

# Complaints Policy, Procedure and Process

## Policy Statement

Norton Webb Ltd is committed to ensuring that the learning experience and the services we provide meet and exceed the expectations of all stakeholders. We encourage stakeholders to tell us when their expectations have not been met, and we use a structured approach to ensure that issues are resolved in a fair and timely manner. Information drawn from complaints is used to support continuous improvement and to promote good practice.

This policy sets out how Norton Webb defines, receives, investigates, resolves, and learns from complaints. It also sets out the rights of complainants at each stage, including the right to appeal and the external routes available where a complaint cannot be resolved internally.

Norton Webb defines a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction with Norton Webb which requires a formal response.

## Policy Scope

This policy applies to complaints raised by any stakeholder, including learners, apprentices, employers, parents and guardians, members of the public, contractors, and other third parties. Concerns raised by Norton Webb staff about their own employment are handled under the Staff Complaints and Grievance Procedure, not under this policy.

Where a complaint engages the Equality Act 2010 — including allegations of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation — it is investigated under this policy, with the substantive standards set out in the Equal Opportunities Policy and the Harassment Policy. Where a complaint discloses a safeguarding matter, it is referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the Safeguarding Policy in parallel with the complaints procedure described here.

This policy is the customer-facing route. Staff wishing to raise concerns about suspected wrongdoing should use the Whistleblowing Policy.

## Legal Framework

The following legislation, regulation, and statutory guidance inform this policy:

- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.
- Education and Skills Act 2008.
- Consumer Rights Act 2015.
- DWP Apprenticeship Funding Rules 2025-26.
- Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (where Norton Webb operates as a recognised centre).
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

- Equality Act 2010.

## Our Commitment

Norton Webb aims to resolve complaints effectively, fairly, and quickly. We will:

- Work with stakeholders to put things right if they go wrong.
- Learn from each complaint to improve and develop as a business.
- Monitor complaints to ensure they are resolved within our published timescales.
- Keep complainants updated with the progress of their complaint and the result of any investigation.
- Advise complainants of the right to appeal if they feel their complaint has not been resolved.
- Respect confidentiality so far as is reasonably possible.

All staff are responsible for following the complaints procedure and for cooperating with any investigation.

## Confidentiality

Save in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Norton Webb maintain confidentiality. The circumstances giving rise to a complaint may, however, mean that complete confidentiality cannot be maintained – for example where information must be shared with the awarding organisation, a regulator, or a statutory body, or where safeguarding considerations require onward referral.

## How to Make a Complaint

If we do not deliver the standard of service that you expect, or you have a complaint, please contact the Quality and Compliance Team by any of the following routes:

- **Telephone:** 0113 2396540
- **Email:** [quality@nortonwebb.com](mailto:quality@nortonwebb.com)
- **Post:** Quality and Compliance Team, Norton Webb Limited, Kingswood House, 80 Richardshaw Lane, Pudsey, Leeds, LS28 6BN

If the initial complaint is against the Head of Centre, it will be referred directly to the Governing Body, which will deal with the complaint and follow the complaints and appeals procedure.

This policy is published at [nortonwebb.com/policies](https://nortonwebb.com/policies).

# The Complaints Procedure

## Stage 1 — Concern heard by a staff member

If a concern is reported to a Norton Webb member of staff, we will:

- Attempt to resolve the matter informally.
- Refer the concern to the Quality and Compliance Team if it cannot be resolved informally.

## Stage 2 — Complaint received by the Quality and Compliance Team

On receipt of a formal complaint, we will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days.
- Investigate the complaint within 10 working days.
- Issue a final response letter setting out the outcome of the investigation within 20 working days.
- Update the internal complaints log.
- Advise the complainant of their right to escalate to Stage 3 if dissatisfied with the outcome.

## Investigating Complaints

The person investigating the complaint will:

- Take ownership of the complaint.
- Keep a detailed and comprehensive record of all stages of the investigation.
- Identify the nature of the complaint and review what remains unresolved.
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.
- Establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved.
- Contact all relevant parties to gain a rounded picture of events.
- Collate any evidence.
- Seek advice and guidance from other services or external sources where needed.
- If more time is needed, contact the complainant to explain why and when they can expect a response.

## Resolving Complaints

A complaint can be resolved in several ways. It may be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. Complainants will be encouraged at any point to state what actions or outcomes they feel might resolve the problem.

If the complaint has been upheld, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology.
- An explanation.
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better.
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again.

- An undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint.
- A change to current practices.
- Reimbursement of fees or costs.

### **Upon completion of the complaints process**

The person investigating the complaint will issue the final response letter detailing the outcomes agreed to meet the issues raised. Details of the appeals process will be included in the letter.

### **Stage 3 – Appeal to the Head of Centre**

If the complaint is closed but the complainant remains dissatisfied at the conclusion of Stage 2, they have the right to appeal. The appeal must be raised within 10 working days of the date on the final response letter.

The Head of Centre or Deputy will respond within 10 working days and arrange an appropriate time to meet with the complainant to discuss the appeal.

If the complaint was investigated by the Head of Centre, the Governing Body will conduct the appeal hearing.

The conclusion of the appeal is the final stage of Norton Webb’s internal procedure. If the matter remains unresolved after Stage 3, external routes may be available — see Stage 4 below.

### **The role of the appeal**

The appeal’s role is to check that the correct procedure has been followed and that the decision made was fair and considered.

The person conducting the appeal can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint.
- Recommend changes to systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

### **Notification of the appeal hearing decision**

The Head of Centre or Deputy must ensure that the complainant is notified in writing of the decision, and the reasons for the decision, within 10 working days of receipt.

The letter will explain that, if the complainant is still dissatisfied, they may have the right to escalate their complaint to an external body, and any relevant contact details will be provided.

## Stage 4 — Appeal to an external body

If the matter remains unresolved at the conclusion of Stage 3, external routes may be available depending on the nature of the complaint. These include:

- **The relevant Awarding Organisation or Assessment Organisation** (formerly known as the End-Point Assessment Organisation). Where the complaint concerns a regulated qualification or apprenticeship assessment, the awarding or assessment organisation's own published complaints route is the first external port of call. Norton Webb's Quality and Compliance Team can identify the relevant organisation and signpost the complainant to its procedure.
- **Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)** — complaints about awarding organisations or regulated assessments may be escalated to Ofqual once the awarding organisation's own procedure has been exhausted. Email: [complaints@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@ofqual.gov.uk). Web: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>.
- **Department for Education (DfE)** — complaints about how Norton Webb has handled a complaint in respect of further education or apprenticeship provision may be made to the DfE via its customer help portal at <https://customerhelpportal.education.gov.uk>. General guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>. Complaints to DfE must be made within 12 months of the issue arising.
- **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)** — DWP is the funding department for apprenticeships (responsibility transferred from the Department for Education on 1 April 2026). Concerns about funding compliance can be raised directly with DWP through the channels published at [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

# Managing and Recording Complaints

## Recording complaints

The Quality and Compliance Team is responsible for maintaining the complaints log and for the secure retention of complaints records.

## Data protection

Personal data collected during the handling of a complaint — including the complainant’s contact details, the substance of the complaint, and the evidence gathered during investigation — is processed by Norton Webb as data controller in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. The lawful basis for this processing is legitimate interests in operating a fair complaints procedure and, where applicable, compliance with our obligations as a recognised centre and funded provider. Retention periods, data subject rights, and onward sharing are governed by the GDPR Compliance Policy Statement and the Data Retention Policy.

## Quality assurance review

The Quality and Compliance Team monitors the level and nature of complaints, and reviews the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure, making changes where necessary. Complaints information will be shared with relevant bodies as required.

As well as addressing individual complaints, the process of listening to and resolving complaints contributes to continuous improvement. When individual complaints are heard, the Quality and Compliance Team may identify underlying issues that need to be addressed in other areas or across the company.

The complaints procedure will be reviewed annually, unless trends or issues require this to be conducted sooner.

## Publicising the procedure

The complaints procedure is shared and publicised through:

- Induction.
- Course handbooks.
- The Norton Webb website — [nortonwebb.com/policies](https://nortonwebb.com/policies).

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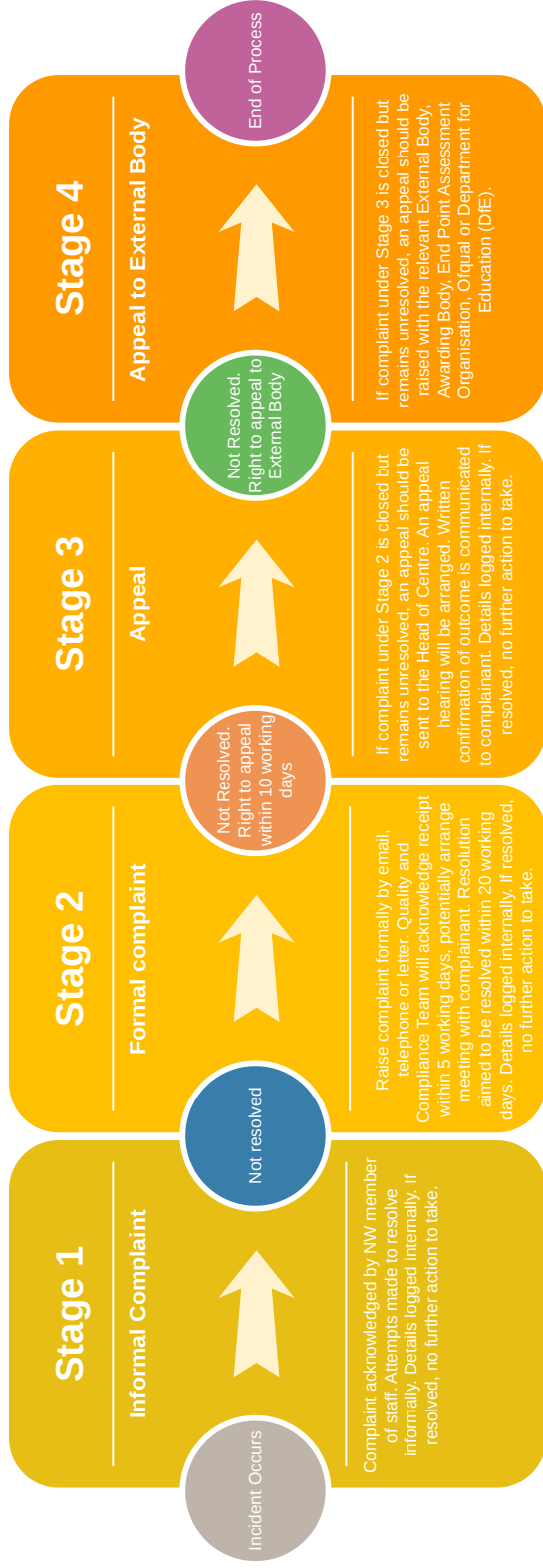
### Document Control

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UKPRN	10018297
Published	6/9/2017
Responsibility	Managing Director
Last Revised	20/05/2026
Next Review	22/05/2027

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# Complaints Process Infographic



## Contact Details in Case of Complaint

**Stage 1**

Norton Webb member of staff. This could be your tutor or Norton Webb representative that attends your place of work, or could be raised to one of our office staff by ringing 0113 239 6540.

**Stage 2**

Formal complaints should be addressed to the Quality and Compliance Team on 0113 239 6540, emailing [quality@nortonwebb.com](mailto:quality@nortonwebb.com) or writing to Quality and Compliance Team, Norton Webb Limited, Kingswood House, 80 Richardshaw Lane, Pudsey, LS28 6BN.

**Stage 3**

Appeals should be addressed to the Head of Centre, Alison Walsh, on 0113 239 6540, emailing [alisonwalsh@nortonwebb.com](mailto:alisonwalsh@nortonwebb.com) or writing to Head of Centre, Norton Webb Limited, Kingswood House, 80 Richardshaw Lane, Pudsey, LS28 6BN.

**Stage 4**

Appeals to External Bodies should be addressed to the relevant body, these include:  
 NCFE: [service@nfe.org.uk](mailto:service@nfe.org.uk), [nfe.org.uk](http://nfe.org.uk) - Training Qualifications UK (TQUK): [quality@tquk.org](mailto:quality@tquk.org), [www.tquk.org](http://www.tquk.org)  
 OFQUAL: [complaints@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@ofqual.gov.uk), [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure)  
 Department for Education (DfE): <https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>





## About this Form:

In order for Norton Webb to deal with your complaint efficiently, please complete this form and return it to: FAO Quality and Compliance Team, Norton Webb Ltd, Kingswood House, 80 Richardshaw Lane, LS28 6BN.

If you have any queries completing the form and need to speak with our Quality and Compliance team, telephone **0113 2396540** during business hours, or alternatively email **quality@nortonwebb.com**.

For more information about our complaints process, please visit [nortonwebb.com/policies](http://nortonwebb.com/policies)

Please complete the form below

## Part 1 - Identification Details

All details captured in this form are confidential and will only be used for dealing with the complaint.

<b>Your Name</b>	<b>Name of Apprentice/Learner - if applicable</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Your Relationship to Norton Webb</b> - e.g. Apprentice, Parent, Carer, Mentor, Employer, Member of the Public	
<input type="text"/>	

## Part 2 - Your Contact Information

Required for forwarding any communication regarding this complaint, including formal outcomes and, in some cases, where to send back documentation evidence.

<b>Street</b> - include house/flat number	<b>Telephone Number</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Town/City</b>	<b>Mobile Telephone Number</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Postcode</b>	<b>Email Address</b> - please print clearly
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Please turn over to complete Part 3

## Part 3 - Details of the Complaint

**Details of Your Complaint** - if you need more space, please attach to this form



**What Action, If Any, Have you Already Taken to Try and Resolve your Complaint?** - who did you speak to and what was the response?

**What Actions Do You Feel Might Resolve the Problem at This Stage?**

**Are You Attaching Any Paperwork?** - if so, please give details

## Part 4 - Signature

**Your Signature**

**Date** - dd mm yyyy

After completing, please return this form to Norton Webb Ltd (see contact details on page 1 in 'About this Form')

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