the participant/client saying the following “We have instigated the formal complaints procedure and it will be investigated and dealt with at a higher level. Within 20 working days from the formal complaint being received, you will receive a response”.
8. All partners should be copied into all correspondence.
9. The manager dealing with the complaint will:
  - Dismiss the complaint as unfounded, providing reasons.
  - Propose an amicable resolution.
  - Uphold or partially uphold the complaint, offer an apology and take appropriate steps to address the issue to avoid a similar problem arising in the future.

## Final stage

An individual may refer to awarding bodies Complaints Procedure if they remain unsatisfied with the outcome of any complaint once all internal procedures have been followed.

Apprentices may also contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency if they remain unsatisfied with the outcome of any complaint once all internal procedures have been followed.

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>

All complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible, the complainant will receive regular updates until a final written response outlining the outcome is provided.

**Every participant is made aware of the complaints policy through Flexilearner**