discovery

Your Workforce Reimagined

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Introduction

Discovery understands the importance of obtaining the views of our clients, candidates, and apprentices to continually innovate and grow; we encourage and welcome any feedback regarding our services and the people providing them.

We always strive to ensure that our clients, candidates, delegates, apprentices, suppliers and partners have a positive experience with Discovery.

If our services fall below our usual high-standards and do not meet expectations, we actively encourage open, honest feedback that addresses any concerns. It is our priority to ensure that we investigate these areas as quickly as possible, so we can objectively assess the situation in full.

In the event of a concern being raised, we will:

- Follow the guidelines set out in this document
- Acknowledge all complaints within two working days
- Be objective in our approach
- Always remain professional
- Provide updates on our progress (as appropriate)

General Complaints and Appeals Process

Discovery's Complaints Policy provides a guide in how to approach us if anyone wants to make a complaint in relation to any part of our delivery. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from anyone about our products, delivery, services or the complaints handling process, where it is clear that there is an expectation to identify the
cause of the problem and to take some kind of remedial action.

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of examples of complaints, but the following are examples of situations that would constitute a complaint:

- Lack of customer focus approach
- Website issues, including newsletters and functionality
- Incorrect product or service received
- Certificates delivered outside of agree service level agreement
- Non-compliance with stated process e.g., not adhering to published timescales or processes within our control
- Finance related issues.

Procedure

Upon receipt of a comment or complaint regarding our services or people providing them, the procedure is as follows:

Tier One – Informal complaint or comment

If appropriate, the complainant should raise concerns directly with the person it relates to or his or her supervisor.

Often, concerns can be resolved quickly and effectively through timely communication; our team welcome feedback as they aim to provide the best service possible for our clients, candidates, and delegates.

If the issue isn't resolved, the complainant should escalate this concern to tier two.

Tier Two – Formal complaint or comment

In the instance that the complainant wishes to lodge a formal complaint, the process is as follows:

1. The complainant must email hello@discovery-adr.com to request a Complaint Form, which must then be returned to our Commercial Director, Sarah Evans, on Sarah@discovery-adr.com.
2. The form should be requested and completed as soon as any concerns or matters arise, so that Discovery can ensure that undue delay doesn't impact on the inquiry. Discovery will send acknowledgement of receipt within two working days.
3. Our Commercial Director will either investigate the complaint themselves or nominate a senior member of the team. This will be confirmed to the complainant within five working days.
4. Those appointed to investigate will conduct a thorough, objective and in-depth inspection of the situation, sharing details with all parties as appropriate.
5. The result of the investigation will be shared with the complainant within ten working days of Discovery acknowledging the complaint.

Appeals

In the event that the complainant wishes to appeal the outcome, they must submit their appeal (including all information relating to the grounds for their appeal) in writing to the CEO within five working days of receiving communication of the investigation's outcome.

The CEO will review the grounds of the appeal (or a senior member of the team if the complaint relates to the CEO), and communicate the outcome of the appeal to the complainant within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

For those staff not regulated and/or registered by a professional organisation or body, the appeal decision will be final.

In the event that a complainant wished to appeal against the final decision for those staff who are regulated and/or registered by a professional organisation or body, the complainant must do so through the related professional organisation or body in line with their Complaints Procedure.

If a complaint regards an assessment decision made by Discovery or any of its partners, the complainant is permitted to appeal directly to the awarding body. In this scenario, Discovery will provide any details the complainant required to escalate the complaint.

Apprenticeship Complaints and Appeals Process

Apprentices

Making a complaint

If you have a complaint about the apprenticeship programme you may want to raise it with your coach, line manager or mentor first. They may be able to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction. You can make a formal complaint if you are not able to solve your issue informally in this way.

Where to send your complaint

Please send any formal complaints to the Programme Manager at Discovery by email: apprenticeships@discovery-adr.com

What you need to make a complaint

Please tell us the reason for the complaint and provide any relevant written evidence which will help us to understand it.

How we will treat your complaint

Your complaint will be treated in confidence, seriously and fairly. The Programme Manager will ascertain the nature of the complaint and the circumstances which have given rise to it. You may be contacted for more information.

The Programme Manager will tell you about any action to be taken to resolve your complaint. This will be done initially by email or telephone and followed up by a formal letter.

When you can expect a decision

A decision can normally be expected within five working days of the complaint being received by the Programme Manager. This may take longer if further information is needed to understand the situation.

What happens if you are unhappy with the outcome?

If the Programme Manager does not resolve a complaint to your satisfaction, it will be escalated to the Director of Programmes and Apprenticeship Learning. He/She will take control of the complaint, investigate it in full and implement the action needed to resolve it. In this case, please contact the following Director by email:

Raj Babber – raj.babber@discovery-adr.com

Tel: 07487 596754

What happens afterwards?

After any complaint, a review will take place to establish if procedural change is required to prevent a repetition. This will involve a review of any training needs identified for any employee involved.

All complaints will be recorded and held on file and will be used for quality assurance purposes and evaluation of our services. Complaints will form part of the agenda for management meetings.

Complaining to the ESFA

You can complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) about how your complaint was handled. Complaints should be made to complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk or by post to:

Complaints team
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

The ESFA does not deal with complaints about employment issues (for example, a problem with your contract if you are working as an apprentice).

You must contact the ESFA within 12 months after the issue happened.

The ESFA will reply to let you know what will happen next.

If you are unhappy with the ESFA response

You can contact the Department for Education if you are unhappy with how the ESFA has dealt with your complaint.

Complaining to Ofsted

If your concern is not resolved, or you feel you did not receive an adequate response, you should follow Discovery complaints procedure.

You should contact Ofsted if:

- you are not satisfied with the services response after you have followed our complaints procedure
- you feel unable to contact the service concerned about this particular issue

Ofsted Recommendations:

It is useful to make notes of any key people involved, dates and times, and to send Ofsted copies of any written complaints you have made.

Ofsted cannot investigate individual concerns. They use the information you provide to inform their next inspection of that service. They may also pass the information to, or advise you to contact, another organisation that does have the power to investigate complaints. They will do everything they can to keep your identity confidential if you want them to.

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or call on 0300 123 1231.

Employers

If you, as an employer, have a complaint about the apprenticeship programme please raise it directly with the Programme Manager at Discovery by email: apprenticeships@discovery-adr.com

If the Programme Manager does not resolve a complaint to your satisfaction, the Director of Programmes and Apprenticeship Learning, will take control of the complaint, investigate it in full and implement the action needed to resolve it.

In this case, please contact the following Director by email: raj.babber@discovery-adr.com

The Programme Manager or Director will inform you about any action to be taken to resolve the complaint. This will be done initially by email or telephone and followed up by a formal letter. A decision can normally be expected within five working days of the complaint being received. This may take longer if further information is needed to understand the situation.

If you are concerned about how your complaint was handled, you can complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) at: complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk or by post to the address given below.

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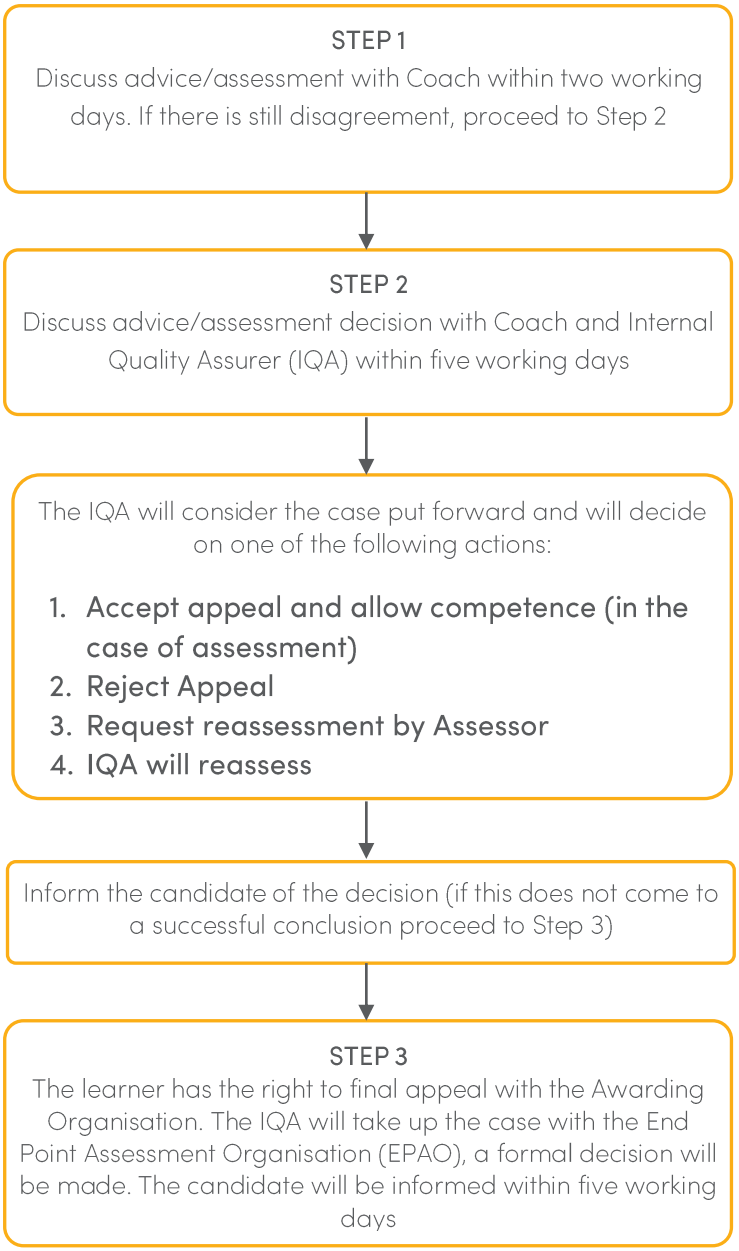
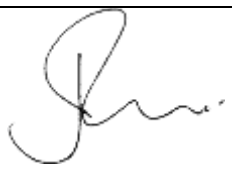
Appeals

If the apprentice disagrees with the advice given by the assessor or assessment decisions made, he/she may appeal. Any appeals against advice/assessment decisions should follow the procedure set out below:



Document details:

Version	Description	
1.0	Date Live:	2nd December 2019
	Version Notes:	Updated policy content, branding & design of document.
	Reviewed by:	Raj Babber - 28th November 2019
	Approved by:	Jonathan Evans - 29th November 2019
2.0	Date Live:	15th February 2021
	Version Notes:	Update to document control policy, which has been reflected, and updated to Discovery appointed email addresses.
	Reviewed by:	Raj Babber – 15th February 2021
	Approved by:	Jonathan Evans – 15th February 2021
3.0	**Date Live:**	15th February 2022
	Version Notes:	Update to document control policy, which has been reflected throughout. Key areas have been made bold for auditing purposes. Page numbers have been inserted. This policy is reviewed annually has been added and the CEO signature.
	Reviewed by:	Raj Babber – 15th February 2022
	Approved by:	Jonathan Evans – 15th February 2022
	Signed by:	

This policy is reviewed annually. The next scheduled date to review this policy is: 15th February 2023.