




## COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

| Person Responsible | Date       | Version | Date to be reviewed | Directors sign off   |
|--------------------|------------|---------|---------------------|--|
| Andrea Keeley      | 10/04/2021 | 1       | 10/04/2022          | AW  |
|                    |            |         |                     |  |

## Complaints

Profile is always keen to hear suggestions for improving our service. We also want to discuss any concerns you may have and, if you think something is wrong, we want to address your concerns. All suggestions, concerns, complaints and compliments are recorded by Profile. This helps improve the quality of our services and ensures that all staff maintain the highest level of professionalism. The policy and procedure for dealing with complaints are detailed below and we aim to ensure that, wherever possible, a resolution is found to a problem quickly and fairly.

Complaints and all information relating to the complaint will be treated in confidence in line with our Data Protection/GDPR Policy. All information will only be shared with our key employees who need to be involved in handling your complaint. Any written material will only be viewed by key personnel and records will be maintained in accordance with our Data Protection Policy, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individuals' rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.

### What to do if you have a complaint about a member of our team

Raise your complaint directly with the member of staff or the person concerned and tell them what you are unhappy about. They should listen and, if there is a simple solution, they should try to put it right immediately. If you would prefer to raise your complaint with someone who is not directly involved with the situation you may contact one of our management team or a director.

Public Disclosure Information Act 1998 is aimed at protecting individuals who make certain disclosures of information in the public interest and allows such individuals to bring action in respect of victimisation or malpractice, without retribution from employers or colleagues. Such retribution may include bullying, harassment, dismissal or being passed over for promotion. Profile will always endeavour to abide by this legislation and would encourage internal 'whistle blowing' to appropriate senior management as a first step.

### Policy for dealing with complaints

All complaints will be taken seriously, and we aim to respond to all concerns and complaints within two working days and to have answered or resolved questions/concerns within seven working days. Complaints may be made to whoever is appropriate depending on the nature and severity of the complaint. Please see suggestions below for guidance as to who would be best placed to deal with your concern most effectively:

| Person with complaint      | Complaint against              | Nature of Complaint                    | Profile Contact                     |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Employer                   | Tutor                          | Teaching, training, assessment related | Lead IQA or Programme Lead          |
| Learner or Parent          | Employer                       | Employer related                       | Programme Lead/Centre Manager       |
| Learner or Parent          | Employer or any other employee | Bullying/harassment etc                | Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy |
| Employer/Learner or Parent | Tutor                          | Teaching, training, assessment related | Lead IQA or Programme Lead          |
| Profile employee           | Profile team member            | Poor practice, bullying, harassment    | Director                            |
| Profile employee           | Director                       | Poor practice, bullying, harassment    | Another Director                    |

Complaints by stakeholders may be made to our Centre Manager, where it will be referred to the most appropriate person depending on the nature of the complaint. Complaints/allegations against Profile employees will be investigated independently and impartially by the most appropriate personnel according to the advice provided above. Lines of complaint will be detailed within the procedure identified below.

Complaints may be made in writing, email or verbally, but they will be recorded and tracked electronically to ensure that an auditable trail may be followed to ensure that appropriate actions within the agreed timescales are followed, in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. This will also enable evaluation of complaint handling to be undertaken which will feed into our quality improvement cycle. Complaint handling will be monitored by Profile's Centre Manager, supported by the Directors, and our policy and procedure will be monitored annually to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

### **Procedure for Dealing with Complaints**

Once a complaint has been received details will be recorded by the person receiving the complaint and will be passed to the appropriate person identified above following the agreed procedure. Whoever handles the complaint will contact the Centre Manager who will update the complaint log and ensure that the complaint is handled in a timely manner. Complaints made regarding a Profile member of staff will be recorded and dealt with as above.

### **What happens next?**

The complaints procedure is in three stages.

#### **Stage 1: Looking for a Solution**

Wherever possible, we aim to put things right straight away. If this is not possible, you will be contacted within 7 working days to discuss the problem and how to resolve it. Normally, finding a solution should take less than 14 days. If it is likely to take longer, you will be informed of the timescales and the reasons for it. You will be kept informed of progress. If you are not satisfied or the complaint is very serious, the complaint will enter the second stage of the process - Making it Formal.

#### **Stage 2: Making it Formal**

If Stage 1 has not resolved a complaint to your satisfaction, it will go to Stage 2. You may decide that you want to make a formal complaint straight away, but generally it will be easier to try to resolve it more informally first. To make a formal complaint, you can speak directly to the Managing Director. When a complaint becomes formal, an investigation is arranged and someone independent of the situation from within Profile will undertake the investigation. The investigator will discuss the complaint fully with you and consider your views. The investigator will recommend to the Managing Director any action that needs to be taken and you will be contacted personally about this. A record will be made of whether you are satisfied with the outcome. If you are still not satisfied you can ask for an Independent Review – Stage 3.

#### **Stage 3: Independent Review**

If you are not happy with the outcome of a formal complaint, you may ask for an independent review by the organisation that works with Profile to fund our work. This is the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA has its own procedures for investigating complaints and you will be put in touch with the appropriate ESFA contact who will advise you further. Profile will be informed by the ESFA of the result of the investigation and will comply with any recommendations unless we feel there are grounds for an appeal.