

## **Complaints Policy**

### **Introduction**

This document sets out Crossfields Institute's Complaints Policy and procedure and is for learners, staff, applicants, visitors and any interested parties who are engaged either directly or indirectly with Crossfields Institute activities.

We value all our stakeholders, learners, staff and visitors, and aim to provide excellent service and training in all aspects of what we do.

Therefore, it is important, should you feel you have encountered a level of service that is below what is expected, that you raise any concerns with us immediately so that they can be addressed and lessons learnt.

### **Scope**

This policy covers complaints learners, stakeholders, staff, or members of the public may wish to make in relation to the activities of Crossfields Institute or its approved centres. Complaints may include both academic and non-academic matters.

It is not to be used to cover appeals in relation to decisions made by Crossfields Institute. These areas are covered by our Appeals Policy. Should a complaint be submitted which is in fact an enquiry or an appeal we will respond to inform the relevant party that the issue is being considered, where appropriate, in accordance with the approach outlined in our Customer Service Statement or our Appeals Policy.

If you are unhappy about the way an assessment was delivered and conducted and you suspect malpractice or maladministration may have occurred you should send your concern to us in accordance with the arrangements in our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

### **Making a Complaint**

Learners are encouraged to raise their concern at an early stage with an appropriate member of staff at the relevant approved centre. As a first stage, please refer to the centre's Complaints Policy either in the Learner Handbook or on the centre website.

If your tutor or Programme Leader cannot help you, ask to speak to the Head of Centre. If this is not possible, or if you are dissatisfied with the response provided by the person concerned, please refer the matter to Crossfields Institute, once you have exhausted the centre's own complaints process. In exceptional circumstances, you can make the complaint directly to Crossfields Institute, without using the centre's complaints process, if you feel there was a significant breach by the centre of our policies and procedures.

We would normally expect to receive details of the complaint within one month of the event you are complaining about. If possible, please use the form at the end of this policy and on our website. Please send details of your complaint to [qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com](mailto:qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com) or you can contact us by phone on 01453 808118.

## **Complaint Details**

When you wish to make a complaint, please use the form found at the end of this policy, giving us your full name, contact details including a daytime telephone number along with:

- a full description of your complaint (including the subject matter and dates and times if known)
- any names of the people you have dealt with so far
- copies of any papers or letters to do with the complaint

Our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice, which can be seen on our website, explain how we use and protect your information.

Sometimes a complainant will wish to remain anonymous. However, it is always preferable to reveal your identity and contact details to us, and, if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences, please inform us that you do not wish us to divulge your identity.

While we are prepared to investigate issues which are reported to us anonymously we shall always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those to whom the complaint/allegation relates.

## **Complaints brought to our attention by the regulators**

Where the regulators notify us about failures that have been discovered in the assessment process or other activities of another awarding organisation, these will be reviewed in the same manner as other external complaints. The review will be in accordance with the procedures below to ascertain if the same issue could affect Crossfields Institute qualifications.

## **Complaints Process**

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days, letting you know who is investigating your complaint.

The Head of Quality will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy, and will either investigate the matter or allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and establish whether or not an issue relating to the complaint has occurred.

At all times we will ensure that Crossfields Institute personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and that they have had no previous

involvement or personal interest in the matter – other than initial contact acknowledging the complaint and explaining our procedures to the complainant. If the Head of Quality has had previous involvement in the complaint matter they will not be responsible for allocating a member of staff to carry out the investigation or for overseeing and managing the investigation.

We aim to investigate the complaint within 10 working days. If your complaint is more complex, or involves people who are not available at the time, we may need to extend this. We may contact you within this period to seek further information or clarification (in some instances we may recommend a meeting). At the end of the investigation we shall write/email to inform you of our decision.

### **Successful complaints and/or issues brought to our attention by Ofqual**

If any part of your complaint is upheld we will of course respond accordingly and give due consideration to how we can improve our service and arrangements.

Examples of the kind of arrangements we may implement as a result of an upheld complaint may include:

- Undertaking appropriate staff induction or training as required to prevent the complaint matter from reoccurring
- Considering if the complaint indicates a future risk that may need to be added to our risk logs
- Reviewing our procedures to assess the impact on our qualification development, delivery or awarding arrangements and assessment process
- In extreme circumstances, internal disciplinary procedures may be exercised where the performance or behaviour of our staff is deemed inappropriate.

In situations where a complaint has been successful, or where an investigation following notification from the regulators indicates a failure in our processes, we will give due consideration to the outcome and will take appropriate actions such as:

- identifying any other learner and/or centre who has been affected by that failure,
- correcting, or where it cannot be corrected, mitigating as far as possible the effect of the failure, and
- reviewing and amending our arrangements, where appropriate, to reduce the likelihood that the failure will reoccur in the future

### **What if I am not happy with the reply?**

If you are still unhappy with the decision taken by Crossfields Institute in reviewing the complaint you can, where relevant, take the matter through our Appeal arrangements which are outlined in our Appeals Policy. If, after you have exhausted our Appeals procedure, you are still unsatisfied

with the outcome you can complain/appeal directly to the relevant regulatory authority for the qualification (e.g. Ofqual in England).

### **Review arrangements**

We will review this document annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements. We will also revise this policy as and when necessary in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback (such as to align with any complaints process established by the regulators) and any trends that may emerge in relation to complaints received.

**Policy Last Reviewed September 2018**

**Next revision date September 2019**

Reviewed by: Head of Quality, Alison Richards

### **Contact us**

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact the Head of Quality on 01453 808118 or email [qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com](mailto:qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com).

## Complaints Form

Please record the details of your complaint on the form and email to [qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com](mailto:qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com) or send to us at Crossfields Institute, Stroud House, Russell Street, Stroud GL5 3AN. We will respond to confirm receipt of your complaint within 2 working days of receipt.

Name:  Date:

Programme/Qualification:

Centre:

Home telephone:  Mobile:

Email:

Please outline the details of your complaint (include relevant dates and names)

**Office use only:**

Date complaint received:

Name of staff investigating the complaint:

Date receipt of complaint confirmed (within 2 working days):

Key points from the investigation:

Complaint upheld: Yes / No

Date outcome reported to the complainant:

Date complaint closed (We aim to complete within 5 working days unless the matter requires further enquiries):

Crossfields Institute actions following the complaint: