

ISSUE YEAR	ISSUE MONTH
2019	April
APPROVED BY	Sharon Jackson
SIGNATURE	
REVISION DATE	April 2021

Complaints Policy

Release Potential Ltd tries hard to provide quality in all of its activities. However, there may be times when you feel that you have not received the high quality of education or level of service which you might reasonably expect. In those circumstances, you are entitled to complain, and to make known your concerns, without fear of reprisal or victimisation. You can expect Release Potential to deal with a complaint seriously, fairly, within a reasonable timescale and, where appropriate, in confidence.

If after reading this guide you are still unsure of how to proceed, advice can be sought from Sharon Jackson, Director of Operations at: sharon.jackson@release-potential.co.uk

General

A complaint can often be resolved relatively easily and informally at an early stage. You should normally talk in the first instance with the person(s) most directly concerned with your complaint. Course tutors, Release Potential Managers and other staff are always prepared to discuss any problems or concerns that you have, before they become major complaints. Although the following procedure sets out a series of steps open to you in raising, lodging and pursuing a complaint, a satisfactory resolution can often be found at the first, informal, stage.

Release Potential's Complaints Procedure includes a series of steps which you should follow in order to find a way forward to a mutually agreed solution. After going through an appropriate number of steps to consider your complaint, which may not be all of those detailed below, Release Potential will advise you of the outcome.

Your rights and responsibilities as a learner making a complaint are detailed at the end of this procedure. If a group of learners wish to make the same complaint, Release Potential will require one learner to be nominated as a point of contact for all.

Please note you must ensure you follow the correct procedure and fulfil requirements yourself if you wish the complaint to be considered seriously and appropriately by Release Potential.

Special Note

The following Complaints Procedure does not apply if you wish to appeal against a mark, termination or other academic decision. If you are uncertain whether you wish to proceed with an appeal or a complaint, please seek

advice from Sharon Jackson before you begin.

If you believe that you have grounds for appeal against the result of an examination or assessments, a requirement to retake an examination, a decision to terminate your programme of study, or any other academic decision, please refer to Release Potential's Academic Appeals Procedure. The full Academic Appeals Procedure is available in section 10 of the learner handbook.

Making a complaint – the procedure

Stage 1 The Informal Approach

If you wish to make a complaint, or are considering doing so, you should first contact Release Potential's Director of Operations, Sharon Jackson by

Telephone to 01661843819, or

e-mail: sharon.jackson@release-potential.co.uk

Stage 2 The Formal Approach

If the substance of your complaint cannot be solved informally, or if the matter is considered particularly serious, the Director of Operations will ask you to submit your complaint in writing.

The letter must be signed, and be addressed to Sharon Jackson, Director of Operations, who will act as your contact in relation to the complaint. Please do not write directly to any other member of staff of Release Potential.

The submission of your letter, and its date of receipt, will represent the commencement of consideration under the Formal Complaints Procedure.

Your submission will be referred by the Director of Operations, for consideration, to an appropriate senior member of staff. This member of staff will be asked to investigate your complaint and to advise the Director of Operations accordingly in writing of their response and any action proposed. The Director of Operations will advise you of this outcome by letter, and of any action you should take in relation to it.

You will have the right to reply to this 'Outcome Letter' containing Release Potential's initial decision about your complaint. If in the light of the response you still feel that the complaint remains unresolved from your point of view, you should notify the Director of Operations by letter, stating clearly your reasons for wishing to pursue the matter further.

Stage 3 Pursuing the Formal Approach

If the Director of Operations finds that your grounds for pursuing your complaint are not justified, you will be advised why, and a 'Letter of Completion' will be issued to you. This letter will advise that Release Potential has completed its investigation of your complaint, has provided its final decision on it and does not intend to take the matter any further.

However, if your reasons for pursuing a complaint are considered to be justified, the Director of Operations will arrange a hearing of the complaint by a panel of three senior staff of Release Potential.

The Director of Operations will ensure that all Panel members will have had no previous connection with the investigation of your complaint. The Panel will interview both you as the complainant, and any persons complained against, and will determine Release Potential's decision on the complaint.

The Director of Operations will confirm the decision of the Panel, and any recommendations, of this hearing to you. A 'Letter of Completion' will be issued to you, indicating that Release Potential has completed its investigation of your complaint, has provided its final decision on it and does not intend to take the matter any further.

Timescale

Release Potential will make every endeavour to deal with your complaint quickly. If there is a delay because of the nature of your complaint, or due to staff availability, you will be kept informed of progress.

- You should receive an acknowledgement of any written submission within **five** working days of its receipt, provided that you have followed the guidelines

- You will normally receive an initial written response to your written complaint within **28** days of its receipt, provided that you have followed the guidelines
- You will normally receive a final response to your complaint within three calendar months from receipt of a formal submission, provided that you have followed the guidelines; but if your complaint is complex, or involves several departments, this timescale may be extended

If there are any exceptional time constraints relating to responding to your complaint, you will be advised at the earliest opportunity. Please note that these may emerge during consideration of your complaint, and it may not be possible to advise you of them at the beginning of the process.

Rights and Responsibilities

When making a complaint you have the right to:

- Be notified of the reasons for a complaint being upheld or not upheld, or any delay in decision
- Be interviewed by a Complaints Panel, at an appropriate point in their proceedings (ONLY if you get beyond STAGE 2)
- Be accompanied by a friend at meetings related to the Complaints procedure

When making a complaint you have to:

- State clearly the substance of your complaint
- Indicate as clearly as you can the remedy that you seek
- Follow the correct procedures as advised
- Provide written statements on request
- Attend a Complaints Panel, or any other meeting about your complaint, when requested

When writing to the Director of Operations, address your letter to:

Sharon Jackson
Director of Operations
Release Potential Ltd
The Bridges
Lead Road
Stocksfield
Northumberland
NE43 7SF

Please note that any complaints about the Director of Operations should be referred in the first instance to Gaye Hutchinson, CEO at the above address.