

Title:	Customer Feedback Policy		
Scope:	PM Training		
Policy owner & job title:	Tim Edwards: Director of Business Excellence		
Approver:	Will Nixon: Managing Director		
Date:	22 March 2019	Review Due Date:	01/04/2020

1. Policy Summary

PM Training is committed to delivering excellent services to all of its learners and customers. Learner and customer feedback is at the heart of our business; both positive and negative feedback helps the organisation to understand, monitor, and assess our learners and customers' needs and expectations. It is therefore important that PM Training makes it as easy as possible for learners and customers to express their views; encouraging and welcoming feedback.

Every colleague has a responsibility to ensure feedback, in particular negative feedback, is either passed to the relevant team or logged so that it can be responded to. Where possible, colleagues should take action to address the negative feedback themselves. PM Training intends to deal with complaints at the first point of contact and as quickly as possible. PM Training encourages feedback through formal and informal channels, and through the use of surveys which form part of our improvement cycle.

1.1 Associated Policies and Procedures:

Acceptable Behaviour Policy, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Appeals and Grievance Procedure, Assessment Malpractice Procedure

2. Policy Statement

This policy sets out how PM Training will deal with learner and customer feedback; how it will be used to understand their expectations and experiences, and to improve service delivery. The policy applies to PM Training colleagues and board members. Learner and customer feedback in the context of this policy refers to the following:

- Compliments
- Comments and suggestions
- Complaints
- Satisfaction survey findings

3. Aim

The aim of this policy is that high quality, customer focused services are provided at all times, and that service failures are identified and acted upon quickly. To enable this to happen:

- Capturing feedback about services will be encouraged, accepted in any format (including through social media), and dealt with in a fair and timely manner
- Complaints will be resolved at the earliest opportunity

- Colleagues will be trained in how to identify feedback and respond to complaints
- Learner and customer feedback will form part of the Performance Management Framework and used to shape Services
- Customers will be advised of how their feedback has been used

If PM Training is not responsible for dealing with an issue raised through feedback we will aim to identify who is and refer the matter to the relevant agency.

4. **Compliments, Comments, and Suggestions**

Compliments are usually received when a customer, be that a learner, parent or employer is very happy with the service they have received or when they feel that a member of staff has gone the extra mile in providing that service. All customers are encouraged to provide feedback, both formally and informally when they feel that they have had outstanding service, or when they have suggestions for how a service can be improved. This information will be recorded so that it can be used to influence future service delivery.

5. **Complaints**

This policy covers all complaints made to PM Training. A complaint is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, action or lack of actions by us where a response is required”. Where PM Training undertakes a contract on behalf of another organisation we will adhere to their complaints policy.

PM Training will monitor, record, take seriously, deal promptly with any complaints received and ensure that prompt action is taken to satisfy the complainant wherever possible. Any complaint received will be used as an opportunity to improve internal operations and rectify any weaknesses highlighted.

Complaints relating solely to the behaviour of a colleague will be referred to the appropriate line manager for consideration under the relevant disciplinary or capability policy. The complainant will not be told the detail of internal investigations when they fall under these policies but will still receive a response to their complaint.

6. **Complaint Stages**

On receipt of a complaint, colleagues will try to resolve the situation as soon as possible. This type of resolution is known as a ‘quick fix’. Where it is not possible to do this because further investigation is required or where the complainant is not satisfied with the response provided, it will be known as a ‘formal complaint’. The complainant then has the opportunity to appeal the outcome of the complaint. Further detail on these stages is provided below:

Quick Fix:

When PM Training receives negative feedback which can quickly be resolved this will be classed as a ‘quick fix’ and where possible it will be dealt with by the colleague

who received the feedback. The complainant will be advised of the outcome and if it has not been resolved to their satisfaction it will be passed to a manager to investigate as a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints:

When negative feedback requires a more detailed investigation and written response, this will be dealt with by a manager. These complaints will usually be addressed within 5 working days however when this is not possible the manager will agree a response date with the complainant. A written response will be provided by the Investigating Officer detailing the complaint outcome.

Cases will remain open until all follow up work identified has been completed. The Investigating Officer will contact the complainant by phone if possible to confirm the outcome. If the complainant does not respond to contact from the Investigating Officer within 14 days of the written response being sent, the outcome will be deemed to be accepted by the complainant and no further appeal will be possible.

Learners undertaking a work placement based qualification are advised to discuss any issues with their assessor. If this is not viable, learners are advised to discuss their concerns with their placement manager who will then inform Head of Skills Development at PM Training, the BTEC Quality nominee or Head of Business Development and Quality.

7. Complaint Handling

The person investigating a complaint is known as the Investigating Officer. It is their responsibility to look at the complaint objectively and from the complainant's perspective while establishing if anything has gone wrong and if any action could be taken to put it right. The Investigating Officer is also responsible for considering learning from complaints and notifying the relevant departments.

The following principles apply for all complaints handling:

- The complainant is advised of who is dealing with their complaint
- Complaints are dealt with as quickly as possible
- The complainant is provided with a clear explanation of the outcome of our investigation including the reasons for the decision, an apology where appropriate, and what action we will take.
- The investigating officer has had no prior involvement in the case.

8. Advocacy & Support

An advocate is someone who acts on the complainant's behalf. They are usually used when a Learner, or Homework's customer does not have the confidence or capability to complain themselves. PM Training will accept complaints from advocates although authorisation from the Learner (if over the age of 18), Apprentice, or Homework's customer will be required before we can discuss the matter with an advocate.

Colleagues can also provide support as long as there is no conflict of interest with their own role. If this is the case an independent advocate should be sought.

If the person handling a complaint identifies that the complainant has support requirements they should contact external organisations such as the Youth Offending Team, Young Minds, Social Workers, schools, families, or the referring agency for additional support. If a safeguarding issue is identified as part of the investigation, the Investigation Officer must suspend the complaint and proceed under the relevant safeguarding procedure.

9. Appeals Process

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their complaint they have the right to appeal this and it will be investigated by a Director. The complainant must advise PM Training why they are dissatisfied with the response they have received. If the customer states they are satisfied with the response it will not be possible to appeal the decision at a later date. The decision of the Director will be final and cannot be appealed internally.

If the complainant is a PM Learner and remains dissatisfied at the end of the complaints process, they have the right to approach the Education Skills Funding Agency for further support.

Learners undertaking a qualification with PM Training who are dissatisfied with an assessment outcome, have the right of appeal. There are three stages in the Appeal Procedure which must be exhausted before proceeding to the next one:

Stage One:

Learners should appeal in writing directly to the Assessor who carried out the assessment clearly indicating the points of disagreement and the evidence where the learner believes they have met the requirements of the qualification criteria

Stage Two:

Learners not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 appeal may appeal to the PM Training Internal Verifier who will review all documentation completed in stage 1.

Stage Three:

Learners appeal writing to the External Verifier of the Awarding Body and be accompanied by copies of all the documentation used in Stages One and Two. The External Verifier will undertake an investigation on behalf of the Awarding Body. On receipt of a report, the Awarding Body will consider the application. The decision of the Awarding Body is final.

Stage Four:

The learner has the right to appeal to the appropriate Regulatory Authority, contact details will be supplied by the Awarding Body within 5 working days.

10. Compensation

Compensation refers to something, such as money, that is given or received as payment or reimbursement for a poor service or loss.

PM Training will, at its discretion, consider compensation for Homeworks customers when there has been loss or damage. This compensation could take the form of a cash

payment, or the use of additional services provided by PM Training, or the provision of replacement items.

Compensation will not be awarded as standard practice. There must be evidence to support the compensation claim and receipts must be provided before any compensation is awarded. Only compensation requests made at the time of the initial complaint will be considered, and awards will only be made back to the date the issue was first reported to PM Training and only until the satisfactory resolution of the complaint.

Compensation will only be paid in cases where PM Training is at fault.

- Compensation will not be considered when:
- legal proceedings are underway or have taken place;
- Where PM Training has not been negligent, or the loss or damage is the result of unforeseen circumstances (such as extreme weather).
- Where a personal injury claim is being managed, unless with the express consent of PM Training's Insurers

Where damage has not been caused by PM Training, and the loss is covered by the customer's own contents insurance, or the customer could reasonably have obtained such insurance claims will not be considered.

All compensation awarded will be recorded and assigned a cash value for monitoring purposes. The compensation will be arranged by the officer responding to the complaint. Any offer of compensation should be agreed with a Director prior to being offered to the customer. If the customer has debts associated with the Aspire Group, the compensation will be used to offset these.

11. Personal Injury and Insurance Claims

If there is a suggestion or claim in the complaint that a personal injury or fatality has been caused by a failure in service by PM Training; the standard procedure for handling the complaint should be halted.

Such a claim may arise where the complainant considers that PM Training has done something, not done something that it should have, or provided or repaired an item that attributed to the injury or fatality.

In these circumstances the complaint should be dealt with by a Director who will liaise with the Aspire Group Legal and Governance Team and insurers before responding to the complainant. There will be no right of internal appeal for these types of cases.

12. Unreasonable behaviour

We recognise that people who are unhappy about an issue may show signs of frustration when reporting a complaint; however, we will not tolerate unreasonable behaviour while trying to resolve a complaint.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- Abusive or threatening behaviour towards PM Training colleagues or property;
- Assaulting PM Training colleagues; or damaging PM Training property;

- Vexatious behaviour (a vexatious or persistent complainant is described as someone who pursues a complaint, regardless of its merits, solely to harass, annoy or subdue);
- Refusing to cooperate with staff during the investigation;
- Repeatedly contacting several members of staff about the same complaint, and making unnecessary demands on staff time;
- Submitting repeat complaints, relating to the same events;
- Continually raising new issues during the complaint investigation which should have been included in the original complaint.

In these circumstances, the Investigating Officer will discuss the case with their line manager and agree a course of action. This may include restricting who the complainant can contact, how and when, or stopping the investigation into the complaint altogether. The complainant should be notified that the behaviour is unacceptable and advised of the implications before further action is taken although in exceptional cases this may not be possible or appropriate.

13. Employee Responsibilities:

All employees of PM Training have a responsibility to pass on customer feedback and where possible to resolve issues as they arise.