



Employer Complaints Policy (apprenticeships)

1. Introduction

This policy is to inform employers of apprentices that are engaged with the University of Nottingham of the process to follow in order to make a complaint about the service provided by the University. A group of employers may use this procedure to make a collective complaint provided that one employer identifies as the main contact for purposes of communication.

Complaints will be treated seriously and employers will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint in good faith. However, it is expected that employers will conduct themselves responsibly and treat the process and those members of the university involved in the process with respect at all times.

The University has a separate complaints policy for apprentices, which is published in the apprentice handbooks, on the Virtual Learning Environment, and at

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/workingwithbusiness/services/degree-apprenticeships.aspx>

After the internal University processes have been exhausted, complainants have the opportunity to have their raise their complaint with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are not satisfied with the university's response.

2. Definitions

Complaint

For the purposes of this policy an employer complaint is "an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more employers about a university's action or lack of action, or about the service provided by or on behalf of the university."

Feedback

An employer may provide feedback which will be useful to a school or service when reviewing its policies and operations, without invoking this policy. Employers are encouraged to provide feedback at a local level to the appropriate school or service provider in a prompt and constructive manner.

3. Process of making an employer complaint

There are three levels to the University complaints procedure:

Level 1: Informal resolution

Level 2: Formal complaint

Level 3: Escalation review

We will record and monitor complaints in order to improve our apprenticeship programmes and to assist in identifying problems and trends across the University. Records will feed into the monitoring and evaluation procedure at the Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Joint Academic Board and other relevant School, Faculty or University committees.



4. How to make an employer complaint

Stage 1: Informal Complaints

We hope that the majority of complaints can be resolved in this manner. Complaints should be raised immediately with the relevant department, or with the Degree Apprenticeships HUB (degree-apprenticeships@nottingham.ac.uk). The relevant department will work with you to try to resolve the issue directly and informally at the earliest opportunity. You will receive a written acknowledgement of your complaint within two working days and we aim to resolve the issue and provide a written response within four weeks.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If an employer is unable to resolve their complaint informally, or they are unhappy with the response, they should raise the matter in writing by emailing the Head of Profession and Workbased Learning ruth.eccles@nottingham.ac.uk and the Academic Director of Degree Apprenticeships jonathan.tallant@nottingham.ac.uk.

The email should be titled as 'formal complaint' and should set out clearly the details of the complaint in full; the action that has been taken to resolve the matter informally, and the resolution sought by the employer. The formal complaint must be raised within two months of receiving written response to Stage 1.

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within five working days and the Head of Professional and Workbased Learning (HoPWBL) or the Academic Director of Degree Apprenticeships (ADDA) will investigate the complaint.

In investigating the complaint HoPWBL/ADDA will review the information submitted by the employer and will meet with relevant members of university staff to discuss. HoPWBL/ADDA may also meet with the employer complainant and/or apprentices to clarify facts or question further.

A written response will be issued by the lead investigator within four weeks of the date of the formal complaint where possible. If this is not possible, revised timescales for resolution will be provided in writing to the employer complainant.

Stage 3: Escalation review

If an employer is not satisfied with the response provided at Stage 2, they can escalate their complaint in writing to the Director of Engagement and Partnerships ben.sumner@nottingham.ac.uk. The email should be titled 'Stage 3 complaint'. The Stage 3 complaint must be received within one month of the employer receiving written response to Stage 2.

Unless new evidence is presented, the Director of Engagement and Partnerships will not re-investigate the complaint, but will check that appropriate procedures have been followed and that the decision made at Stage 2 was reasonable.

If new evidence is presented, the Director of Engagement and Partnerships will consider it in making their decision, and may undertake further investigation.



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A written response will be issued by the Director of Engagement and Partnerships within four weeks of the date of the formal complaint where possible. If this is not possible, revised timescales for resolution will be provided in writing to the employer complainant.

6. Further action

After the internal university processes have been exhausted, complainants have the opportunity to raise their complaint with the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are not satisfied with the university's response. You must contact the ESFA within 12 months after the issue happened.

Email or post your complaint to the ESFA complaints team.

ESFA complaints team

complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk

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

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

If you're unhappy with the ESFA response

You can [contact the Department for Education](#) if you're unhappy with how the ESFA has dealt with your complaint.