



Compliments & Complaints Policy

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1.

2. Introduction

Assessu's aim is to deliver a high-quality service where the apprentice is at the heart of everything we do. Assessu welcomes all types of feedback on our services with an aim to ensure that all complaints are dealt with quickly and effectively, and a satisfactory outcome is achieved for all parties. Likewise, users of Assessu's services will wish to express their satisfaction with the service they have received and be assured that their comments will be forwarded to relevant colleagues. Assessu also want to recognise and share excellent practice.

Assessu is committed to dealing with compliments and complaints in a fair and transparent manner via accessible and communicated procedures, which enable:

- Complainants to be clear of the process, timescales and actions taken
- Colleagues to be clear about their responsibilities within the process
- Recognition and sharing of good practice

Assessu encourages customer feedback and gathers and analyses this as part of the drive to improve the quality of service. Similarly, Assessu views feedback as an additional method of measuring the effectiveness of its service and where appropriate highlighting good practice. Post end point assessment, apprentices, employers and training providers will be invited via surveys to give feedback on their experiences.

Not all issues turn into formal complaints and often an issue can be resolved quickly and informally by colleagues. However, if the response is unhelpful or slow then this may result in a formal complaint. It is important that Assessu recognises that informal or low-level issues may be symptomatic of a negative trend; therefore, all colleagues strive to capture such feedback and assess any underlying problem. All feedback is saved and stored securely and analysed systematically. Trends are identified and communicated to the board and, where appropriate, shared with relevant colleagues.

Where areas of development are identified it is important that a full review takes place; actions identified and policies and procedures are reviewed and communicated, which would include full feedback to the complainant.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all customers of Assessu's services – internal and external.

There is a procedure for all 'customer feedback' for the management of compliments and complaints, which accompanies and is a guide to this policy.

3. Responsibility

The overall responsibility for the management of feedback lies with the Centre Manager. However, it is the responsibility of each end point assessor to maintain the quality of Assessu's services. Similarly, it is recognised that compliments and complaints are received through a variety of routes and therefore any colleague may, at some time, be in receipt of these. It is therefore expected that all colleagues be

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familiar with the policy and procedure and it is their responsibility for ensuring complaints are resolved as quickly as possible.

4. Compliments and Complaints

4.1 Compliments

A compliment is an expression of praise. It is a positive statement about a service provided by or on behalf of Assessu or about the helpfulness, attitude or approach of a colleague.

It is important that compliments are recognised and shared about the service provided. A compliment from a customer may be made to any colleague by:

- Telephone
- E-mail
- Feedback forms
- Letter
- In person

Details of any compliments received should be recorded on the Qu-F143 – Compliment/Complaint Record and sent to epa@assessu.co.uk within 24 hours. This information will be recorded on the feedback database and will be shared with the relevant management team for the purpose of recognition and sharing of good practice.

4.2 Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of a service or with a failure to provide a previously agreed service, or with the attitude or behaviour of a colleague.

4.3 Methods of making a compliment or complaint

A customer who is dissatisfied with the service that Assessu delivers for whatever reason or who has made a comment/asked a question but remains unhappy with the response may wish to make a formal complaint. Those wishing to complain may do so by a variety of methods as shown in process.

Assessu will treat any complaint received seriously regardless of the route chosen to make the complaint.

Assessu's compliments, complaints and feedback procedure details how complaints should be progressed, irrespective of by whom and how they are received.

Assessu undertakes to:

- Record the complaint on the Qu- F143 - Complaints Record and e-mail to epa@assessu.co.uk within 24 hours.
- Acknowledge complaints within 5 working days of receipt
- Conduct an internal investigation to establish what went wrong and why

- Reply within 10 working days with a suggested remedy
- Occasionally, a very complex complaint will need more time to investigate – the complainant should be kept informed at all times of the progress

4.4 Information about compliment or complaints

Details of complaints should be kept confidential and shared only with:

- The complainant
- Those being the subject of the complaint
- The line manager of a colleague subject of the complaint
- The Centre Manager
- The Head of Assessu

Only when it is necessary to involve others in the investigation will the information be shared, and this will be on a 'need to know basis'.

All documentation relating to the complaint will be kept electronically in a complaint's file and database and will be held for 5 years.

4.5 Complaints regarding Assessu colleagues

Complaints against Assessu colleagues will be investigated thoroughly with the involvement of their Line Manager and the HR Department, this may result in action in line with the Policies contained within the colleague handbook. If necessary, we may also need to involve any relevant public bodies.

A record of these types of complaints will be kept on file with Human Resources also.

4.6 Right of Appeal

Any complainant who is dissatisfied with the outcomes of the investigation into their complaint has a right to appeal. These rights are explained in the complaints, compliments and feedback procedure.

4.7 Complaints made to the ESFA

The ESFA will investigate all complaints about providers of education and training made within 12 months of the date of the complaint taking place

If for any reason a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint made to Assessu they can take the complaint to the Education & Skills Funding Agency for further consideration by contacting the apprenticeship helpline, this can be by email to nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk or by telephone 0800 0150440 or 0247 6826482 .

4.8 Complaints made to the External Quality Assurance Body

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Each apprenticeship standard has a named EQA organisation in its assessment plan. If an apprentice or their employer have concerns about assessment practice or assessment decisions, they should refer to the Assessu Appeal policy. Assessu will provide contact details on request of the EQA organisation should complainants feel dissatisfied with the outcome and they need to take their complaint further to the relevant EQA body.

5. Surveys

Assessu regularly solicits and collates feedback from customers by using surveys which are sent in a variety of methods such as online/phone/post.

The Quality team have an annual planner with dates for all the surveys to take place.

The Quality team will co-ordinate the circulation and collection of all surveys using survey monkey. Assessu circulates surveys to Learners, Employers, Subcontractors, Parents/Guardians, and Colleagues.

Surveys will be analysed, and a summary forwarded to the Head of Quality to present to the board. Appropriate managers will be responsible for identifying and implementing actions to address issues highlighted from the survey analysis. Outcomes and actions will be communicated to learners and employers via Assessu's website. All colleagues will receive a summary of the surveys via Fuse.

All feedback from the surveys will be used as part of the self-assessment and continual improvement planning process for the business.

Any Compliments/Complaints or comments made through the surveys will be actioned and treated seriously in the same way as any other complaint receive via another form.

6. Timing

Compliments/Complaints should be made through the appropriate channels as soon as an issue arises. The time limit for making a complaint is one month from the date of the original incident.

The timings for acknowledgement and resolution of a complaint can be found in the compliments, complaints and feedback procedure and these will be reviewed on an annual basis.

7. Reporting

All customer feedback will be collected by the Centre Manager. There will be a record of each compliment or complaint in order to track progress and where relevant, to assist action planning processes to improve services.

Regular reports and a formal annual report will contain statistical analysis of all compliments, complaint and feedback received.

The Head of Assessu will review complaints received, overview investigation and provide quarterly reports to the board.

