



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Please read these notes carefully before instituting the complaints procedure:

Introduction:

CPCAB is committed to maintaining standards and quality assurance across all registered centres and to ensuring the integrity of its accredited units and qualifications.

Scope of the complaints procedure:

- a) Candidates and tutors are not contracted directly to CPCAB and must therefore address all complaints about internal assessment or any aspect of their teaching or learning experience via the centre's own internal complaints procedure. It is the centre's responsibility to make this procedure available to candidates and tutors and to inform the complainant of the result of the complaint. Candidates and tutors who contact CPCAB directly on these issues will normally be directed back to their centre. However, if an individual's grievance against the centre has not been satisfactorily resolved via the centre's own internal complaints procedure and relates to the integrity of CPCAB qualifications (see b, below), he or she may contact CPCAB using the procedure outlined on the next page.
- b) CPCAB is obliged to take action to maintain the integrity of the unit or qualification where there is evidence of alleged or suspected malpractice or where there is evidence that certificates may be invalid. The centre must immediately notify CPCAB of all cases of suspected internal malpractice where linked in any way to courses leading to CPCAB units or qualifications. Any centre that fails to report, investigate or co-operate in the investigation of malpractice may be prohibited from registering further candidates or have their Approved Centre status withdrawn. See *CPCAB Policy on Malpractice* for further information.
- c) A formal complaint against CPCAB will normally be lodged by an approved centre - rather than by a tutor or trainee - in relation to CPCAB's qualification service including our external verification, administration and telephone support.
- d) No candidate registration or centre fees will normally be refunded in relation to any outcome of this complaints procedure.

When to complain:

Every reasonable effort should be made to resolve the matter informally with the person(s) concerned before using this formal complaints procedure.

A formal complaint must be submitted within 8 weeks from the date of the incident that gave rise to the complaint.

In the event of a complaint against a centre, the centre's own complaints procedure must have been exhausted before the complaint is brought to CPCAB.

Making a complaint:

The complainant may either contact CPCAB to request a complaints form, or write to CPCAB giving the following information under the title “formal letter of complaint”:

- the name(s), position(s) and contact details of the person(s) bringing the complaint;
- the name(s), position(s) and contact details of the person(s) who are the subject of the complaint;
- a precise statement of the nature of the complaint;
- what informal steps have already been taken to resolve the issue;
- a clear summary of the facts surrounding the complaint, including a timeline and giving unit/qualification titles and Candidate Learner Number(s) where appropriate;
- any supporting documents relevant to the complaint;
- a clear statement of what remedy would be acceptable if the complaint were upheld.

In the event of a complaint being against a centre or centre staff, the following information is also required: an account of the centre’s handling of the complaint, including the final outcome prior to contacting CPCAB.

Responding to a complaint:

On receipt of a formal letter of complaint (or completed complaints form):

1. CPCAB will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, normally within 10 working days;
2. CPCAB will appoint a complaints panel to examine the complaint. The complaints panel will consist of senior staff not directly involved with the complaint and may include an independent consultant;
3. The complaints panel will consider each complaint and decide whether any further investigation to progress the complaint is warranted;
4. The complaints panel reserves the right to make the final determination of the outcome of any unresolved formal complaint.

Time limit for completion of the complaints procedure:

The complaints procedure will normally be completed within 40 working days from the date of receipt of the formal letter of complaint (or completed complaints form). Where CPCAB is unable to meet this deadline the complainant will be informed of the progress of the complaint within this time frame.

If the complaint does not fall within the remit of CPCAB, the complainant will be informed, normally within 15 working days, with an explanation of why the complaint cannot be considered.

Status of the complaints policy:

This complaints policy and procedure replaces all previous CPCAB complaints policies and procedures and will be reviewed periodically by CPCAB.