

## Complaints Policy, Procedure and Process 2019/2020

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<b>Responsibility:</b>	Shelley Gallagher
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<b>Authority:</b>	Trevor Yoxall

### Pareto website policy link:

<https://www.pareto.co.uk/uploads/paretocomplaintspolicyandprocedurefinalversion.pdf>

### Purpose of Policy

This document is intended to support staff in implementing the Pareto Law Customer Complaint Process. It provides details of responsibilities, time scales and record keeping requirements of the process which all colleagues must adhere to. This document has been developed to comply with Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The generic term “customer” has been used in the Pareto Law Customer Complaint Process and refers to all people who use our services, including learners, customers, employers and partners.

### 1.0 Guiding Principles

All complaints must follow the complaint procedure and process each time a new formal complaint is raised. The complaints database is used to record complaints and what we have learnt from them. Information inputted into the complaints database must be factual, concise and accurate, with copies of correspondence and other relevant records stored using appropriate file names. Our complaints are subject to audit and inspection and may, where appropriate, also inform investigations.

### 2.0 Record Keeping

All complaints must be logged using the Pareto Law complaint database and files containing documentation relating to individual complaints kept up to date. These will be entered onto the database by the Quality team. Staff must complete a complaint record template for the relevant stage of the complaint. Staff must maintain confidentiality and security of customer's information, they should only use the documentation provided to record information that directly relates to the complaint that has been assigned to them and they must send all communication via the relevant email: [dgagg@pareto.co.uk](mailto:dgagg@pareto.co.uk)

### **3.0 Process**

#### **Stage 1**

#### **Staff guidance and responsibilities**

1. The recipient of the complaint will decide if they are able to deal with the issue raised, based on the nature of the complaint. An explanation must be forwarded to the Delivery or Account Manager detailing the reasons why they do not feel able to deal with the complaint.
2. If the recipient of the complaint is not able to deal with the issues they must ensure they pass on all appropriate details to the person who can for example be their line manager or a suitable person in one of the support teams. The Quality team must be informed. This must be done on the same day the complaint is received as the response is required within 5 working days.
3. The complaint handler will send a written acknowledgement, including a copy of the Customer Complaints Process to the customer on the day the complaint is received, using the customers preferred method of communication, i.e. Letter to home address or email. Check details held on file are correct and request an update if necessary.
4. The complaint handler will conduct a fair and balanced investigation of the facts, by contacting the complainant, staff, and other relevant parties. The investigation should include a review of written or digital records to establish the details such as dates and times where appropriate to ensure that a full and prompt investigation takes place.
5. The complaint handler will respond to the customer complaint in writing within 5 working days of the complaint being received and include contact details of the stage 2 complaint handler, so the customer knows who to contact if they are not satisfied with the

response at stage 1. If the complaint handler is unable to respond within 5 working days, they must inform the customer before this period expires, giving the reason for the delay and the date they can expect a response that is realistic and reasonable. This information should be included in the customer records that the manager will create.

6. The complaint handler is responsible for keeping notes, copies of correspondence or other records relating to the complaint. The complaint handler will provide all details, including records to the team/centre manager.

7. The complaint handler is responsible for creating a new record file locally and forwarding onto the Quality team either when the complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with or in the event that the complaint reaches stage 2. The file name should include the customer's name, e.g. Jennifer Saunders 21-12-2121. Please ensure documents are named appropriately, including the date. If the complaint is closed at this stage, the complaint handler must complete the lessons learnt and changes made or recommended section on the appropriate document and forward to the Quality team via the appropriate email [dgagg@pareto.co.uk](mailto:dgagg@pareto.co.uk). This will ensure that consideration has been given to how we can reduce the risk of this type of complaint reoccurring and that we highlight any changes made or recommended.

## Stage 2

1. If the customer is not satisfied with the response from us at stage 1, they have the right to escalate their complaint to stage 2. The customer must address this in writing (or with help if they need support with their writing) justifying why they are not satisfied with the stage 1 response to the stage 2 complaint handler. The stage 2 complaint handler will be a manager.

2. If the manager is the subject of the complaint they must refer it to [d.gagg@pareto.co.uk](mailto:d.gagg@pareto.co.uk) within 1 working day of receiving the complaint, providing the complainant's name so the investigation can be carried out by another manager, designated by the Quality team.

3. The complaint handler will send a written acknowledgement to the customer on the day the complaint is escalated, using the customer's preferred method of communication, i.e. Letter to home address or email. If corresponding by email, include a delivery and read receipt.

4. The stage 2 complaint handler is responsible for reviewing all the information, making contact with all parties concerned and responding to the customer in writing within 10 working days of the stage 2 complaint being received. This correspondence will include contact details of Quality Manager, so the customer knows who to contact if they are not satisfied with the response at stage 2. If the complaint handler is unable to respond within 10 working days, they must inform the customer before this period expires, giving the reason for the delay and the date they can expect a response.

5. The stage 2 complaint handler will be responsible for updating the customer file with additional correspondence or other appropriate records and forwarding onto the Quality team either when the complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with or in the event that the complaint reaches stage 3. The file name should include the

customer's name, e.g. Jennifer Saunders 21-12-2121. Please ensure documents are named appropriately, including the date.

6. If the complaint is closed at this stage, the complaint handler must complete the lessons learnt and changes made or recommended section on the appropriate form and forward to the Teaching Learning and Standards Team via the appropriate feedback inbox. This will ensure that consideration has been given to how we can reduce the risk of this type of complaint reoccurring and that we highlight any changes made or recommended.

### Stage 3

1. If the customer is not satisfied with the response from us at stage 2, they have the right to escalate their complaint to stage 3. The customer must address this in writing. The complaint must be referred to the Quality team within 1 working day of the stage 3 complaint being received. The Quality team will designate the stage 3 complaint handler

2. The stage 3 complaint handler will be a Senior Manager. The stage 2 complaint handler is responsible for collating all the information about the complaint and presenting it to the appropriate Senior Manager.

3. The Stage 3 complaint handler will send a written acknowledgement to the customer on the day the complaint is escalated, using the customers preferred method of communication, i.e. Letter to home address or email. If corresponding by email, include a delivery and read receipt.

4. The stage 3 complaint handler will review all the information, making contact with all parties concerned if appropriate and respond to the customer in writing within 10 working days of the stage 3 complaint being received. This correspondence will include contact details of the stage 4 organisation appropriate to the customer's complaint. If the complaint handler is unable to respond

within 10 working days, they must inform the customer before this period expires, giving the reason for the delay and the revised date for the response that is realistic and reasonable.

5. The stage 3 complaint handler will be responsible for updating the customer file with additional correspondence or other appropriate records and forwarding onto the Quality team either when the complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with or in the event that the complaint reaches stage 4. The file name should include the customer's name, e.g. Jennifer Saunders 21-12-2121. Please ensure documents are named appropriately, including the date.

6. If the complaint is closed at this stage, the complaint handler must complete the lessons learnt and changes made or recommended section on the appropriate form and forward to the Quality team. This will ensure that consideration has been given to how we can reduce the risk of this type of complaint reoccurring and that we highlight any changes made or recommended.

#### Stage 4

1. If the customer is not satisfied with the response from us at stage 3, they have the right to escalate their complaint to stage 4. The customer must address this in writing to the appropriate external body. Details of the contact details and timescales where relevant are provided below and on the learner or employer/partner process.

2. The Quality team will be responsible for coordinating any complaints at this level. The Standards Lead with support from the Senior Manager who responded at stage 3 will respond to requests for information from the external body the Quality team will update the database (Stage 4).

3. If the complaint is closed at this stage, the Senior Manager must complete the lessons learnt and changes made or recommended section on the appropriate form and forward to the Quality team. This will ensure that consideration has been given to how we can reduce the risk of this type of complaint reoccurring and that we highlight any changes that need to be made or recommended.

For **Apprenticeships** you can contact **Apprenticeship helpline** on either [nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk) or Telephone: 0800 015 0400. You must do this within 3 months of receiving our final response to your complaint. You'll find further information at <https://www.gov.uk/complainfurthereducationapprenticeship>

#### **4.0 Procedure**

The procedures set out below explains how you can make a complaint about the quality of our services.

##### **Informal Procedure**

Our aim is to resolve any complaint quickly and you are invited initially to bring any matter of concern to the attention of the referred person outlined below. However, if you still feel dissatisfied after this approach, you may initiate a formal complaint in writing.

##### **Formal Procedures**

All formal complaints should be in writing. Please provide as much information as possible along with contact details, such as your name, telephone number and postal address. We will handle any personal data you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Complaint /Reason for complaint**

**Who it should be referred to.**

**Responsible for collating records**

From Customer

Appropriate Skills Coach /Trainer or  
Delivery Manager

Account Manager/Delivery Manager

About a Skills Coach/Trainer/other staff  
member

Line Manager

Line Manager

From ESFA/OFSTED or arbitration bodies

Apprenticeship and Training [Director-  
sgallagher@pareto.co.uk](mailto:sgallagher@pareto.co.uk) , cc  
[akennedy@pareto.co.uk](mailto:akennedy@pareto.co.uk) (The Director  
will notify our MD)

Investigating Manager

About Bullying or harassment

HR

Head of HR

From Partner about Pareto Law

[dgagg@pareto.co.uk](mailto:dgagg@pareto.co.uk)

Quality team