

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy details the **SkyPeople Training** (hereafter be annotated 'SPT') Complaints Procedure, how Training Providers/Employers or Apprentices can make a complaint and how we will handle your complaint. We are very confident that you will be satisfied with our excellent assessment delivery standards and that your Apprentices will have a good experience with us. Therefore, it is very important that you let us know as soon as possible if you feel we are not achieving this, so that we can make changes where necessary as soon as possible.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all SPT End Point Assessments (EPAs) and all standards that we are approved to deliver. It applies to all complaints that are made by Apprentices, Training Providers/Employers or anyone involved in the delivery of EPAs.

This policy does not apply for any enquiries or appeals about an assessment decision made by SPT. Neither does it apply for any suspected malpractice or maladministration. In these cases, we refer you to our other relevant policies (included with this submission) such as:

- SPT Enquiries and Appeals Policy
- SPT Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

3. Definitions

A complaint relates to any dissatisfaction with the provision of SPT's EPA service that has been drawn to the attention of a member of the SPT EPA Delivery Team, where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.

4. Aims

The purpose of this Complaints policy is to demonstrate our commitment to ensuring any concerns and complaints are dealt with efficiently and effectively, and that we operate to the highest standards of openness, honesty and accountability.

5. Our commitment

SPT aim to always ensure Apprentice and Training Provider/Employer satisfaction. Anyone involved in any aspect of the EPA has the right to complain if they are dissatisfied about any aspect of the service they receive from SPT.

We will ensure that all of our staff and all of your Apprentices are aware of the contents of this document, so that everyone is clear about our complaints handling procedure and how to follow the procedures contained within it.

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SPT will:

- Monitor complaints and disclosures received to review the service and contribution towards continuous improvement.
- Informally discuss any concerns with Apprentices, Training Providers/Employers with a view to resolving concerns before a formal complaint is made.
- Address a formal complaint only when informal discussions and actions do not resolve the issue or if the Apprentice or Training Provider/Employer makes a request to do so.
- Follow our complaints procedures to ensure timely and transparent decisions are made and so that any required actions can be carried out without adverse effect on Apprentices' EPA progress.
- Ensure that any complaints and disclosures are handled confidentially and only provide to others the information needed to carry out a full investigation and make a response.
- Ensure that any documentation related to the complaint remains confidential. All details will be held in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and DfE guidelines.
- Ensure that any complaint or disclosure made in good faith will not disadvantage the complainant or lead to victimisation.
- Provide Apprentices, Training Providers/Employers with details of how to make a complaint, or how to appeal an assessment decision via our other relevant policies.

6. Our complaints procedure

How to make a complaint:

Stage 1: Informal Complaint

We recommend first speaking to your Independent End-point Assessor (IEPA) immediately, who will be the best-placed person to solve a problem quickly. Our IEPAs are very experienced in customer services and will be very willing to help solve any issues.

If the IEPA is unable to help you, or if you wish to speak to someone else, you can always request to speak to our Head of EPA (or Lead IEPA if you have been appointed one). If the Head of EPA (or lead IEPA if you have been appointed one) is unable to solve the problem, or you are not satisfied with the solution we found, then you may proceed to Stage 2 (Formal Complaints).

However, the informal complaint stage must have been initiated, before proceeding to Stage 2.

Note: Complaints can also be initiated using the SPT End of Assessment Feedback Forms which are given to our Apprentices and Training Providers/Employers.

Acknowledgement of the informal complaint will be provided within 2 working days of receipt and a full response given within the following 7 working days from acknowledgement of the receipt.

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Although Stage 1 is considered informal, the SPT Staff member involved will provide a written outcome to the complainant with a copy also sent to the Head of EPA who will record the details within the complaints log.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

To make a formal complaint, the Training Provider/Employer, or Apprentice, should put the matter in writing to SPT to the Independent End-point Assessor (IEPA) or the Head of EPA (if the complaint is about the IEPA), via the email address katie@skypeopletraining.co.uk.

This email should be titled as a complaint and set out all details and the resolution sought. Remember to include the following information in your email; name, contact details, telephone number, description of complaint including dates/times, names of people you have already spoken to and any other evidence to support your complaint.

If you wish to remain anonymous, please let us know if you fear adverse consequences. Be reassured that we are not obliged to disclose any information provided to us if it would be a breach of confidentiality.

Acknowledgement of the formal complaint will be provided within 2 working days of receipt.

The complaint will be forwarded to an Investigating Officer who has not previously been involved in Stage 1 or any other element of the complaint. The Investigating Officer will:

- Review all the information submitted.
- Meet with relevant members of SPT.
- Speak to the Training Provider/Employer, or Apprentice, to clarify and gather additional facts as needed.

A written response relating to the Investigating Officers finding and any resolution will be issued within a maximum of 30 working days from the date of receipt of the original complaint. If the Training Provider/Employer or Apprentice is not satisfied with the action taken, then they may proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3 - Review

A complaint must have been considered at Stage 2 before it can be escalated to the review stage. The review stage will not normally consider new issues or any further investigation.

Acknowledgement of the review request will be provided within 2 working days of receipt.

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Where a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome from Stage 2, they can request a referral of their complaint to a review officer. A review officer will consider the complaint for review where:

- There was a procedural irregularity in the conduct of stage 1 or 2 of the complaint.
- New evidence is now available which was not available following reasonable enquiry at the time of the stage 2 investigation.
- Clear reasons why the complaint was rejected at the formal stage have not been effectively communicated to the complainant in the written response.
- The decision reached was not one which any reasonable person could have reached on the available evidence.

The review officer may dismiss the complaint in writing to the complainant within 10 working days, in such cases a completion of procedure letter will be issued by SPT.

If the review officer considers the complaint to be well founded, they will allocate a request for review by a Senior Manager at SPT or a suitably experienced, externally nominated person who will undertake the role of Senior Investigating Officer who has had no previous involvement in the case. The review officer will normally communicate to the complainant detailing the identity and contact details for the Senior Investigating Officer.

Once the review has been undertaken, the complainant will receive a letter from the Senior Investigating Officer detailing the final decision. Where the complaint is partially or fully upheld the notification will include details of how the resolution will be brought about and the timescales.

The review stage will normally be completed within 30 working days. If there are clear and justifiable reasons to extend the timescale the complainant will be notified in writing.

The outcome of the review stage represents the final stage of SPT's internal procedure. The complainant will be issued with a completion of procedure letter. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be directed to pursue the matter through any procedures of the External Quality Assurance Organisation the details of which will be included in the Completion of Procedure letter.

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7. Timescales

Stage	Timescales
Stage 1 – Informal Complaint	SPT will acknowledge the informal complaint in writing within 2 working days of receipt of the communication. SPT will aim to investigate the complaint within 7 working days; however, more complex cases may take time, and we might take longer than this. If this happens, we will let you know.
Stage 2 – Formal Complaint	SPT will acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 2 working days of receipt of the communication. SPT will aim to investigate the formal complaint within 7 working days; however, more complex cases may take time, and we might take longer than this. If this happens, we will let you know.
Stage 3 - Review	SPT will acknowledge the review request in writing within 2 working days of receipt of the communication. The Review Officer may dismiss the complaint in writing to the complainant within 10 working days (following acknowledgment of receipt). In such cases a Completion of Procedure letter will be issued by SPT. The review stage will normally be completed within 30 working days. If there are clear and justifiable reasons to extend the timescale the complainant will be notified in writing.

If SPT discovers a failure in its assessment process, SPT will take all reasonable steps to:

- identify other Apprentices who have been affected by the failure.
- correct or where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure.
- ensure that the failure does not recur in the future.

Every attempt has been made to ensure that the provisions of this document are consistent with the requirements of the regulatory authorities.

Where the requirements of the regulatory authorities are amended and require changes to this document, such changes will be made as soon as practicable and SPT will inform its customers accordingly.

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8. How long does it take?

We will normally acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two working days in line with our Customer Service Policy. The acknowledgement will confirm receipt and let you know who the Investigating Manager will be. (Normally it will be the Head of EPA, the SPT Managing Director, or their deputy).

9. Successful Complaints

If your complaint is upheld, we will respond with the changes we have made to our services and/or arrangements as appropriate. We may also instigate disciplinary proceedings, but we will be unable to comment or confirm details about this (for confidential reasons).

If it is discovered that there has been a failure in our processes, or if the qualification regulator advises us to, we will take the following actions:

- Identify if any other Apprentices have been affected by our process failure.
- Apply mitigating actions to minimise the effects of our process failure.
- Correct the failure and ensure that it will not occur again in the future.
- Conduct standardisation activities if necessary.

10. Unsuccessful Complaints

You must first exhaust all of the steps above that are available to you. If you have done that and your complaint is eligible, then you may be able to follow the Appeals procedure (if applicable). If that decision is unsatisfactory to you, then you can complain directly to Ofqual, the qualification regulators.

11. Supporting Documentation (included with this submission)

- SPT End of Assessment Apprentice Feedback Form
- SPT Appeals Application Form

We recommend reading other policies that can be found on our website in conjunction with this Complaints Policy. However, we draw your attention particularly to:

- SPT Enquiries and Appeals Policy
- SPT Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

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12. Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed in conjunction with other relevant policies in a quarterly review meeting, or following any successfully upheld complaint where our processes were deemed to be at fault (whichever is sooner).

13. Regulatory Body

Ofqual, Earlsdon Park, 53/55 Butts Road, Coventry, CV1 3BH
Telephone: 0300 303 3344

[What would you like to do? - Make a complaint – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/make-a-complaint)