Complaints Policy

| Version 2.0 |

Policy Commencement Date	7/8/2026
Policy Version	2.0
Review by	6/8/2027
Document Controller	Jonathan Hall
Signature	*J.Hall*

Contents page

Content	Page
1. Our Commitment	2
2. Scope	2
3. Principles	2
4. How to Make a Complaint: The Four-Stage Process	3
5. Compliments	4
6. Confidentiality and Data Protection	4
7. Monitoring and Review	4
8. Policy Review	4

Policy Update Summary (Version 1.6 to Version 2.0)

This policy has been reviewed and updated to strengthen accessibility, fairness, governance, and data protection arrangements while retaining the existing four-stage complaints process. Key improvements include:

- Introduction of a clear definition of a complaint to improve understanding and consistency.
- Enhanced accessibility provisions, including acceptance of verbal complaints, alternative formats, support for individuals with additional needs, and the use of representatives or advocates where appropriate.
- Greater assurance of impartiality through investigation by a manager with no direct involvement in the matter being complained about.
- Updated management responsibilities and complaint escalation routes to reflect current organisational roles.
- Clearer information on external referral options, including direct signposting to relevant funding, regulatory and awarding bodies.
- Introduction of complaint record retention requirements, with complaints retained securely for six years and access restricted to authorised personnel.
- Strengthened oversight through quarterly review of complaints by the Senior Leadership Team to identify trends and drive continuous improvement.

These changes enhance the policy's effectiveness, transparency, inclusivity, and compliance with current good practice while maintaining a clear and accessible complaints procedure.

1. Our Commitment

1.1 Staff Power Training *(SPT)* are dedicated to providing a high-quality learning and assessment experience for all our learners, apprentices, employers, and stakeholders. We value feedback, including complaints, as it allows us to review and improve our services. We are committed to resolving any issues promptly, fairly, and effectively.

1.2 This policy outlines our procedures for handling complaints and compliments, ensuring a transparent and accessible process for all.

2. Scope

2.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about a service, action, or lack of action where a response or resolution is expected. This policy applies to all learners, apprentices, employers, and other individuals or organisations who receive a service from SPT. It covers complaints relating to:

- *The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment.*
- *The conduct of our staff.*
- *The learning environment and resources.*
- *Administrative processes and support services.*
- *Any other aspect of our service delivery.*

2.2 This policy does not cover academic appeals *(e.g., against an assessment result)*, which are dealt with under our separate Appeals Policy. Matters relating to whistleblowing or safeguarding will be handled in accordance with our specific policies on these areas.

3. Principles

3.1 Our complaints handling process is guided by the following principles:

- Accessibility: *We will ensure our complaints process is easy to understand and use. We will accept complaints verbally when required, provide alternative formats, support learners with disabilities or additional needs and accept complaints from advocates or representatives where appropriate.*

- Fairness: *We will treat all complaints with impartiality and confidentiality.*

- Timeliness: *We will deal with all complaints promptly and provide clear timelines for resolution.*

- Transparency: *We will keep complainants informed of the progress of their complaint.*

- Confidentiality: *We will handle all complaints with discretion and only share information with those who need to know to investigate the matter.*

- No Detriment: *No individual will be treated less favourably as a result of making a complaint in good faith.*

4. How to Make a Complaint: The Four-Stage Process

We aim to resolve complaints as quickly and informally as possible. Our complaints procedure has four stages:

4.1 Stage 1: Informal Complaint

In the first instance, we encourage you to raise your concern directly with the individual involved *(e.g., your trainer, assessor, or main point of contact)*. Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally at this stage. We aim to resolve informal complaints within **5 working days**. If you do not feel comfortable raising the issue directly, or if you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can proceed to Stage 2.

4.2 Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If your complaint is not resolved at the informal stage, you should make a formal complaint in writing. You can do this by:

Emailing:
quality@staffpowergroup.com

Writing to:
Director of Continuous Improvement,
Staff Power Training
Mackies Corner
106 High Street West
Sunderland
SR1 1TX

Please include the following information in your formal complaint:

- *Your full name and contact details.*
- *A clear description of your complaint.*
- *Details of the steps you have already taken to try and resolve the issue.*
- *Any relevant evidence (e.g., emails, documents).*
- *What you would like to happen as a result of your complaint.*

We will acknowledge receipt of your formal complaint within **3 working days**. A designated manager (who has no direct involvement) will then investigate your complaint. We aim to provide a full written response within **15 working days** of the acknowledgement. If the investigation is likely to take longer, we will inform you of the delay and provide a new timescale.

4.3 Stage 3: Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint, you have the right to appeal. Your appeal should be made in writing to the Operations Director within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 response.

Your appeal should state the reasons for your dissatisfaction with the initial outcome. The Operations Director will review your appeal and the initial investigation and provide a final written response within **15 working days**. This is

the final stage of our internal complaint's procedure.

4.4 Stage 4: External Referral

If you have exhausted our internal complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may be able to refer your complaint to an external body.

The appropriate body will depend on the nature of your complaint and the type of training you are receiving.

- *For learners on programmes funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA): You can complain to the ESFA via* Home - Customer Help Portal
- *For apprentices: You can also contact the ESFA via* Home - Customer Help Portal
- *For qualifications regulated by Ofqual: You can contact the relevant Awarding Organisation. If you remain dissatisfied, you may be able to complain to Ofqual via* What would you like to do? - Make a complaint – GOV.UK

We will provide you with the necessary contact details for the relevant external award body in our final response letter.

5. Compliments

5.1 We are always pleased to receive positive feedback about our services and staff. If you would like to make a compliment, you can do so by speaking to a member of staff or by emailing quality@staffpowergroup.com . We will ensure your compliment is passed on to the relevant individual(s) and their manager.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection

6.1 All complaints and compliments will be handled in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR). Information will only be shared with those who need it to investigate and respond to the matter. Complaints will be securely retained for six years and accessed only by authorized personnel.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 All complaints and compliments are logged, monitored and regularly reviewed to identify trends and areas for improvement. Complaints will be reviewed quarterly by the Senior Leadership Team.

8. Policy Review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if there are significant changes in legislation, working practices, or following any related incidents.