

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AT **MARK** BETTS HAIR EDUCATION

Effective from May 19

Our Responsibilities

We are committed to providing a high quality service for our learners, clients and the community we serve. We will deal with legitimate complaints in a fair, prompt and objective manner. Complaints will be dealt with without recrimination and learners will not be disadvantaged by raising a complaint. We will be fair in the treatment of all those who complain irrespective of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics and whilst socio-economic background is not a legally protected characteristic, Mark Betts Hair Education is committed to combating any discrimination on this basis and recognises the harm that discrimination has in terms of an individual's access to equality of opportunity). Complaints will be dealt with promptly and constructively. All complaints will be dealt with in confidence but shared with any person who may be the subject of a complaint. The outcomes of any complaint will be shared with the complainant and any staff involved. Complaints made which, on investigation, turn out to be malicious, may result in disciplinary action.

Summary

The overall aim of this document is to provide guidance on the complaints/grievance process. Learners/employers may raise a grievance in relation to any aspect of the training, assessment or work placement, although a separate process exists regarding any disciplinary action. The procedure currently reflects good practice guidelines and sets out the steps which need to be taken by the learner/employer and training provider when dealing with grievances/complaints. The process provides a means of dealing with complaints in a timely manner before they escalate.

Introduction

The grievance/complaint process aims to ensure any dispute is resolved in a timely manner and at the informal stage before further action is a necessity. A grievance/complaint is raised using the process which also includes issues relating to diversity, protection and equality in the learning environment.

The Procedure

Informal Procedure – Learners/employers should aim to resolve most grievances with their tutor. This has advantages for all concerned and allows for problems to be resolved quickly.

If the Grievance/complaint cannot be settled informally, the following procedure should be followed:

Step 1: Complaint in writing

The learner/employer must write to the General Manager of the Training School setting out the details of the Grievance or complaint.

Step 2: Investigation

The General Manager will carry out an initial assessment of the complaint within 5 working days. In most cases, complaints will be referred to the appropriate staff for investigation and report. More serious or unusual complaints will be investigated

personally by the Managing Director. An appropriate manager will carry out an investigation of the complaint and may interview the complainant; the respondent; witnesses to the matter or events; and anyone they believe may have a role in establishing or disproving the complaint, as necessary. They will prepare a summary and report back to the General Manager within 10 working days of the initial assessment.

Step 3: Inform of Outcome

The General Manager will record the outcome of the complaint and either arranges a meeting to deliver the outcome or notify all those involved in writing as appropriate. All outcomes will be confirmed in writing to all those involved.

If the complaint involves a learner, they will be offered support at the meeting. All learners will be encouraged to bring a supporter to the interview. Vulnerable Adults and those under 16 years of age must have the support of their care worker, or a person of their choice, who can act as their advocate and the Managing Director must be informed. The formal complaint should be resolved within 25 working days of the receipt of the original formal complaint. If it appears that a decision will not be reached within the due period, those involved will be advised of the need for a longer period. The decision made will be final but this does not affect an individual's legal rights.

Grievance Appeals

Grievance Appeals: Step 1: Written notice of Appeal

If the learner/employer wishes to appeal against the Training Schools decision, then the learner must write to the Training School within 5 working days of receiving the Training Schools written decision. The letter must set out the grounds for the appeal.

Grievance Appeals: Step 2: Meeting

The Training School shall arrange a meeting at a time, date and place convenient to the learner/employer and advise them of the right to be accompanied at the meeting. As far as practicably reasonable the appeal will be with the most senior manager who has not been involved in the matter.

Grievance Appeals: Step 3: Written Outcome

Following the meeting, the Training School shall write to the learner/employer with a decision on the Grievance/complaint which shall be regarded as the final stage of the Grievance/complaint Procedure.

Review of the Complaints Policy and Practice

Once a year the Centre's Senior Management Team will review the Complaints Policy and Practice to include:

- Number of complaints of each type
- Time taken to process complaints
- List of outstanding complaints
- Outcomes to complaints

- Results of appeals
- Analysis of complaints and outcomes by age, gender and ethnicity of complainant

If changes are required the Complaints Policy will be rewritten and all staff and learners will be informed. A record of all complaints for 3 years will be available to the relevant authorities for audit purposes.