

FlatWorldWorks Ltd

Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy

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Approved By:	Ray Robinson
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Amendment History

This document is reviewed periodically, at least annually, and is retained for a period of 5 years. Amendments and revisions are distributed to the named holders. The history of amendments and the issue of revisions are recorded below.

Date	Version	Page Amended	New Issue No.	Reason for Change	Authorised By
31/01/2019	1			Initial release	Ray Robinson
1/03/2020			2	BCS appeals	Ray Robinson
	2		3		
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Copies of this document other than those listed above will not be revised; such copies will be marked as **UNCONTROLLED**.

FWW Directors require the effectiveness of this policy to be monitored and this is achieved by annual reviews, amendments as defined by changes in legislation and any operational changes which may impact on this policy. All amendments are to be countersigned by a Director.

Signed:  (Director)

Date: 31 January 2022

Next planned policy review date: January 2023 (unless required sooner)

An online copy of this policy can be found at <https://www.flatworldworks.com/assets/doc/FWWComplimentsandComplaints.pdf>

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SCOPE AND PURPOSE

FlatWorldWorks Ltd is committed to providing high quality service in all aspects of its business. However, we understand that from time to time we may need to review quickly if any aspect falls short of our usual quality. This Policy explains how members of the community which FWW serves including apprentices, parents, carers, guardians and employers can complain about the service provided and the procedure which will be followed in responding to those complaints. The Policy also sets out the arrangements for the handling of compliments. In addition, this policy also outlines the appeals process for apprentices and learners undertaking training as part of FWW Academy.

The Academy's Mission Statement sets out the commitment to provide access to the "highest quality education and skills training to meet the needs of individuals, employers and the communities which it serves".

The objectives of the Compliments and Complaints Policy is to provide;

- A rapid, open process which is fair to complainants and staff alike
- A procedure designed to resolve problems and satisfy concerns promptly
- A thorough investigation into complaints received
- Improvement to services for apprentices and learners and the quality of provision by acting promptly in response to feedback received and the recommendations made following the investigation of complaints
- Structured recording, monitoring and reporting of complaints

Matters relating to the assessment and or grading of an apprentice's work are not within the scope of this policy, the Academic Appeals Policy is the relevant policy.

The Education Lead will, where appropriate, assist in delivering this policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Education Lead is responsible for the policy, for ensuring that FlatWorldWorks responds to compliments and complaints in accordance with the procedures set out within the policy and for ensuring that complaints and compliments are reported regularly.

The Education Lead is responsible for the administration of compliments and complaints and for maintaining records of those compliments and complaints received.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLICY

This policy reflects sector best practice regarding complaints and praise as well as the standards set out within the quality procedures for awarding bodies and ESFA guidelines relating to apprenticeships.

The policy reflects Education Skills Funding Agency guidance relating to the management of complaints and the arrangements for appeals including the right of appeal to the Education and Skills Funding Agency when FlatWorldWorks procedure has been exhausted. Further information relating to the guidance provided can be found on the agency website

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>) or, alternatively, is available upon request from FlatWorldWorks.

POLICY

Compliments and Complaints will be used positively to improve service delivery.

Procedures will be open, simple and aim to deal with the complaint as near to its source as possible. Academy staff will provide support and advice to anybody wishing to make a complaint including those with a learning difficulty or disability. Where an apprentice is unable or reluctant to present their complaint without support, a member of FlatWorldWorks Training and Academy team will provide that support upon request. This may include representing the apprentice at any meeting which forms part of a formal investigation conducted by FlatWorldWorks.

FlatWorldWorks will operate a fair, efficient and confidential system which is simple and accessible and does not put at risk of disadvantage or discriminates against anyone who makes a complaint in good faith in accordance with this policy.

FlatWorldWorks reserves the right to deem as “out of time” any issue that has not been raised within four months.

COMPLIMENTS

Compliments received by managers or other staff will normally be passed on to the individual or individuals who is or are the subject of the compliment. A central record will be maintained by the Academy. Managers will use compliments to motivate staff and, where appropriate, support the promotion of FlatWorldWorks activities.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A complaint is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more apprentices about FlatWorldWorks action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of FlatWorldWorks”.

Examples of complaints include;

- Failure by FlatWorldWorks to meet obligations including those outlined within course/learner handbooks
- Misleading or incorrect information in prospectuses or promotional materials and other information provided by FlatWorldWorks
- Concerns about the delivery of a course or programme, teaching or administration including, where applicable, that provided by a partner organisation
- Poor quality facilities, learning resources, or services provided directly by FlatWorldWorks

Complaints may be brought to the attention of FlatWorldWorks in person, in writing, by telephone or by email. Apprentices may submit a 'group complaint'. Where a complaint is made by several apprentices, FlatWorldWorks may ask the group to nominate one apprentice to act as a group representative.

Complainants should set out the details of their complaint clearly and concisely and wherever possible provide evidence to substantiate their complaint. Evidence submitted might include, for example, independent medical evidence, reports by professionals, financial information, witness statements or other written information.

An apprentice who makes a complaint knowing or having reasonable grounds for believing that it is untrue, may be subject to action in accordance with FlatWorldWorks Disciplinary Procedure. A complaint considered to be vexatious or malicious may be rejected subject to the complainant being advised in writing within seven days of the decision to reject the complaint.

Complaints may only be made by an apprentice or group of apprentices, parent, carer or guardian of a 16- to 18-year-old learner or an employer and not by a representative or third party.

FlatWorldWorks will endeavour to resolve complaints informally in the first instance with the objective of achieving an early a resolution. Where it is not possible to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant informally; where the complainant declines to engage with the informal resolution process; or where the seriousness or complexity of the complaint is such that it is more appropriate that it be dealt with formally, the complainant will be advised of the formal complaints procedure.

Formal complaints will be recorded by the Education Lead who will maintain the centralised database and correspondence file. Complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and the complainant advised of the line manager undertaking the investigation.

Where the nature of the complaint is such that a particularly prompt response is required, to safeguard or protect an individual for example, FlatWorldWorks will act promptly to resolve such matters as quickly as possible.

FlatWorldWorks will allocate an investigating officer to complete an investigation into each formal complaint. The investigating officer will normally be a member of staff who has had no previous involvement in the matter. A copy of the complaint will be sent to the investigating manager who will respond to the complainant within 10 working days. Where a complaint requires more lengthy investigation, updates will be provided at intervals not exceeding 10 working days. Any complaint not resolved within 21 days will be reported to the Director of Training. Investigating managers will keep copies of any notes or correspondence undertaken in relation to the complaint.

The investigating manager will provide a written response summarising the nature of the complaint, the evidence obtained, details of any witnesses interviewed, and the conclusion reached including whether a complaint is justified or not justified, a clear explanation for the reasons for each decision and what action is necessary. Where a complaint is justified, the investigating manager must report in writing what action has been taken to avoid recurrence of similar complaints.

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Anonymous complaints will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of FlatWorldWorks. FlatWorldWorks decision in adjudging whether an anonymous complaint is investigated will be final.

APPEALS

Where a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of an investigation, an appeal can be made to the Board of Directors within 10 working days of receipt of the official response. The Board of Directors will review the complaint and respond within 21 working days. Complainants also have the right of appeal directly to the awarding body e.g. BCS for the Cyber apprenticeship.

Appeals to Directors should be submitted to:

FlatWorldWorks Board of Directors, The Old Rectory, 57 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 4QH

Apprentices having exhausted FlatWorldWorks complaints procedure including the right of appeal to Directors, also have a right to complain directly to the awarding body of the programme if the learner is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint raised within the process outlined above under the FlatWorldWorks appeals process.

For the Cyber Security Technologist Apprenticeship the awarding body is BCS, and learners are directed to the following document

<https://www.bcs.org/media/3196/complaints-policy.pdf> When contacting BCS complainants are asked to do so in writing and provide the following information : candidate full name, contact details including an email address (where applicable) and a daytime telephone number along with:

- a full description of your complaint (including subject matter and dates/times if known)
- the date and location of the course / examination if applicable
- any names of the people you have dealt with so far
- copies of any supporting documentation to do with the complaint
- any previous correspondence with the training provider if applicable

The learner must submit notice of an appeal within 20 working days of the assessment/examination result being released. Any appeals received after this date will be reviewed on a case by case basis and may be allowed to proceed if there are extenuating circumstances as to why the appeal was not submitted within the required timeframe.

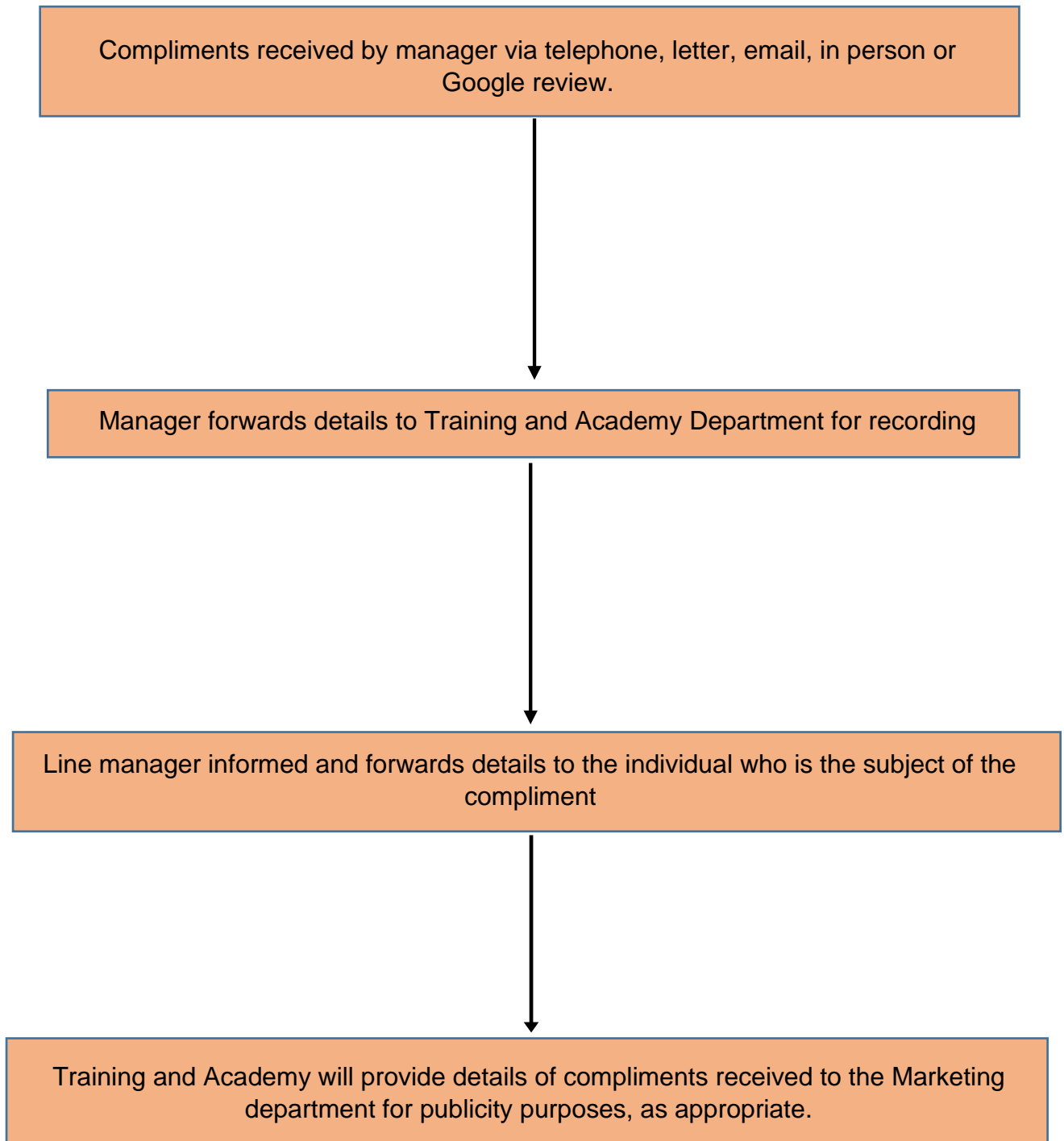
In addition, the apprentice also has the right to complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Further information is available on the website

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship> or upon request from FWW Training and Academy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Compliments and complaints will be reported within FlatWorldWorks for consideration by the Board of Directors and the Senior Management Team. The Board of Directors, will receive an annual report on those compliments and complaints received during the previous twelve months. The Education Lead, will produce an annual report under the following categories:

1. Quality of Apprenticeships
2. FlatWorldWorks acted unreasonably
3. FlatWorldWorks acted in default of duties and power
4. Course unavailable
5. Manner or conduct of staff
6. Manner or conduct of apprentices
7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
8. Other

COMPLIMENTS – FLOWCHART OF PROCESS

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FLOWCHART
OF PROCESS**

