

HART LEARNING GROUP

COMPLIMENTS, FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

GOVERNANCE AND CONTROL

Date approved by Group CEO	11 th October 2022
Scheduled review date	October 2024
Accountable member of Group SMT	Exec. Director of Quality, Curriculum and Organisational Development
Responsible member of staff	Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality
Document author	Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality

AUDIENCE

Applicable to students?	Yes
Accessible to students?	Yes
Accessible to public?	Yes

PURPOSE

We want to ensure that all of our students and customers have an excellent experience of the Hart Learning Group.

We're proud of the good work that we do for the vast majority of students and customers we work with. It is always great for us to hear from our customers about that good work.

Feedback is crucial to our continuous improvement efforts – and recognition is always really welcome for our colleagues.

We are aware that things can sometimes go wrong. When this happens, we want to know about it so we can do our best put things right and make sure things don't go wrong again in the future.

All compliments, feedback and formal complaints are handled by the Hart Learning Group Quality team. We will share your feedback, make sure that any complaints are properly considered – and that we respond in good time.

COMPLAINTS

If you make a complaint, we'll follow the process outlined below:

STAGE 1: INFORMAL COMPLAINT

You may find you are able to deal with your complaint informally. If you are a student, or parent / guardian of a student, you may find it useful to speak to your course team leader or the manager of the area in which you study. If you are a business client or partner organisation, you may wish to speak to the manager you work most closely with in Hart Learning & Development or NHC. At this stage, your complaint will be listened to and taken

seriously, and every effort will be made to deal with the issue in an effective and efficient manner.

STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you have found you are not satisfied with the outcome of your informal complaint or do not find that stage appropriate you can make a formal complaint. This can be made in one of three ways:

- You can use the Contact Us form available on both the North Hertfordshire College and Hart L&D websites

- You can make your complaint in writing to:

Deputy Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality – Quality and Curriculum
Hart Learning Group
Engineering and Construction Campus
Fulton Close
Stevenage
SG1 2AF

- You can email us at complaints@nhc.ac.uk. Please ensure the email is marked for the attention of the Deputy Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality – Quality and Curriculum.

STAGE 3: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

You will receive an acknowledgement within five working days of our receipt of your complaint.

STAGE 4: INVESTIGATION

Your complaint will be forwarded to an appointed manager for investigation, which may be the Deputy Head of Teaching, Learning & Quality as appropriate. They may contact you for further information if appropriate. This investigation may include further information provided by you, interviews with the relevant person or audits.

If no response is received to a request for further information within 10 working days from the date the request was sent by the investigating manager, and the investigation is unable to proceed as a result of this, the investigation will be closed. You will be contacted in writing to confirm this.

STAGE 5: RESPONSE

You will receive a response within 20 working days* from the date of acknowledgement. If further investigation is required then a revised response date will be given. The response to your complaint will be confirmed in writing.

STAGE 6: REVIEW

It is rare that complaints are not fully answered or customers are dissatisfied with their response. However, if this happens, you can request a review of the response takes place by contacting the Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality.

Requests for a review of the response must be sent within ten working days of the date of the response to the formal complaint and must detail the grounds upon which the review is

requested. The Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality reserves the right to deny the request for a review if these conditions are not met.

A request for a review of the response must be made in writing in one of two ways. You can ask for a review of the response by writing to:

Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality
Hart Learning Group
Engineering and Construction Campus
Fulton Close
Stevenage
SG1 2AF

Or you can email us at complaints@nhc.ac.uk. Please ensure the email is marked for the attention of the Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality.

You will receive an acknowledgement within five working days of our receipt of your request for a review. The review will be undertaken by an appointed manager not connected to the original investigation or the Head of Teaching, Learning & Quality where appropriate.

The review will start with a review of the first investigation to ensure it was sufficient, and where appropriate further investigation may take place. This may include further information provided by you, interviews with other relevant persons or audits. The Head of Teaching, Learning and Quality reserves the right to deny the review at this point by providing written explanation.

If no response is received to a request for further information within 10 working days from the date the request was sent by the reviewing manager, and the review is unable to proceed as a result of this, the review will be closed. You will be contacted in writing to confirm this.

STAGE 7: FINAL RESPONSE

Following the review, the reviewing manager will provide a final written response within 20 working days* from the date of acknowledgement of the request for a review. If further investigation is required then a revised response date will be given.

STAGE 8: APPEAL

If, after the stages of the process have been completed, you are still not satisfied, you can appeal the response to the Executive Director of Quality, Curriculum and Organisational Development. The Executive Director reserves the right to decline appeals.

Requests for an appeal must be sent within ten working days of the date of the response to the review and must detail the grounds upon which the appeal is requested. The Executive Director reserves the right to deny the request for an appeal if these conditions are not met.

A request for an appeal must be made in writing in one of two ways. You can ask for an appeal by writing to:

Executive Director of Quality, Curriculum and Organisational Development
Hart Learning Group
Stevenage Campus
Monkswood Way

Stevenage
SG1 1LA

Or you can email us at complaints@nhc.ac.uk. Please ensure the email is marked for the attention of the Executive Director of Quality, Curriculum and Organisational Development.

You will receive an acknowledgement within five working days of our receipt of your request for an appeal. At this point a senior manager will be appointed to undertake this stage of the process.

The appointed senior manager will review the investigation(s) and make a full and final decision of the appeal within 20 working days* from the date of acknowledgement of the request for an appeal. There will be no further opportunity to appeal this response.

If you are not satisfied with the final decision, you are able to refer your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency, the relevant awarding organisation, the qualification regulator, or any other relevant organisation in order to make a complaint about the college.

A copy of the Education and Skills Funding Agency policy is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>

FRIVOLOUS OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

Complaints may be rejected without full consideration if it is considered frivolous or vexatious. Example of what can be considered frivolous or vexatious include:

- complaints which are obsessive, harassing, or repetitive
- insistence on pursuing unmeritorious complaints
- seeking unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes
- insistence on pursuing what may be meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
- complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value.

If your complaint falls into this category, you will be advised that your complaint will not be considered further. You will be given the opportunity to appeal against this decision by submitting written reasons to the Head of Teaching, Learning & Quality within 5 working days from the date the email has been sent to you.

All HLG employees are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect while at work. Therefore, intimidation, victimisation, bullying or harassment of any kind towards our staff will not be tolerated. All allegations of bullying and harassment will be investigated and, if appropriate, action will be taken.

DATA PROTECTION

Personal data that you provide in connection with your complaint will be used by us only to deal with your complaint and held by us securely and in accordance with the requirements of relevant data protection legislation.

You have a number of rights in respect of your personal data:

The right to access: You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal data. We may charge you a small fee for this service.

The right to rectification: You have the right to ask us to correct any information you believe is inaccurate. You also have the right to request us to complete information you believe is incomplete.

The right to erasure: You have the right to ask us to erase your personal data, under certain conditions.

The right to restrict processing: You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your personal data, under certain conditions.

The right to object to processing: You have the right to object to us processing of your personal data, under certain conditions.

The right to data portability: You have the right to ask that we transfer the data that we have collected to another organization, or directly to you, under certain conditions.

You can find more information about your data protection rights on the Information Commissioner's website: <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/>

If you make a request, we have one month to respond to you. If you would like to exercise any of these rights, please contact us by writing to the Data Protection Officer, Hart Learning Group, Monkswood Way, Stevenage, SG1 1LA or by email at DataProtectionOfficer@nhc.ac.uk

SAFEGUARDING

If the college receives information that a young or vulnerable person is, or has been, put at risk of harm, the matter will be addressed to one of the responsible persons for safeguarding at Hart Learning Group. Where this is the case, processes covering safeguarding of young and vulnerable persons will supersede the complaints process.

* there will be occasions when these time periods could be extended due to College holidays, operational demands, staff availability or the need to secure additional information. If for any reason more time is required this will be communicated via email.