

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy Number	HCT-CC-003
Version	3
Applicable To	Members of Horizon Community Training (learners, staff (including volunteers) partners and visitors) and the general public
Document Owner	Kath Shanahan
Next Review	September 2027
Availability	Policies and Procedures Folder, SharePoint, Company Website

Introduction

This Policy and Procedure applies to the Horizon Community Training CIC (Horizon) approach in respect to the receipt of compliments and complaints concerning the provision of services, Horizon's fundraising activities, the suitability of campaigns and the conduct of employees, volunteers, contractors and third parties working with or representing Horizon.

This Policy and Procedure does not apply to complaints made by Horizon staff including volunteers; in such cases, please refer to the relevant Horizon policies e.g. Grievance, Safeguarding Policy & Procedure.

Purpose

This Policy and Procedure describes how Horizon will deal with compliments and complaints, how to make a comment or complaint and what can be expected from Horizon in response.

Principles

- Horizon values a safe, proactive environment and welcomes any feedback that helps us achieve this.
- Horizon defines a compliment as positive feedback that contributes extra features to something else in such a way as to improve or emphasise its quality.
- Compliments may be used in newsletters, positive feedback and rewards to staff and learners or used for marketing and press releases.

- Horizon defines a complaint as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, concerning an act or omission by Horizon or one of its representatives’.
- Where it is unclear whether a comment is indeed a complaint, Horizon will take steps to confirm whether a complaint is being made. Horizon recognises the difference between what is a concern expressed in a comment and what is a complaint. However, taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest possible stage and seeking an informal resolution will reduce the likelihood of the issue developing into a formal complaint.
- We strive for excellence in everything that we do, but we acknowledge that sometimes things can go wrong and mistakes happen. Also, that sometimes not everyone will agree with what we do. Therefore, our complaint procedure is non-adversarial and does not provide a role for any other statutory or non-statutory body.
- In respect of any complaint Horizon will preserve the confidentiality of personal information as much as is reasonably possible. Horizon will only disclose it to people who are involved in the investigation (the investigation may require the Investigating Officer to speak to witnesses investigating a complaint) and any others to whom we have a legal obligation.
- If the communication or comment is anonymous, Horizon may not be able to treat it as a complaint under this Policy and Procedure. If it is deemed by Horizon to be of a serious nature an anonymous complaint may be investigated where they relate to alleged criminal, child, vulnerable adult, protection matters or alleged financial impropriety. This will be at the discretion of Horizon.

The aim of this Policy and Procedure is to:

- Encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- Allow swift handling of a complaint within established time-limits for action
- Keep people informed of progress
- Ensure a full and fair investigation
- Have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved
- Respect confidentiality
- Fully address all aspects of a complaint and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary

If a prompt informal resolution cannot be achieved then complaints must be submitted in a written/documented form such as a letter or email. A compliments and complaint form is available on request.

The following issues will be treated as complaints (this is not an exhaustive list or limited to the following):

- Inappropriate/improper/negative behaviour of learners, staff or anyone considered a member of or representing Horizon in any capacity
- Current or non-current (historic) harm to learners by Horizon as an organisation or through its activities (refer also to our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure)
- A substandard level of service, including accusations of professional incompetence/misconduct, teaching, activities or projects
- A lack of consideration towards the environment or local community
- Inappropriate/improper fundraising methods and financial losses/waste
- Criminal activities within or involving Horizon
- Exploitation of Horizon for personal advantage
- Non-compliance with Horizon's policies/procedures
- Non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations

Under certain circumstances Horizon may not be able to respond to a complaint where:

- The complainant has not identified themselves or provided their contact details
- The complaint is not about Horizon
- The expression of the complaint is insufficiently clear
- The complaint has been sent to us and other organisations as part of a bulk mailing or email

Regardless of the above points, Horizon will still take any and every complaint seriously and deal with it appropriately including, if deemed necessary, contacting the complainant where we are able, to discuss the matter further.

Horizon Complaints Procedure

This procedure is designed to be:

- Easily accessible and publicised
- Simple to understand and use
- Impartial
- Non-adversarial

In dealing with a complaint, Horizon will ensure that the complainant is dealt with:

- Fairly
- Courteously
- In a timely manner
- Accurate advice is gained

- Respect for privacy is provided – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility that Horizon may have to consult with other appropriate parties about a complaint
- Reasons for Horizon’s decisions will be provided

Where a complaint is upheld Horizon will acknowledge this and will inform all relevant parties of the action taken to address the complaint raised. Where it is judged that the complaint is unsubstantiated or there are no grounds for the complaint, all relevant parties will be also advised.

Responsibilities of Complainant

In making a complaint, Horizon would expect that the below is satisfied:

- Issues are raised in a timely manner
- Our team members are treated with respect and courtesy
- Accurate and concise information is provided in relation to the issues raised
- These procedures are fully utilised and that the complainant engages with Horizon

Complaints concerning learners, staff members, activities, any safeguarding concern or the organisation are to be addressed to the Chief Executive. If the complaint is regarding the Chief Executive, it is to be forwarded to external bodies as referenced at the end of this policy.

Informal Resolution

On receipt of a complaint Horizon staff will endeavour to resolve the matter at the earliest opportunity. If a complaint can be resolved informally to the satisfaction of the complainant, this will be recorded if deemed necessary. If it is not possible to resolve the matter informally, the formal complaints procedure will be instigated. At this stage details of the complaint will need to be placed in writing.

Time Frame

Where a formal complaint has been submitted in accordance with this policy and procedure, Horizon will:

- Acknowledge the complaint.
- Complete an investigation
- Following an investigation, provide a written full response notifying the complainant of the outcome of the investigation.

Meetings Protocol

Complainant

Where a meeting is arranged the complainant may be accompanied by another appropriate person where this will assist the investigation and resolution of the complaint.

Staff

Should it be necessary to meet with staff as part of an investigation into a complaint, they may seek the advice and support from an external professional body and may also be accompanied by another person to meetings where it is accepted by Horizon that this will assist the investigation and resolution of the complaint.

A member of staff who is the subject of a complaint will be provided with full details of any allegations made against them before being required to respond to the matters raised. On many occasions this may be best achieved by providing the member of staff with a copy of the letter/email detailing the complaint.

Legal Representation

Legal representation, or representation by a person or persons acting in a professional capacity, is not permitted within this Procedure.

This Policy and Procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

Submitting Compliments or Complaints

Compliments and complaints should be submitted and addressed to Mark Shanahan, Chief Executive

email: katherine@horizoncommunitytraining.co.uk

Postal address: Horizon Community Training,
16 Southgates Road
Great Yarmouth
NR30 3L

Further Information for Complainant

Taking your complaint further

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the response they have received or the complaint is against Mark, the complainant is entitled to take their concerns to any relevant statutory body, including but not limited to:

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

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

email: complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk

LADO

email: lado@norfolk.gov.uk

Department of Education

Ministerial and Public Communications Division
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Tel: 0370 000 2288

<https://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus>

Norfolk County Council

[Submit feedback or make a complaint - Norfolk County Council](#)

Compliments and Complaints Form

For us to deal with your feedback quickly and efficiently please fill in the form below providing as much detail as possible.

What is the Nature of your feedback		
Compliment	Complaint	Something else

Details of incident	To be filled in	Office use
Date & Time		
Location		
Group or individuals involved		
Additional detail (attach additional sheet if need be)		

Contact Details of the Person Giving Feedback	
Name, including title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	