

THE COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

Lifeskills Solutions welcomes all types of feedback as this forms an important part of quality improvements. From time to time an individual may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of his or her dealings with Lifeskills Solutions and when that happens it is important that the issue is dealt with as quickly as possible. In this instance the issue should be raised as a complaint. Complaints should cover:

- An aspect of a Lifeskills Solutions policy
- Staff Dignity at Work Policy
- Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The complaint's procedure has been developed to ensure that such complaints are dealt with timely, appropriately and sensitively.

Is the Complaint's Procedure for me?

If your complaint relates to any issues not covered by any of the above points, please refer to the relevant procedures instead of this procedure, to ensure your complaint is dealt with appropriately.

Anyone who wishes to complain but is unsure of the appropriate procedure should seek advice from their Line Manager who will liaise with the HR department to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Key Stages

Throughout this document an individual who has complained will be referred to as a complainant.

1. The Complainant should try to resolve the matter informally in the first instance. Dissatisfaction often arises from misunderstanding, which is why the best starting point is with the person whose actions are the cause of dissatisfaction or with the Line Manager responsible for the provision of the service. If it is explained to someone what the problem is they can often provide explanation or solution.
2. Once it is clear that an issue cannot be resolved by informal means, a complaint should be made as soon as possible. It is much more likely that the matter will be satisfactorily resolved if it is raised at an early stage.
3. Complaints will be dealt with quickly and complainants kept informed of progress if the investigation is prolonged.
4. Lifeskills Solutions is under an obligation not to allow a complaint to have any bearing on the way that a learner / staff member is treated or assessed; information about a complainant will only be disclosed when appropriate and / or necessary to the HR department.
5. If a learner / staff member who is subject to disciplinary procedures makes a complaint, which relates in any way to the allegation against him/her, then this matter would be taken into account as part of the Disciplinary Process, not as part of the complaints Procedures.

6. Complaints about an individual will be investigated by their Line Manager. The Line Manager will share the complaint with the individual concerned.
7. If a Stage 2 or 3 investigation identifies staff shortcomings, the Line Manager will notify Human Resources.
8. In exceptional circumstances, the Line Manager may decide to omit Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedures and proceed directly to Stage 2.
9. This procedure operates within Equality & Diversity Policy of Lifeskills Solutions. The complainant will be able to discuss the complaint with a male or female member of staff and alternative formats of the Complaints Procedure and Form will be provided on request.
10. Information in relation to complaints will be stored and processed in line with Data Protection Act 1998.

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