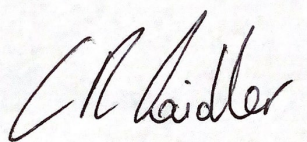




Apprenticeship Compliments and Complaints Policy



Document Approval	
Document Title	Apprenticeship Compliments and Complaints Policy
Version	V4
Name of approver	Craig Laidler
Date	02/12/2025
Signature	

Policy Statement

This policy is published on the LNER public website and is accessible to all apprentices, prospective apprentices, and employers. It is also provided at induction and referenced in the Apprenticeship Commitment Statement. A printed copy is available on request.

Any apprentice, employer, or their representative may raise a complaint or provide feedback under this policy.

The Learning and Development Team welcome feedback and take all complaints seriously, whilst also valuing compliments. We will act appropriately whenever complaints are received. The Learning and Development Team takes the view that a complaint is an opportunity to improve our level of service.

When a complaint or compliment is received, it is forwarded to the Apprenticeship Programme Manager for recording and disseminating as appropriate.

The Learning and Development Team categorises complaints as informal or formal. Complaints may be raised informally (i.e., in day-to-day conversation with staff) which should then be dealt with immediately to prevent any escalation of dissatisfaction. However, where this is not possible, our escalation process will look to resolve complaints to a satisfactory outcome.

All complaints and compliments are recorded and reviewed regularly by the Apprenticeship Programme Manager and Head of Learning and Development. Trends and lessons learned are reported to senior leadership to support continuous improvement.

Responsibility

This policy is owned by the Head of Learning and Development, supported by the Apprenticeship Programme Manager. Updates are completed every two years, or if any changes are required by updates to Department for Education guidance. Updates and content are reviewed by the Head of Learning and Development. It is the responsibility of all members of the Learning and Development Team to be aware of this policy and adhere to its content.

Scope and Definition

Our complaints and complements policy, along with our library of LNER Learner policies and procedures, sets out the principles and requirements by which LNER will enhance learning through apprenticeships/Learning Programmes. The Policy applies to all LNER Apprentices/Learners in connection with the training, development and support they receive during their apprenticeship/learning programme. The policy is explained to apprentices and employers at induction and referenced in the Commitment Statement.

A complaint is an objection to something that is unfair, unacceptable, or otherwise not up to normal standards. While we strive to work to the best of our abilities it is accepted that at times there may be occasion where our delivery falls below the level of standard expected.

Concerns about issues not connected with the apprenticeship/learning programme should be raised using LNER's established mechanisms including but not limited to: Close Call, Grievance, Bullying and Harassment, and Whistleblowing.

Making a Complaint

Apprentices, employers, and their representatives can raise complaints by completing a Complaints Form (see page 5). However, it is recognised that it is not always possible to do this and therefore a letter, email, or telephone complaint will suffice addressed to the Apprenticeship Programme Manager who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days. The Apprenticeship Programme Manager will liaise with the Head of Learning and Development (or in their absence a member of the People Leadership Team (PLT)) who will direct the complaint to the most appropriate manager to investigate. The investigating manager will respond directly to the complainant.

Once an investigation is initiated, it should be completed and reported upon within fifteen working days. If that cannot happen, for whatever reason, it is the responsibility of the investigating manager to keep the complainant informed as to the reasons why and the anticipated conclusion date. All complainants will receive a written response outlining the actions taken to resolve it and detailing any mitigating circumstances arising from the investigation. Complainants will be made aware of the appeal procedure at this stage.

An informal complaint may mean that no further action will need to be taken, but the complaint will be recorded, and a copy forwarded to the relevant Manager for information. In all cases, the complainant will be made aware that if they want a resolution to their complaint, then they must follow the procedure for a formal complaint as set out below. If a pattern of a particular type of informal complaint begins to emerge, the Head of Learning and Development may initiate an investigation.

Formal complaints will be investigated by an appropriate manager. The complaints and compliments policy does not apply to appeals against an assessment decision relating to a qualification, award, progression on a programme of study or operational competency assessment. Further information about appeals against assessment decisions will be provided on request.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

All complaints will be treated with due sensitivity and confidentiality, without undue fear of reprisal or repercussion, and access will be provided on a 'need to know' basis. We will work to instil a culture through which learners and employers feel confident to make a complaint where they have any perceived grievance. By submitting a letter of complaint, the complainant is agreeing that the company can share details of the complaint, where necessary, to facilitate its resolution. Apprentices can also contact Ofsted directly if they have safeguarding or quality concerns.

A copy of the complaint will be circulated to the individual(s) who are subject to the complaint only where appropriate as part of the complaint investigation. Where the complaint proceeds to appeal stage, documentation relating to the complaint will be circulated to those involved in the process of appeal. Where the complaint is about a member of staff the concern will be passed to the Company's Human Resources department on receipt. If the complaint is taken

by them, we will write out to inform you of this, but no further information will be provided on any outcome found.

All material content related to a complaint will be stored in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679, with no threats to misuse or use for purposes other than those outlined in the initial complaint. Any data held or processed will only be used for the purpose of dealing with complaints and for monitoring and will be deleted/destroyed once the complaint is resolved.

Appealing the Outcome of a Complaint

The complainant can appeal against the outcome of the investigation. This must be in writing and received by the Head of Learning and Development within ten working days from the date of the written response sent regarding the outcomes of the complaint. The Head of Learning and Development will then investigate the circumstances surrounding the initial investigation or assign a new investigating (appeal) manager to do this.

Complainants may be invited to a meeting to consider the appeal, and this will ordinarily take place within fifteen working days of the Head of Learning and Development receiving a written notice to appeal. Where it is not possible to hold such a meeting within this timescale, they will be kept informed and the manager considering the appeal may do this through a telephone conversation.

Complainants will receive written notification of the appeal decision. Ordinarily this will be within five working days of the meeting to consider their appeal. The decision reached, as a result of the appeal investigation, will be final.

If the complaint is about an aspect of Learning or Development activity which is not funded from an external funding body, then there is no automatic right of appeal. There are limited situations in which such appeals can be made. These are complaints from students undertaking LNER run courses, where the Awarding Organisation allow appeals from students studying their qualifications within the business. Some Awarding Organisations (such as CMI, IOSH and Signature) allow students who have been studying the right to appeal any complaint that LNER has dealt with to them. LNER will ensure that complainants are made aware of the contact details, timescales and other information required to appeal the LNER's decision should that facility exist.

Where the complainant is not content with the decision made, they have the right of appeal to the relevant regulatory body:

Ofsted

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Website: [Ofsted| Contact form](#)

Department for Education (DfE)

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Website: [Contact the Department for Education](#)

Compliments/Complaints/Comments Form (Please complete all sections of this form)	
Compliment	
Informal Complaint	
Formal Complaint	
Comment	

Personal Details	
Name	
Department	
Job Role	
Course Details	

Details of your compliment/complaint/comment	
Signature	
Date	

Please return the completed form to apprenticeships@lner.co.uk marked *Compliments and Comments*. A formal complaint will normally receive acknowledgement within 3 working days.