

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to set out the steps which a complainant must follow when submitting complaints to EMD about any of its services and the steps EMD will take when responding to such complaints.

Scope

This procedure applies to all centres, customers, clients and learners who use the services of EMD.

Responsibility and Authority

The Quality Improvement Manager and the Director.

Procedure

1. General Statement

- 1.1 It is important that all centres, customers, clients and learners are fully aware of this procedure.
- 1.2 We will carry out an annual review of the policy and revise it, if necessary, in response to feedback or good practice.
- 1.3 We consider that a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the services provided by EMD. This is not the same as a learner appeal, a whistleblowing report or a staff grievance.

2. Complaints: Stage 1: Initial Complaints

- 2.1 Many problems can be resolved informally. People with complaints (the complainant) are encouraged to begin by trying to resolve any complaint directly with an EMD member of staff. Complainants will be invited to a face to face meeting to discuss any issues and try to arrive at a solution. This may be the easiest way of resolving the issue. The complainant can explain to the EMD staff member why their behaviour, decision or actions were unfair, offensive or discriminatory. Through discussion the issues may become clear, and the problem can be addressed. Many complaints can be resolved at this level.
- 2.2 Where an initial complaint cannot be resolved quickly and easily, the complainant may wish to escalate their complaint to Stage 2.

3. Complaints: Stage 1

- 3.1 A complaint must be made in writing or by e-mail, must state clearly the nature of the complaint and must be addressed to the Quality Improvement Manager or Director - at EMD UK Ltd, 64 Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, WF13 1LJ or info@emduk.com - within 14 days of the incident taking place.
- 3.2 Acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint will be sent to complainant within 3 working days.

3.3 Complaints, in the first instance, will be dealt with by the Quality Improvement Manager, ensuring that this individual has no personal interest in the complaint being made.

3.4 The Quality Improvement Manager carries out an investigation and reviews all the documentation, then reaches a decision.

3.5 A response time of 10 working days (15 working days for overseas) will be adhered to.

3.6 The possible outcomes are:

- Complaint upheld and appropriate action will be taken to remedy the situation and recompense the complainant.
- Rejection of the grounds of complaint with clearly stated reasons.
- If the complaint is rejected, or the complainant does not accept the outcome as satisfying the original grounds, the complainant will be informed that they may, within 10 working days of receipt of the decision, make an appeal and ask for the complaint to be referred to the Academic Panel for Complaints Stage 2.

4. Complaints: Stage 2

4.1 If a request for an appeal against a complaint decision is received within the timeline, the details will be sent to the Academic Panel, plus an additional individual independent of EMD for scrutiny (including ensuring that the procedures up to that point have been followed correctly, fairly and fully) and for a decision within 20 working days.

4.2 The Academic Panel will also consider the procedures followed up until that point and ascertain if they have been followed correctly, fairly and fully.

4.3 The Academic Panel will write to the complainant with their decision.

4.4 Possible outcomes are:

- Complaint upheld and appropriate action will be taken to remedy the situation and recompense the complainant.
- Complaint partially upheld and appropriate action will be taken to remedy the situation and recompense the complainant in some aspects of the complaint, with clearly stated reasons provided for areas where the complaint has been rejected.
- Rejection of the grounds of complaint with clearly stated reasons.

4.5 The decision resulting from the Academic Panel's review will be final.

5. Further Actions

- 5.1 Where the Academic Panel has found that the complaint is upheld and the complainant must be recompensed, the Academic Panel will inform EMD of any actions that the company is required to undertake.
- 5.2 Where the Academic Panel has found that the complaints procedure has not been followed, the Academic Panel will inform EMD of any actions that the company is required to undertake.
- 5.3 Where the Academic Panel has found that the complaint is rejected, they will provide clearly stated reasons and state any further actions to be undertaken by the company or by the complainant.
- 5.4 Where the complainant does not accept the outcome of the Academic Panel's review, they may wish to take their complaint to an external body, such as an Ombudsman, funding body or Awarding Organisation. The external third party will vary depending on the nature of the complaint. EMD will provide details of any external stakeholder the complainant wishes to contact upon request.