

Why? Change

Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Document maintenance and review history

This document will be reviewed as necessary by the document owner. The minimum review frequency is stated below, and the review date will be noted once review is completed and any amendments are agreed.

Version	Date of Review	Reason for review	Reviewed by	Date amendments approved	Date of next review (Annually)
0.1	12/06/19	Addition of document maintenance and review history tracking	Emma Harrison (Governance Officer)	RTB 24/07/19	12/06/20

Why? Change Complaints Policy

1 Policy Statement

1.1 Why? Change is committed to providing a high quality, educational experience and aims to provide a supportive environment, responsive to any concerns raised by Learners, Centre Staff, Awarding Organisational Staff and other identified stakeholders.

Any of the stakeholder groups above should feel able to make a complaint relating to the action or lack of action, or about the standard of a service or facility provided to Learners at Why? Change.

2 Scope of the Policy

2.1 This policy applies to (“Stakeholders”):

- All Learners
- All Why? Change delivery staff
- Awarding Organisation Staff
- All staff and partners carrying out delivery on behalf of Why? Change or related to Why? Change

2.2 Why? Change has established a number of ways of ensuring that Learners have the opportunity to take part in decision making processes. It is hoped that Learners will take full advantage of these and think about addressing concerns and suggestions to a relevant Staff Member as they arise.

3 Purpose of the Policy

Why? Change ensures that all complaints are dealt with via:

3.1 Accessible and Supportive Service

- Accessible, clear, timely process
- Fair to all parties concerned
- Supportive of informal resolution at any point
- To ensure the sensitive handling of complaints
- Confidentiality of Learners and Staff

3.2 Fair and Equal and Timely

No stakeholder bringing a complaint under this procedure, whether successfully or otherwise, will be disadvantaged. Should evidence to the contrary be found, the matter will be fully investigated and, if necessary, disciplinary action may be taken.

It is expected, except in exceptional circumstances, that a stakeholder wishing to make a complaint will start informal procedures within one calendar month of the event which is the cause of the complaint.

4 Complaints Procedure

- 4.1 There are three parts to the internal procedure: two stages to attempt informal, local resolution and a third stage to attempt a formal resolution which operates according to guidelines. Full details of this latter procedure can be found in the Why? Change Complaints Procedure.

5 Outcome of the Complaints Procedure

- 5.1 If your complaint is upheld you will be informed how and when any resolution or redress will be implemented. If the complaint is not upheld then you can expect to receive clear reasons why this decision has been reached and advice on further action available to you including a review of the process of the complaint by the awarding body where appropriate.
- 5.2 A report on each case will be used to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure and to identify any quality assurance issues. The Complaints Procedure is one of the ways in which Why? Change can monitor its performance and ensure that the quality of its provision is enhanced and the student experience improved. This will be achieved through quarterly governance reviews and an audit trail to ensure that recommendations are followed up on.

6 External Review

- 6.1 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome you may be able to apply for a review of your complaint by the awarding organisation.

7 Protocols

- 7.1 Reviewing an Assessment Decision
The Complaints Procedure should not be used to request a review of an assessment decision made by Assessors or Tutors. Stakeholders who feel they have suitable grounds should use the Appeals Procedure (please note that the outcome of an appeal cannot be made the subject of a complaint).
- 7.2 Anonymous Complaints
Such complaints will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances as it is necessary to investigate to enable a resolution.
- 7.3 Group Complaints
If a group of Stakeholders is submitting a complaint it may be appropriate for the group to appoint one individual from the group to act as representative and liaise with Why? Change.
- 7.4 Complaints by Former Learners
Such complaints will be considered providing they relate to issues which arise whilst they were Learners with Why? Change, and provided that the complaints procedure is initiated within 1 months of programme completion. A response to issues raised outside of this timescale is at the discretion of Why? Change.

7.5 Access to Information

Complainants will be entitled to request access to personal data, only if the request meets the principles of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 legislation.

Why? Change Complaints Procedure

Notes for Complainants

Introduction

Why? Change is committed to providing a high quality, educational experience and aims to provide a supportive environment, responsive to any concerns raised by Stakeholders. Stakeholders should feel able to make a complaint relating to the action, or lack of action, or about the standard of a service or facility provided to Learners at Why? Change. The procedures are intended to ensure that all complaints are treated fairly and consistently and, wherever possible, to resolve the matter to the complainant's satisfaction.

Definition

A complaint is an expression of concern or dissatisfaction with any aspects of Why? Change's delivery which requires a response. Complaints concerning assessment and certification should be dealt with through the appeals procedures and those set up by awarding/validating organisations. For details of these please see the Enquiry and Appeals Procedure.

The Why? Change internal complaints procedure has three stages:

- Stage 1 (informal) – resolving a concern through informal discussion with the Tutor concerned
- Stage 2 (informal) – resolving a concern through informal discussion with the relevant Programme Director
- Stage 3 (formal) – resolving a concern through the formal complaints procedure, of which there are three possible stages

Informal Stage

Stage 1

Many concerns are straightforward and can be resolved quickly with the Staff directly involved without the need to complete and submit a complaint form. We do recommend completing a Learner Complaints Form as this provides a full audit trail if the complaint needs to be progressed, and allows us to keep a written record of Learner complaints to take into account during reviews of programme delivery.

Therefore, in the first instance, having considered the responsibilities of both Stakeholders and Why? Change, any concerns/issues should be discussed, informally, with the person concerned or another Staff Member. For example, if your complaint concerns teaching/tutorial matters, you may wish to talk to your Tutor or other members of delivery staff.

If your complaint is about a service, then you should talk to an appropriate member of staff from that service. If you are not sure who to speak to, or you do not feel able to approach

the person most directly involved, you can seek advice regarding this from the Programme Manager.

Stage 2

If you do not feel able to approach the person most directly involved or have approached them but no satisfactory resolution has been reached, Stakeholders may proceed to submit a complaint with the relevant Programme Director.

If a satisfactory resolution is not found informally, students are entitled to proceed to Why? Change's formal complaints procedure.

Formal Stage

Stage 3

You should fully complete a Stakeholder Complaints Form, copies of which can be obtained from any Staff Member or the Programme Manager. You can ask a member of staff for help to complete the form or ask another individual to submit a complaint on your behalf, but we would require written agreement from you.

In addition to personal details (Section A) and other information on the form, you will need to provide:

- Section B: details of the complaint
- Section B: any supporting evidence (ie copies of emails, notes of meetings, references to procedures, handbooks etc).
- Section C: an explanation of the steps you have already taken to try to resolve the complaint informally and why the responses you have received are not satisfactory
- Section D: where applicable, the outcome you would like from your complaint

It is important to keep a copy of the completed form and other documentation submitted for your own records. Completed complaint forms should be submitted to the Programme Officer, either in person or via email to complaints@whychange.com.

Within **3 working days of receipt** of your complaint form, you will receive an acknowledgement. Your complaint will be considered to determine that the complaints procedure is appropriate and if so, it will be referred to a senior member of staff (usually the Programme Director) who will follow up on your complaint. The Quality Manager will ensure that necessary action is taken and will monitor it through to completion.

We aim to complete the enquiry and reach a conclusion within **20 working days of receipt** of your complaint form. If this is not possible you will be informed of the progress being made. Complaints identified as requiring particularly speedy resolution will receive special attention.

You may be invited to attend a meeting to consider your complaint. You may bring a friend or representative to support and/or for assistance.

Complaints raised will remain confidential to those directly involved in the investigation (which includes any Staff Members concerned). All Staff and Stakeholders who become aware of any of the issues involved in a formal complaint are required to keep this information confidential (except as is necessary to progress, investigate or respond to the complaint). Failure to do so may constitute misconduct and result in formal disciplinary action being taken.

However, there may be occasions when it is not possible to maintain confidentiality, for example if another person is at risk. In such cases the situation will be explained to the complainant and/or the representative. If the Learner is below 18 years of age, Why? Change may be obliged to inform the parent/carer unless we have received written notification from the Stakeholders that they do not wish for the parent/carer to be notified.

If your complaint is upheld, you will be informed how and when any resolution or redress will be implemented.

If the complaint is not upheld, you can expect to receive clear reasons why this decision has been reached and advice on further action available to you.

Feedback

As part of our Quality Assurance process, at the end of any complaints procedure, you will be invited to complete a short evaluation of the process.

Monitoring and Review

The complaints procedure is one of the ways in which Why? Change can monitor its performance and ensure that the quality of its provision is enhanced and the Stakeholder experience improved. This will be achieved through quarterly reporting to the Executive Directors and the Governing Body who will monitor the handling of complaints and subsequent improvements through its annual report. Why? Change will review the complaints procedure every two years and Stakeholders will be able to contribute to this review through informal feedback, written feedback, and the complaints procedure evaluation.

Stage 4 (Complaints to Awarding Organisation)

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal complaints procedure, you can refer to the relevant awarding organisation body.

The awarding organisation(s) are committed to offering a quality and customer orientated service, and feedback from Centres and Stakeholders on any issue will be most welcome. Where the awarding organisation(s) receives a complaint, it is important that this is dealt with promptly and in line with their procedures.

Procedure for complaints may involve the following actions:

1. Complaint received
2. Acknowledged

3. Complaint reviewed
4. Response made
5. Notifying the regulators (where necessary)
6. Record the complaint

Complaint Received

If you have a complaint about any awarding organisation, please put the complaint in writing and send it by email to the address supplied by the centre. Please give as much information as possible about your complaint, to enable an investigate and review it.

Acknowledged

The awarding organisation will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in-line with their internal policies.

Complaint Reviewed

The awarding organisation will review the information presented and decide whether it is appropriate to either:

- Bring the matter to the attention of the Programme Director, asking them to investigate the complaint and to produce a written report on the outcome, or;
- Investigate the complaint directly; this investigation will be carried out by the Quality Manager/Auditor/Head of Awarding Organisation.
- Consider whether the regulators should be notified of the matter.

Response Made

The awarding organisation will respond to the complainant by email or post as per their internal policy and will take the appropriate, preventative and/or corrective action required.

Notifying the Regulators

In cases where there could be an adverse effect (e.g. cases with alleged fraud or serious threat to the integrity of qualifications or as an organisation) Awarding organisations are required to escalate the matter immediately to the appropriate regulatory bodies and required to co-operate in full, providing information and taking the appropriate action.

Investigation

Following a review of the complaint, it may be appropriate to investigate the matter in more detail. Staff will do this following the internal Investigation Procedure.

Complainants will be informed as to the appropriate action taken/or to be taken and will be informed as to when they can expect a response regarding the outcome.