



COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND APPEALS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Version	6
Effective Date	Mar 2019
Review Date	Dec 2023
Next review Date	Dec 2024



Title	Complaints, Compliments and Appeals Policy & Procedure			Ref. No	WI16
Approved by	R Ingram	Date	17/12/2023	Issue	5

Summary of Changes

Ser	Issue	Date	Summary of changes
1	5	18/12/2023	Addition of this table
2			

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy outlines the methods and stages through which learners and other stakeholders can make a complaint / compliment or appeal against an assessment decision relating to the service provided by MKC Training. MKC Training aims to use all complaints, compliments and appeals to further improve the service provided.

2. Scope and Aim of Policy

- 2.1. MKC Training is committed to providing a quality service for all of its learners, employers and other service users. It is our aim to work in an open and accountable way that can build trust and respect with our stakeholders.
- 2.2. We strive to improve the service offered by listening and responding to the views of all stakeholders. More importantly, we aim to ensure that we respond positively to complaints and appeals by putting mistakes right.
- 2.3. This policy applies to all learners, employers and other stakeholders who engage in training services directly with MKC Training, or for training delivery where MKC Training is the named approved centre.
- 2.4. It does not apply to trainees on military training courses at the Royal School of Military Engineering and associated sites. In this instance, the Defence Systems Approach to Training DSAT JSP822 policy and local training quality arrangements are applied.
- 2.5. Our Learner Feedback system is a key mechanism through which learners can raise a compliment or complaint.
- 2.6. Any learners who are dissatisfied with our response following their feedback, may choose to take advantage of the complaints system.
- 2.7. The formal complaint process is not open to:
- Those learners who have already pursued the matter and failed their final appeal.
 - Any former learner or graduate who fails to lodge a complaint within three months of completing or ceasing their studies.
- 2.8. The appeals system is for learners who wish to challenge any aspect of the assessment

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process.

3. Policy Statement

3.1. MKC Training aims to provide an excellent service to all its learners and to continuously improve the quality of its provision. Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- Making any type of complaint or appeal is an easy and accessible process.
- We deal with all complaints / appeals promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially.
- Responses are made in an appropriate way for the complaint received - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken.
- We learn from complaints / appeals, use them to improve our service, and review regularly our complaints policy and procedures.
- Where a complaint highlights a safeguarding issue, our Safeguarding Officer is notified promptly, and the associated procedure is enacted.

4. Procedures – Complaints

Stage 1 (informal resolution)

- 4.1. Concerns or issues should be raised with the member of staff who is responsible for the particular matter in an attempt to resolve it quickly. This ensures that any dissatisfaction arising from misunderstanding can be dealt with quickly to all parties' satisfaction.
- 4.2. If the complainant feels they cannot raise their concern with the member of staff in question, they should make their complaint to the relevant Training Manager or Training Coordinator who will then try to achieve a satisfactory resolution.
- 4.3. The Learner Feedback process also provides the opportunity for learners to raise concerns at the end of every phase of training.

Stage 2 (formal resolution)

- 4.4. If the complainant feels their issues have not been addressed at the informal stage, then they should make a formal complaint.
- 4.5. The form of the complaint may be received in a range of formats. Where it is helpful to the complainant (in terms of structure or accessibility), they can complete the Complaints / Appeals Form. This can be found on the company website, ISO 9001 Quality Management System (QMS) and in Appendix A of this document.
- 4.6. Complaints or completed forms should be returned to the Teaching and Quality Improvement (TQI) Division:
 - Email MKC.Training.tqi@midkent.ac.uk
 - Hand in to the TQI Division office, Denison (BR059), RSME
 - Telephone 01634 822382
- 4.7. When a complaint is received, it will be logged using the IM10 – Improvement Log within MKC

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Training's ISO 9001 QMS. TQI will acknowledge the complaint within 3 working days.

- 4.8. The TQI Division will refer the complaint to the training division responsible for resolving the complaint.
- 4.9. It is the responsibility of the training division management team, supported by TQI, to resolve the issue and notify TQI that the issue has been resolved along with any email correspondence and outcome.
- 4.10. All complaints are expected to be resolved within 10 working days. In exceptional circumstances, this may take a little longer but the complainant will be informed that this is the case within 10 working days and kept informed of further progress.

Stage 3 (formal resolution)

- 4.11. Where a complainant is not satisfied with the result following stage 2 of the investigation. it will be passed to the TQI Divisional Manager or other designated senior manager.
- 4.12. The TQI Divisional Manager, or other designated senior manager will review the findings of the original investigation and decide whether there are sufficient grounds for review within 10 working days of the conclusion of stage 2.
- 4.13. The outcome of the review will either be:
 - No further action as the TQI Divisional Manager or other designated senior manager agrees with the outcome of the original investigation
 - Initiation of a new investigation.

5. Procedures – Appeals

- 5.1. All learners must have access to a responsive appeals system. It is important for an assessment team to consider appeals and to improve, where appropriate, the assessment system. The consideration of appeals that are made will help Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) staff to monitor the assessment process and improve it where appropriate. This process contributes to the standardisation of assessment and therefore, all parts of the IQA process.
- 5.2. Learners can appeal against the following:
 - **The assessment plan** – the learner can appeal if they do not agree with the suggested methods, location, time and criteria.
 - **The assessment** – the learner has the right to appeal if they feel that the assessment differed from what was agreed on the assessment plan, or they feel that they did not receive a fair assessment.
 - **The assessment decision** – the learner can appeal if they feel the assessor's judgment was unfair.

5.3. The three stages of the appeals process are summarised in Annex B.

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- 5.4. Concerns with the assessment process should be raised with the trainer or assessor to resolve the issue quickly.
- 5.5. If the learner feels they cannot raise their concern with the member of staff in question, they should make their appeal to the relevant Training Manager or Training Coordinator who will then try to achieve a satisfactory informal resolution.

Stage 2 (formal resolution)

- 5.6. If the trainee feels their concerns have not been addressed at the informal stage, then they should make a formal appeal.
- 5.7. The form of the appeal may be received in a range of formats. Where it is helpful to the person raising the appeal (in terms of structure or accessibility), they can complete the Complaints / Appeals Form. This can be found on the company website, ISO 9001 Quality Management System (QMS) and in Appendix A of this document.
- 5.8. Appeals or completed forms should be returned to the Teaching and Quality Improvement (TQI) Division:
 - Email MKC.Training.tqi@midkent.ac.uk
 - Hand in to the TQI Division office, Denison (BR059), RSME
 - Telephone 01634 822382
- 5.9. When an appeal is received, it will be logged using the IM10 – Improvement Log within MKC Training’s ISO 9001 QMS. TQI will acknowledge the appeal within 3 working days.
- 5.10. The TQI Division will refer the appeal to Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) staff within the appropriate training division (usually Programme Leader / Training Manager).
- 5.11. It is the responsibility of the training division management team, supported by TQI, to resolve the appeal and notify TQI that the appeal has been resolved along with any email correspondence and outcome.
- 5.12. All appeals are expected to be resolved within 10 working days. In exceptional circumstances, this may take a little longer but the complainant will be informed that this is the case within 10 working days and kept informed of further progress.

Stage 3 (formal resolution)

- 5.13. Where a learner is not satisfied with the result following stage 2 of the investigation. It will be passed to the TQI Divisional Manager or other designated senior manager.
- 5.14. The TQI Divisional Manager, or other designated senior manager will review the findings of the original appeal and decide whether there are sufficient grounds for review within 10 working days of the conclusion of stage 2.
- 5.15. The outcome of the review will either be:
 - No further action as the TQI Divisional Manager or other designated senior manager agrees with the outcome of the original appeal
 - Initiation of a new appeal. It is likely that the new appeal will involve quality assurance

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representatives from the Awarding Organisation.

6. Compliments

6.1. Where MKC Training has exceeded expectations, the Learner Feedback system, or emails to the TQI Division (MKC.Training.tqi@midkent.ac.uk), are used to tell us how we have done this. We will then share this best practice to improve our services in other areas and aspects of training life.

7. Promoting the policy

7.1. Learners will be informed about the complaint, appeal and compliment process at induction and during assessment activities.

7.2. The policy is available via the MKC Training Website and ISO 9001 QMS.

7.3. Flow charts summarising the complaints and appeals process (Annex B) will be displayed in classrooms and assessment areas.

8. Associated Policies, Procedures and Documentation

- POL01 – Quality Policy
- F10 – Complaint / Appeal / Compliment Form
- IM10 – Improvement Log
- BP04 – Non-conformance and Continuous Improvement
- BP02 – Management Review
- TQI01 - Quality Assurance and Improvement procedures
- TQI09 – Internal Quality Assurance Process
- WI11 - Course Evaluation procedures

9. Monitoring

9.1. All complaints are monitored my the Senior Leadership Team and monitoring reports are provided twice annually through the ISO 9001 Management Review process

10. Policy Validity

10.1. This policy is subject to annual review.

11. Policy Owner and Reviewer

11.1. The Senior Manager responsible for this policy is the TQI Divisional Manager.

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Complaints and Appeals Process

A complaints and appeals process exists, allowing you to raise an issue or complaint to do with your training. You can complain about any aspect of your training that fails to meet your expectations. You can make an appeal against the following:

- **The assessment plan** – you can appeal if you do not agree with the suggested methods, location, time and criteria.
- **The assessment** – you can appeal if you feel that the assessment differed from what was agreed on the assessment plan or you feel that you did not receive a fair assessment.
- **The assessment decision** – you can appeal if you feel the assessor's judgment was unfair.

