

Complaints and Disputes Policy

For Vertex Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Programmes, UK

1. Purpose

Vertex Company UK 1 Limited (Vertex) is dedicated and committed to providing high standard services. However it is important that we can recognise at times, things may go wrong. If or when these occasions occur and a client, learner, guardian/parent etc. expresses any sort of dissatisfaction it is key we are made aware of this, so we can in turn, conduct a review to ensure that this does not occur again and potentially make relevant changes or amendments to improve processes. If a complaint is raised, we ensure that:

- We treat each complaint seriously
- We will acknowledge and respond to the complaint within 48 hours of receipt
- We will conduct a full investigation into all complaints
- All findings will be relayed to the complainant in full
- We deal with the complaint promptly and politely
- If appropriate, we aim to deal with a complaint informally (for example, by email)

The scope for a complaint to be made is from the following stakeholders:

- Learners
- Learner parents
- Authorised representatives of the learners
- Employers

Complaints will be acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt, complaints can be received via email, written letter, or telephone. The complaint will be logged on our internal log and investigated promptly, with efforts to ensure the complaint is resolved in a timely manner. We may need to contact the complainant to obtain information or further details regarding the complaint with the aim to resolve the complaint promptly and informally.

On instances where a complaint cannot be resolved informally after an investigation, a 4-week timeframe will be set, during which a formal investigation will be conducted and careful consideration will be taken in reviewing relevant processes. A final response letter will be sent to the complainant within the 4-week deadline detailing the outcome of the complaint.

2. Definitions

Employer	means a company employing a Learner enrolled on a Vertex Apprenticeship or Vocational Programme
Learner	means any learner, apprentice or similar.
Apprenticeship Programmes	are recognised frameworks or standards of training, and delivered by Vertex Company UK 1 Ltd as a training provider.

3. Scope and Applicability

This policy aims to enable learners and employers to raise complaints in relation to the delivery of Vertex Apprenticeship and/or Vocational Training Programmes in the UK and to set out the process for dealing with such complaints.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in the delivery of Vertex Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Programmes including:

- all employees of Vertex engaged in the Apprenticeship and/or Vocational Training Programmes: including all trainers, assessors, internal quality assurers; and
- any other third parties contracted by Vertex to support delivery of the Vertex Apprenticeship and/or Vocational Training Programmes.

4. What is a Complaint?

A complaint is a situation in which a learner or employer raises a concern that the Vertex Apprenticeship and/or Vocational Training Programmes are not run as they should be, in accordance with the statutory requirements, or there are other issues in relation to the Apprenticeship and/or Vocational Training Programmes that the learner or employer wish to raise.

Reasons for formal complaints could include:

- Breach of Health & Safety legislation
- Breach of Equal Opportunities legislation
- Discrimination, bullying, abuse (physical or verbal)
- Quality of training being provided
- Quality of pastoral support being provided
- Quality of administrative support being provided

5. Responsibilities

All individuals must disclose a complaint which has been raised to them to their line manager. If there is any doubt whether or not it represents a formal complaint it should still be reported.

The individual and his or her line manager will both ensure that the complaint is documented in detail.

It is the responsibility of all persons when involved in the delivery of the Vertex Apprenticeship and/or Vocational Training Programmes and other associated activities to:

- Conduct their activities so that Vertex's quality standards are implemented
- Monitor their activities, in order to maintain the quality of the delivery
- Devote enough time to their responsibilities
- Recognise and report any complaint

The possibility of a complaint may be declared by any key stakeholder as an entity, or any individual.

6. Managing Complaints

A formal complaint should be made in writing or by e-mail to the Vertex Programme Manager, stating the following:

- The nature of the complaint;
- Any decisions or actions that have already taken place;
- The name of the person making the complaint and the date.

Acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint will be made in writing or by e-mail, identifying the person appointed by the Vertex Programme Manager to investigate the complaint.

7. Complaints Procedure and Escalation and Dispute Resolution Process

Stage 1 - Informal complaints: Where possible, complaints should be raised immediately with the Apprenticeship Management team or via the Apprenticeship Delivery Team. The aim is to resolve the problem directly and informally at the earliest opportunity. It is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved in this manner.

Stage 2 - Formal complaints: To make a formal complaint this should be sent to the attention of the Operations Manager Apprenticeship Programmes by writing to:

Name: Roger Adams
 Tel.: 0044 7885 201092
 Email: rogeradams@gov2x.eu

The email should be titled as a complaint and set out the details of the complaint in full and what would be an appropriate resolution. An acknowledgement email will be sent, and a response will be provided within 48 hours. The Operations Manager Apprenticeship Programmes will review all information submitted and meet with relevant members of staff to review the complaint if necessary.

Stage 3 – Resolve: If the complaint has not been resolved to the complainant’s satisfaction, the complainant has the right to escalate to the Directors of Vertex by writing to

Darren Scott, Director
 Vertex Company UK 1 Limited
 Building 3 Units 3.3 & 3.4
 Caldecotte Lake Business Park
 Milton Keynes
 MK7 8LF

within 10 days outlining why they are dissatisfied with how the complaint has been addressed. The Director will appoint an individual to investigate the case fully, including how the original complaint was handled, and reply to the customer within 10 days with the outcome and suggested resolution.

Stage 4 – Confirm: If the complaint fails to be handled to the satisfaction of the complainant contact the ESFA via complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk. When contact is made, you will need to provide the following:

- the name of the organisation you are complaining about
- details of what your complaint is, together with the relevant documents
- evidence that you have fully exhausted the organisation’s complaints procedure, including any appeals process (for example, written correspondence confirming the outcome)
- permission to disclose details of your complaint to the organisation concerned
- if you are acting on behalf of a learner, evidence that you have their permission to do so

We can only investigate on behalf of learners whose courses we fund or employers that we fund. We may ask you for further information to help us confirm this.

8. Recording a Complaint

When complaints are received, they are acknowledged and then logged onto a central complaints log. The reason for the complaint and all progress made during the life of a complaint is recorded on the log until it is resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant or to a point at which Vertex Company UK 1 Ltd can reasonably be expected to do no more. Complaint's data is collated for analysis and presented in quarterly governance and oversight meetings to the Apprenticeship Programmes Operations Management team.

9. Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated seriously, handled sensitively and with due consideration to all parties involved. In line with our equal opportunities policy, all complainants will be treated fairly and not suffer any recrimination or disadvantage as a result of making a complaint. Any person named in a complaint, however, will be informed and have a right to reply as part of the investigation process.

Version	Date	Comments	Approved By	Review Due
1	20-10-23	Created by: MN Reviewed by: SW (Quality and Compliance department)	UK Apprenticeship and Vocational Operations	20-10-23
1.1	01-11-23	Final review by: MDFE Contracts Department	Operations Director, Vertex Company UK 1 Limited	01-11-2024