

Compliment, Comment and Complaints

Policy and Procedures



At Open Awards we are committed to providing an accreditation service which is prompt, courteous, clear and responsive to customer needs. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that there may be circumstances where a customer may wish to register a compliment, comment or complaint.

Where customers wish to register a compliment, comment or complaint they may do so by completing the Compliment, Comment and Complaints form available on our website.

Purpose

This policy sets out guidelines to ensure that compliments, comments and complaints received by Open Awards are dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively.

Policy

Open Awards will:

- Undertake regular activities to gauge opinion on our products and services
- Take appropriate action to address views, suggestions and concerns;
- Implement the compliment, comment and complaints procedure in an open, transparent and accountable way;
- Ensure that the individuals charged with deciding the outcome of the complaint or appeal have appropriate authority, were not involved in the incident that is the subject of the complaint or appeal, and have no vested interest in the outcome
- For complaints Open Awards will communicate outcomes of investigation within 15 working days from receipt of complaint;
- Aim to hold an appeals panel within 15 working days of receiving a written appeal.

Definition

This policy applies to all stakeholders accessing Open Awards products and services. This includes:

- Staff in centres delivering Open Awards qualifications
- Learners undertaking Open Awards qualifications

If a learner wishes to make a complaint relating to their place of study, they must follow the centres appeals and complaints procedure prior to submitting a complaint to Open Awards. They will be asked to submit all correspondence relating to the outcomes of the investigation as part of their submission.

Complaints and Appeals Procedure

It is hoped that issues can be resolved informally. An informal complaint can often be rectified immediately and therefore in the first instance the customer should contact the Customer Service Team at Open Awards on 0151 494 2072, who will seek to rectify the situation as soon as possible.

However, if they remain dissatisfied they should complete the Compliment, Comment and Complaints form available on our website www.openawards.org.uk.

Should the complaint fall outside the scope of Open Awards they will be advised of this in writing within 5 working days of receipt of the form.

The Open Awards Head of Quality will investigate the complaint and seek any further information that may be required. If the complaint is in relation to the Head of Quality another member of the management team will lead the investigation. Once we are satisfied that all information is available a conclusion will be reached. This will be communicated to the customer in writing within **15 working days of receipt** of the form. However, if a conclusion cannot be reached within this time frame they will be notified in writing of the reasons why.

Appeals

If they are dissatisfied with the decision, they may appeal against this in writing within **15 working days** of receipt of the outcome letter. Appeals will be heard by the Appeals Panel, which is drawn from the Board of Trustees Quality Committee. The appeal will be heard within **15 working days** of receipt of the appeal. The outcome of the Appeal will be communicated to the customer within **5 working days** of the Appeals Panel. Please note the conclusions drawn from the panel will be final.

Compliments and Comments Procedure

All compliments and comments received will be forwarded to our Customer Relations Senior Officer. Details of compliments and comments will be shared with relevant members of staff and will be incorporated into Open Awards future planning and development sessions. Compliments may be used for marketing purposes, if customers wish to contribute they can do so by ticking the appropriate box on the form.