

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (APPRENTICESHIPS)

1. INTRODUCTION

The University requires a published Complaints Procedure for apprenticeships, with a clear route for raising concerns.

1.1 Purpose

- The University aims to represent itself in a professional manner in its dealings with staff, apprentices and external parties but recognises that occasionally things can go wrong. In many cases issues, problems or misunderstandings can be dealt with by discussion between the parties involved but in other instances, it may be appropriate to pursue the matter in a more formal way. Those making a complaint can expect their complaint to be dealt with promptly and fairly and in accordance with the appropriate procedure.
- Some complaints will require a full investigation to be carried out and other complaints will be successfully dealt with by an explanation of why something has happened and/or an apology. In whichever case, the University will seek to give a satisfactory response to any concerns raised. A complaint may be defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction or concern”. The expression of dissatisfaction or concern may take the form of an informal verbal complaint, an informal or a formal written complaint.
- A complaint is more than purely an objection to the merits of a decision or action by the University, its students, staff or sub-contractors. Examples of complaints can be claims of impropriety, irregularity, misconduct, poor performance or ineffectiveness. In summary, a complaint is concerned with the manner in which a decision has been made or action taken, rather than with the decision or action itself. This Complaints Procedure is established in order to review formal or informal complaints.
- Where issues of complaints around contracted provision are not resolved through this complaints procedure, they will be raised through to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) process mandated in the ESFA Funding and Performance Management Rules for Apprenticeships.

1.2 Scope

- This procedure covers Apprenticeship Services procured from the University and forms a mandatory policy as part of our contracted apprenticeship provision;
- Contracted employers and University staff must comply with the procedure;

This Apprenticeships Complaints Procedure does not cover:

- Complaints related to the University’s Business Gateway function which should be directed to the [Business Complaints Procedure](#)

- Complaints related directly to the academic programme of study by participants enrolled on the programme which should be handled under the [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

2. PROCEDURE

Informal complaints

- Informal complaints should be made to the University's Development Manager - Engaged and Experiential Learning, Lou Taylor-Murison, either in person, via email (l.e.taylor-murison@keele.ac.uk) or via telephone 01782 734603.
- The Development Manager - Engaged and Experiential Learning will investigate the informal complaint and respond to the complainant within ten working days.
- Informal complaints in relation to the Development Manager - Engaged and Experiential Learning should be made to the University's Associate Director of Employability and Employer Engagement, Terry Dray, either in person, via email (t.r.dray@keele.ac.uk) or via telephone 01782 734492.
- Every attempt should be made to resolve concerns on an informal basis in the first instance, by speaking to the relevant member of staff. The expectation remains that both parties should make a genuine attempt to solve any problems at this preliminary stage.

Formal Complaints

- Formal complaints should be made to the University's Development Manager - Engaged and Experiential Learning, Lou Taylor-Murison by completing the Complaint Form and sending this via email (l.e.taylor-murison@keele.ac.uk) or post (Development Manager - Engaged & Experiential Learning, Apprenticeships Team, IC2, Keele University, Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 5NH).
- The complainant will be expected to state clearly the nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, provide copies of any related documentation. The complainant should also state the remedy they are seeking.
- The Development Manager - Engaged & Experiential Learning will acknowledge receipt of the complaint without delay and within 10 working days and provide an indication of when the complainant could expect to hear further.
- The Development Manager - Engaged & Experiential Learning will determine the nature of the complaint (complaint, enquiry or allegation) and undertake to task the appropriate Head(s) of School (HOPD) or Associate Director at the University to investigate the matter as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO).
- The Development Manager - Engaged & Experiential Learning will endeavour to provide a written response to the complainant within ten working days from the date of the initial acknowledgement. If this is not possible, the complainant will be provided with an interim statement.
- The written response of the University will include details of any arrangements for pursuing the matter with an independent body where necessary.
- The Development Manager - Engaged & Experiential Learning will keep the Director of the Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence (KIITE), informed of the situation, and will provide them with a written statement of the nature of the complaint and the response.

Where action and mediation does not resolve the issue, there is a requirement to escalate to the ESFA, in line with the funding and Performance Management Rules for apprenticeships. Apprentices and Employers can contact the apprenticeship helpline regarding apprenticeship concerns, complaints and enquiries via the National Apprenticeship Helpline channels below:
email: nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk
tel: 0800 015 0400

3. APPEALS

If you have submitted a complaint but are not satisfied with how the complaint was dealt with you may submit a grievance.

Should you wish to submit a grievance, you should do so within 10 working days of the date of the complaint investigation outcome letter to the Associate Director of Employability and Employer Engagement, IC2, Keele University Science and Innovation Park, Keele University, Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 5NH, providing as much information about the background of the case as possible and including any documentary evidence in support of the case.

The grievance will be reviewed by the Associate Director of Employability and Employer Engagement in conjunction with the Director KIITE within 10 working days and provide a final written response to the complainant, which will be considered final.