

# Complaints and Appeals Policy

Northcoders Limited and Northcoders Group PLC | Funded Training

*Classification: Public/Not Sensitive*

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NC_Funded Training Complaints Policy	1.0	16/10/2024	10/06/2025	16/10/2025	Public	Charlotte Prior

## Policy Aim

This Policy aims to ensure that complaints and appeals are resolved as fairly and quickly as possible.

## Scope

This policy applies to all provisions provided by Northcoders Limited and Northcoders Group PLC. We want to provide good-quality services for everyone, but things sometimes go wrong. If they do, we need to know about them so that we can put them right and learn from them. This will help us to improve our performance and service to our service users.

## How Will We Do That?

We will make it easy for learners, staff, and other stakeholders to make a complaint by providing various methods in which to do so:

- In person
- By telephone
- By digital means

## What is a Complaint?

A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made about actions taken or a lack of action'.

## Who Can Make a Complaint?

Any person who receives a service from Northcoders (for example – a learner or client), any of the agencies with whom we work, or anyone who is impacted by the service we deliver, can make a complaint. If necessary, a person can ask a representative to make the complaint on their behalf.

## How Should Complaints Be Made?

Complaints may be made verbally, or in writing. We commit to handling all complaints as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Complaints can be made in several ways:

- a) By telephoning our main line as an individual
- b) In person by scheduling an appointment with a member of staff
- c) Via email to a Northcoders Member of Staff
- d) Formally via our Feedback form on our website
- e) Complaints Team at the following address:

**Complaints Team**  
**Northcoders**  
**Bloc**  
**17 Marble Street**  
**Manchester**  
**M2 3AW**

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## Response From Us/Timeline

- All telephone calls requesting a return call received before noon will be returned that same working day; those received in the afternoon will be returned by the end of the next working day.
- Written complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days on receipt, and a full reply will be sent within 10 working days of receipt.
- Further response times are set out in the procedure itself.
- At all stages the complainant will be kept informed as to what is happening with their complaint or appeal.
- If for whatever reason it is not possible to deal with the complaint within the published timescales, then the complainant will be informed of this, and a reason given.

## Informal Complaints

Learners who wish to raise issues about the conduct of Tutors, Mentors and Supervisors, may request an informal meeting with the Wellbeing & Pastoral Officer. The purpose of the meeting is to enable the Learner to talk through and clarify any issues they have.

## Complaint Procedures

### Stage One

In the first instance, a complaint can be made to any employee of Northcoders via the process documented above (a-e).

Contacts a, b and c are usually dealt with immediately by the relevant staff member. Formal complaints via d and e are dealt with centrally, depending on the department referred to. The complainant will be informed of the timescale within which they will receive a response as indicated above (should they want to receive one). If the matter is not resolved within the timescale or within a mutually agreed time, it will be referred to stage two.

### Stage Two

At this stage, a meeting will be convened between the person (and their representative if necessary) and an appointed employee who has not been involved in the complaint. This will take place within 14 days of the matter being referred to stage two.

Following discussions with all relevant parties, the appointed employee looking into the complaint will prepare a written statement of their findings and any recommendations. A copy of the statement will be given to the complainant.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, they then have the option to appeal within 7 working days of receiving the decision. The complaint will then be referred to stage three.

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### Stage Three

A panel will be convened of independent persons who have the relevant skills and knowledge to understand the issues surrounding the complaint being made. The person making the complaint along with their representative if appropriate, will be invited to attend the panel hearing and present their complaint. The complaint will be heard again in its entirety.

The panel will then inform the complainant in writing of their decision within 3 working days of the hearing. The decision from this panel hearing is final.

### Complaints Panel

The panel should be small and formed to be objective and independent and will normally consist of:

- A member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Head of Department
- Quality Lead

The panel will ensure that:

- It has full accounts from all parties involved. The Wellbeing & Pastoral Officer can support the Learner in the preparation of the written report/account of the issue/complaint.
- It will not have as members anyone involved in the complaint.
- They will inform the Complainant that they have the right to be accompanied in the panel meeting.

### Solutions

If the complaint is accepted, the person involved will try to solve the problem by doing the following:

- Apologising to you and explain what went wrong.
- Providing the service, you are entitled to receive.
- Changing procedures so that the mistake is not repeated.
- Asking you to detail any recommendations of areas where we can improve our performance concerning the information, advice and guidance given.

### Recording of Complaints

Formal complaints are kept, recorded, and monitored centrally.

### Complaints Resulting in Disciplinary:

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This policy is concerned only with resolving complaints and not with the investigation of disciplinary matters towards a member of Northcoders Staff, learner, or visitor. Any complaint investigation that results in disciplinary will follow the relevant Northcoders' Disciplinary Policy.

Where a complaint is made against a learner from a peer, this complaints policy may be used in conjunction with our Learner Disciplinary Policy.

## Appeal

Sometimes, you may not be fully supportive of our course of action following a complaint or an action that we have taken, and you may wish to appeal our decision.

You can appeal any decision we make within 5 days of receiving our full and final decision. You must appeal in writing to [appeals@northcoders.com](mailto:appeals@northcoders.com), clearly outlining why you are not satisfied with the outcome and what you would like us to do about it.

We will respond to you within 10 working days.

There is no further appeal after this step.

## Local Authority/Department for Education/Education & Skills Funding Agency Contact Information

You may wish to take your complaint to the Department for Education (DfE), the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), or Ofsted. You can do this by writing to them:

- Ofsted - [Click here](#)
- Department for Education/Education and Skills Funding Agency - [Click here](#) to access their complaints form
- For Lancashire residents completing a skills bootcamp through the local authority, you can appeal directly to the council by emailing [SkillsBootcamps@LancashireSkillsHub.co.uk](mailto:SkillsBootcamps@LancashireSkillsHub.co.uk), once this process has been concluded in full.

## Equality & Diversity

Learners and other service users have the right to express dissatisfaction with the services they receive from Northcoders or any of its group of companies. Learners using this policy can expect to be treated fairly and without discrimination.

## Monitoring & Reporting

The Senior Management Team will oversee all complaints received. Continued monitoring of complaints will take place within Northcoders and will form part of the customer satisfaction reviews.

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Northcoders will be required to make available information regarding the numbers of complaints as part of its annual report.

Arrangements for dealing with complaints will be monitored by the Director of Operations to identify trends and ensure that appropriate action has been taken.

Procedures will be reviewed annually, both to consider any amendments that are necessary to services and procedures, as well as to enable effective and satisfactory working arrangements to be maintained.

Northcoders through its Monitoring and Reporting of the frequency and handling of complaints will constantly be looking for ways in which Complaints, Policies and Procedures can be improved.

When such improvements are implemented, these will in turn be monitored by the board. Spot checks may be made to verify that action resulting from a complaint has been implemented.

All formal complaints should be in writing. Where the complainant is unable to put the formal complaint in writing, the relevant staff member should ensure that a record of the complaint is made and ask the complainant to sign it.

## **Dissemination of the Complaints Procedure**

The Complaints Policy and Procedure shall be:

- Published on the main website
- Discussed on staff induction/training courses
- Included in the learner induction booklet
- Form part of the individuals Training Plan
- Published on the LMS website for transparency

## **Quality Assurance**

The Senior Management Team and the Quality Lead will monitor the complaints and appeals procedure, to ensure that quality standards and the effectiveness of the procedure are maintained.

They will ensure that records on any matters related to the complaints and appeals procedure are maintained. These records will be held securely and remain confidential to the parties involved.

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