

Complaints and Feedback Policy

Document Control		
Document Number:	CST-001	Effective from: 02-01-2023
Linked Regulatory Requirements:	General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Data Protection Act 2018. GCOR: D2.2, D3.2, D4.2, D4.3, D4.4 https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook	
Version Number & Date:	V1.5, 03-02-2025	Review date: 03-02-2025
Date of Next Review:	02-02-2026	Classification Level: Public/General

Approval Level: High impact

Approved by: Executives

Approved Date: 03-02-2025

Revisions				
Version Number	Date	Changes	Author	Approved by
V1.5	03-02-25	Annual review- formatting updates, section 2.5 location updated terminologies updated for consistency throughout the document, Qualifications Wales email updated. Approved by Executives 15/01/25 and 03/02/25 to ensure quota met.	Assurance Officer	Executives

Table of Contents

1. Policy principles	4
2. Introduction.....	4
2.1. Purpose.....	4
2.2. Scope.....	4
2.3. Responsibilities/duties	5
2.4. Definitions	5
2.5. Location.....	5
3. Process.....	5
3.1. Providing feedback.....	5
3.2. Submitting a complaint	6
3.3. Investigation of the complaint	6
3.4. Resolution and response	6
3.5. Review of the complaint	6
3.6. Escalation to regulators	7
3.7. NCFE's contact details	7
3.8. Awarding regulators' contact details	7
4. Initial Equality Impact Assessment	8
5. Implementation and dissemination	8
6. Monitoring arrangements.....	8
7. Data retention.....	8

1. Policy principles

NCFE is committed to providing high-quality products and services to its customers and learners. We value feedback and complaints as an opportunity to improve our services and ensure customer satisfaction. We strive to provide a fair, efficient, and effective process for handling feedback, concerns, and complaints to resolve any issues in a timely and satisfactory manner.

2. Introduction

This policy applies to all customers of NCFE, including learners, centres, employers, and other stakeholders. It applies to all products and services offered by NCFE, including but not limited to, qualifications, assessments, accreditation, certification, customer service, resources, website, digital platforms and online services, marketing and communications, policies, and procedures.

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and consistent approach for customers to provide feedback and raise any concerns or complaints about NCFE products and services, and to outline the process by which NCFE will handle and respond to such feedback, concerns, and complaints.

2.2. Scope

This policy covers all feedback and complaints relating to NCFE products and services, including but not limited to:

- **qualifications and assessments:** any issues relating to the content, format, delivery, or assessment of qualifications or end-point assessments offered by NCFE
- **accreditation and certification:** any issues relating to the accreditation or certification process, including but not limited to recognition of prior learning (RPL), assessment, moderation, and certification
- **customer service:** any issues relating to the service provided by NCFE
- **resources:** the physical and virtual resources provided by NCFE to support with the delivery of NCFE qualifications
- **website, digital platforms, and online services:** any issues relating to the functionality, usability, and accessibility of the NCFE website, Portal, and other online services
- **marketing and communications:** any issues relating to the accuracy, relevance, and effectiveness of NCFE's marketing, communication materials, webinars, and events, for example
- **policies and procedures:** any issues relating to the clarity, fairness, and effectiveness of NCFE's policies and procedures.

This policy does not cover:

- requests for information under the Data Protection Act 2018

- requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2.3. Responsibilities/duties

All Executive members, directors, and heads of department are responsible for ensuring this policy is followed.

2.4. Definitions

Word/acronym	Definition
Record	Document stating results or evidence of activities performed
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning

2.5. Location

Accessible on the NCFE website

3. Process

All feedback and complaints will be treated confidentially and will be handled in accordance with the NCFE's Data Protection Policy. Personal data will be collected, used, and retained in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

It is important to note that throughout the complaint process, customers will be treated with respect, and their complaints will be handled in a confidential and impartial manner. NCFE will ensure that all complaints are thoroughly investigated and that appropriate actions are taken to resolve the issue.

Additionally, NCFE will maintain a record of feedback, concerns and complaints received and will use this information to identify any trends and areas for improvement in our products and services. This information will also be used to measure our performance in addressing and resolving complaints and to make sure that the complaints process is working effectively.

3.1. Providing feedback

Customers can provide feedback through various channels such as email, phone, feedback surveys, online chat, or in person. Where appropriate, we may contact you regarding your feedback to gain more information. We will regularly review feedback trends, using the information to make improvements to our products and services.

3.2. Submitting a complaint

Centres are encouraged to submit any feedback, concerns, or complaints to NCFE in writing, via email/live chat, or by phone. All written communications should be addressed to the appropriate department, if known.

Customers should provide as much detail as possible about the issue, including any relevant dates, times, and names of any colleagues involved. Any supporting documentation such as emails, letters, or assessment results should be attached to the complaint, along with your desired resolution.

NB: If you are an NCFE learner/student with a complaint, before raising concerns with us, you are required to exhaust your centre's complaints process. If you have not exhausted your centre's complaints process, we will clarify this requirement with you and redirect you to your centre. If you have exhausted your centre's complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied, or you still have concerns you would like to raise, you can submit a complaint to NCFE. Any supporting documentation such as emails, letters or assessment results should be attached to the complaint. If you know which individual or department is appropriate to help with your complaint, this should be outlined within the submission.

3.3. Investigation of the complaint

In compliance with the T Level Contracts all complaints should be acknowledged within five working days and should be resolved within 10 working days. We will always aim to meet these SLAs and resolve a complaint as quickly as possible. When this is not possible, we will fully investigate the complaint by appointing an appropriate person to investigate the matter on your behalf, and we will keep you updated along the way. The investigation will be conducted in a fair, impartial, and confidential way, and this is ensured by independent internal monitoring.

3.4. Resolution and response

We aim to respond to and/or resolve all complaints within five working days of receipt. If there are exceptional circumstances, we may take longer; however, we will inform you if this is the case. Once the complaint has been investigated fully, we will contact you with the outcome and to discuss any next steps.

If we uphold your complaint, we will outline to you the remedy that we propose.

The remedy chosen will be proportionate and appropriate to the issue being raised and may include an explanation of any poor service you have received, and/or an explanation of how a matter has been or may be rectified, and/or recommendations to change or improve our processes and/or procedures.

3.5. Review of the complaint

In the unlikely event that you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you can request a review of the complaint. We will conduct a review, including all relevant documentation, and will provide a response within 10 working days of receipt, unless

there are exceptional circumstances that require more time – in which case, we will keep you informed of the progress of the review. The response will include the outcome of the review and, where relevant, any steps to be taken to resolve the issue and our aim to prevent it from happening again in the future.

3.6. Escalation to regulators

If, after we have done everything that we can to help, you are not satisfied with our final response, you can refer your complaint to our qualification regulators. Our regulators ask that the complaint is made within twelve months of the action you are complaining about, and that you have completed all stages of the awarding organisation's complaint process.

3.7. NCFE's contact details

By phone*: 0191 239 8000
(or for our skills assessment products, 0300 102 1023)

By email: customersupport@ncfe.org.uk

In writing: Customer Support team
NCFE, Q6, Quorum Park,
Benton Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8BT

Face-to-face: our representatives are always happy to help.

Online Chat: available on our website.

3.8. Awarding regulators' contact details

If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome of your complaint after following our appeals process, you can contact the appropriate regulator, with evidence that NCFE's complaints process has been exhausted:

Ofqual (England)	0300 303 3344	public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk
Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Regulation (Northern Ireland)	02890 261 200	complaints@ccea.org.uk
Qualifications Wales	01633 373 222	report@qualifications.wales

4. Initial Equality Impact Assessment

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy, and no concerns were raised.

5. Implementation and dissemination

This policy will be available and communicated to all customers through the NCFE website and other appropriate channels and available on QMS SharePoint for all colleagues.

6. Monitoring arrangements

NCFE will continuously review and update this policy to make sure it remains effective, relevant, and aligned with any changes in legislation or regulations. This policy will be communicated to all learners, customers and colleagues and will be easily accessible through our website.

7. Data retention

Any data held in relation to the complaints and feedback policy will be held in our internal CRM system and will be disposed of in line with our current data retention policy.