

Your fastest way to learn. Why wait?



Complaints Policy and Procedure

May 2018

Firebrand is committed to providing a high quality, transparent and accessible service to everyone we deal with. In order to do this, we need you to tell us when we get things wrong. We want to help resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

We handle any expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a response as a complaint. We listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.

Our policy covers complaints about:

- the standard of service you should expect from us
- the behaviour of our staff in delivering that service
- any action, or lack of action, by our staff or others engaged on commission business

Our complaints policy does not cover:

- comments about our policies or policy decisions
- dissatisfaction or complaints expressed with our policies or decisions about individual cases, funding, or requests for legal advice and assistance
- matters that have already been fully investigated through this complaints procedure
- anonymous complaints

Our standards for handling complaints

- We can receive complaints by letter or email, or alternatively if required by virtue of reasonable adjustments. We treat all complaints seriously.
- You can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times. We expect that you will also treat our staff dealing with your complaint with the same courtesy, respect and fairness.
- We will treat your complaint in confidence within Firebrand.
- We will deal with your service complaint promptly. We will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within five working days where we have a return address and you can expect to have a full reply within 20 working days. In a few cases we will not be able to send a full reply within 20 working days of receipt, for example if your complaint is very complex. If this happens, we will tell you the reason why and let you know when we will be able to reply in full, keeping you fully informed of progress.
- We will not treat you less favourably than anyone else because of your:

- sex or legal marital or same-sex partnership status: this includes family status, responsibility for dependants, and gender (including gender reassignment, whether proposed, commenced or completed)
- sexual orientation
- colour or race: this includes ethnic or national origin or nationality
- disability
- religious or political beliefs, or trade union affiliation
- any other unjustifiable factors, for example language difficulties, age, pregnancy and maternity.

Third Party Reporting

Complainants may wish to have a third party act on their behalf. A third party is any person or organisation acting on behalf of or making enquiries for the complainant. For example, third parties may include:

- advice organisations
- professionals such as social workers, community psychiatric nurses, doctors or solicitors
- family members or friends

Where a third party is helping a complainant with a particular complaint, we need written consent to that effect. Where we have this authority, we will endeavour to take all possible steps to keep the third party informed of progress on the complaint.

We do not need written consent if a MP or elected Councillor is helping a constituent with a complaint, and we can disclose information to them in response to their enquiries.

Also, some lawyers are legally empowered in certain circumstances to act on behalf of a complainant, and consent to disclose information is not required.

Confidentiality

All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR, subject to the need to disclose information as required by statutory authorities, and/or as a result of statutory, legal or parliamentary obligations.

How to complain to us

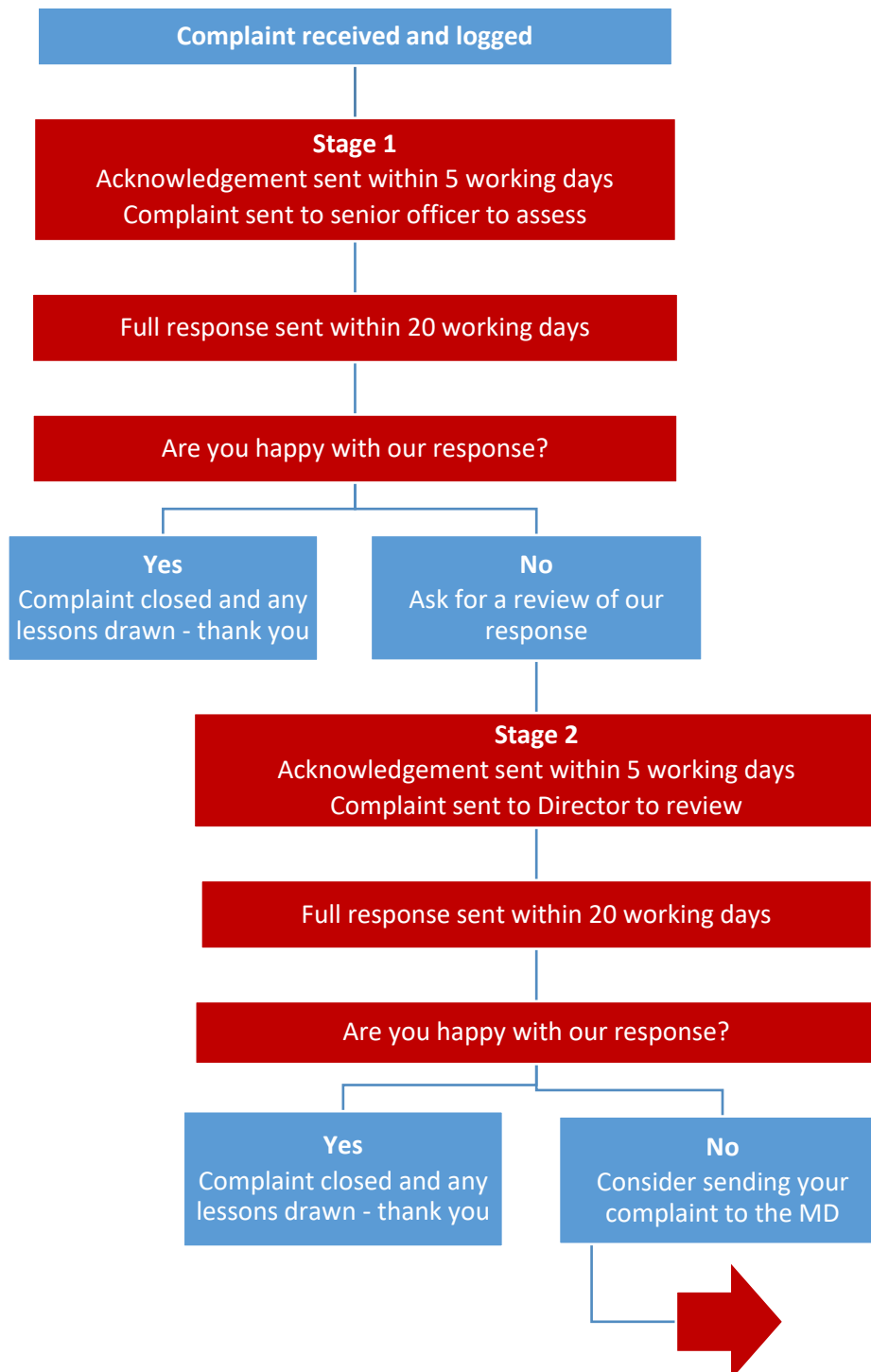
If you wish to make a complaint, you can do so by email or letter.

If you are disabled, and need a reasonable adjustment to ensure you can register your complaint, you can contact us alternatively by:

- telephone (one of our officers will help you by writing out your complaint)
- fax

- asking a member of staff to help you in writing out your complaint
-

How we will respond to your complaint:



Service complaints procedure

We have a two-stage service complaints handling procedure, explained above. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clarity and detail as possible, including providing any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint. If we do not have all the details required to deal with the complaint, we may contact you and ask you for further information.

Our Apprenticeship Dept. is responsible for managing the handling of service complaints including notifying you of the outcome.

Stage 1

This is the first opportunity for us to resolve your dissatisfaction. We expect the majority of complaints to be resolved at this stage. On receipt of your complaint we will refer to the most appropriate directorate and ask them to respond to your complaint. This includes any service complaints about our services where we still retain relevant information.

Stage 2

If you are dissatisfied with the response at stage 1, you may request a review. This will be carried out by a responsible Director. Your request together with all subsequent correspondence relating to it should be sent to the Quality Assurance Manager, who will forward your request to the relevant Director to be reviewed.

If you are still dissatisfied

If having followed the two internal stages of our service complaints procedure you remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by Exec Management who will have a maximum of **28 days** from the date of your referral to give a final conclusion.

Timescales

Stage 1

We will acknowledge complaints within 5 working days of receiving each complaint. We will send a full response within 20 working days of receiving each complaint.

If you make a complaint in person to a member of our staff we will record your complaint in writing within 3 working days, and acknowledge it within 5 working days thereafter. We will then deal with your complaint in accordance with our policy for written complaints.

Stage 2

We will acknowledge complaints within 5 working days of receiving each complaint. We will send a full response within 20 working days of receiving each complaint.

Extending time limits

We aim to complete our investigation into all complaints received about our service within the timescales set out above. However, in a limited number of cases - for example, if a complaint is very complex or requires further breakdown, it may be necessary to extend the time limit to ensure we have all the information necessary to deal with it. If this is the case we will keep you informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and inform you of next steps.

Remedies

When we get things wrong we will act to:

- accept responsibility and apologise
- explain what went wrong and why, and
- put things right by making any changes required
- learn lessons from mistakes and change policies and practices where proportionate and sensible to do so

The action we take to put matters right in response to a service complaint can include any combination of the remedies set out in the list below. The general principle we follow is that complainants should, so far as possible, be put in the position they would have been in, had things not gone wrong.

The remedy applied needs to be proportionate and appropriate to the failure in service, and take into account what redress people seek when they complain. An apology is generally the most appropriate action, but other action may also be necessary in some circumstances.

List of remedies

- A full apology, explaining what happened and/or what went wrong
- Remedial action, which may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to an individual complainant
- Provide the service required in first instance (immediately, if appropriate)
- Putting things right (for example a change of procedure to prevent future difficulties of a similar kind, either for the complainant or others)
- Training or supervising staff; or a combination of both

Recording complaints

Complaint details, outcomes and actions taken are recorded by us and used for service improvement. We record all complaints we receive and collate data from them to help us understand what types of problems are most prevalent, and how well we are doing to resolve them.

We value your feedback and expect to use it to help us to:

- get things right in the future if we have not done so already
- become more customer focused
- be more open and accountable
- act fairly and proportionately
- seek continuous improvement

We will handle your information so that it is only processed and retained appropriately and legally, in line with data protection legislation.

Contacting us

All complaints and requests for review under our complaints procedure should be sent as follows:

By post: Firebrand Training Ltd.
Langham House,
308 Regent Street,
London.
W1B 3AT

By Phone and Email:

International: +44 207 907 7844

apprenticeshipcomplaints@firebrandtraining.co.uk

Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats

Firebrand is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our corporate complaints policy easy to use and accessible to all of our customers. We will take reasonable steps to accommodate any reasonable adjustments you may have to enable you to access this policy or receive responses to complaints in other formats, and provide such assistance as you may reasonably require.

Comments and non-service complaints

Quality of service is an important measure for us of our effectiveness. Learning from complaints, including non-service complaints (complaints not covered by this policy), is a powerful way of helping continuous improvement at Firebrand and enable us to better deliver to our values and standards. All non-service complaints will be looked at by a responsible manager from the appropriate team, and a response, if required, sent to you directly within 20 working days where possible. Non-service complaints should be sent to the Apprenticeship Dept.

As well as learning from your complaints we are also interested in ideas you may have on how we might do things better. We would also like you to tell us when we do things well.

Your comments will be passed on to the relevant team and we will use them to help improve our service and the way we do things. You can make your comments by contacting any members of our staff, or you can e-mail the Apprenticeship Dept.

Authorisation & Document Control

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V.2	Barbara Turner	May 2018	GDPR Compliant