

# Complaints Policy and Procedure

## 1. Policy statement

At the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), we strive for excellence in everything we do. Occasionally we will fall short of the high expectations customers and partners have for us. When that happens, we want to know. This allows us to look into what has happened and have a chance to rectify any mistakes we may have made. A thorough and transparent complaints procedure helps us do this.

Our policy is to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- Publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- Make sure everyone at ETF knows what to do if a complaint is received;
- Make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way;
- Make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired;
- Gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

## Definition

A complaint is a clear expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service provided by ETF.

## Scope

This policy and procedure covers all services and products which we deliver directly (including the Society for Education and Training), or are delivered by third parties on our behalf; and also the behaviour and conduct of ETF staff, trustees, and that of those contracted to work on behalf of the ETF.

This policy does not cover complaints from ETF's own staff, who should use ETF's Grievance procedures.

## 2. Procedure

### Informal complaints

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved informally and by the person (or delivery partner) responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

- Complainant makes a verbal complaint to the ETF employee/contractor.
- Complaint logged with the Head of CEO's Office by the member of staff who received it. Informal complaints from SET members are logged by the SET team.
- The ETF employee / contractor hears the complaint, agrees resolution and implements solution.
- Complainant confirms that they are satisfied with the resolution.

Timeframe: immediate to within 5 working days.

Method: verbal.

### Formal complaints

The ETF formal complaints procedure has three stages of handling and escalation:

1. Review by the Director of the area concerned;
2. Review by the CEO;

Complaints Policy & Procedure version 2, issue 1, last updated 1 March 2017

### 3. Review by the ETF Board Chair, on behalf of the Board.

All formal complaints should proceed through steps 1 and 2 before they proceed further (unless they refer to the Director concerned or CEO, in which case they will be escalated to the next level).

#### 1. Review by the relevant Director

- Complaint is received in writing, by email, phone or by submission via ETF enquiries.
- Complaint is logged formally with the Head of CEO's Office by the member of staff who received it, and the relevant Director is informed. If the complaint is regarding a Director, it will be escalated to the CEO. If the complaint is regarding the CEO it will be escalated to the Chair (or an alternate trustee), and if the complaint is regarding the Chair it will be escalated to the Senior Independent Director (or an alternate trustee).
- Case ownership is allocated to a member of the ETF support team.
- Receipt of the complaint is acknowledged within 2 working days.
- Investigation of the complaint will then proceed.
- Complainant will receive a response from the ETF within 10 working days.
- Complainant has 10 working days, after the response has been issued, in which to respond; after which it will be assumed the complaint is resolved.

Timeframe: Between 2 working days and, at the latest, 22 working days after submission of complaint.

Method: email, verbal or written complaint submission; written response.

#### 2. Review by the CEO

- Complainant confirms in writing within 10 working days that they are not content with the proposed course of action, explanation or resolution.
- Receipt of the escalated complaint is acknowledged within 2 working days.
- Case is then escalated to the CEO. If the complaint is regarding the CEO, it will be escalated to the Chair (or an alternate trustee), and if the complaint is regarding the Chair it will be escalated to the Senior Independent Director (or an alternate trustee).
- Complainant is informed within 5 working days of the escalation of the next steps which the ETF will take.
- The CEO will then proceed with review of the case and all relevant material.
- Complainant will receive a response from the ETF within 10 working days of the review of the case.
- Complainant has 10 working days, after the response has been issued, in which to respond; after which it will be assumed the complaint is resolved.

Timeframe: Between 2 working days and, at the latest, 25 working days after submission of dissatisfaction notice to the CEO.

Method: written dissatisfaction notice, followed by consideration by CEO, and written response.

#### 3. Review by the ETF Board Chair, on behalf of the Board

- Complainant confirms within 10 working days that they are not content with the proposed course of action, explanation or resolution.
- Receipt of the escalated complaint is acknowledged within 2 working days.
- The Chair (or an alternate trustee) is advised by the Head of the CEO's Office of the complaint. If the complaint is regarding the Chair it will be escalated to the Senior Independent Director (or an alternate trustee).
- Within 5 working days, the complainant is advised of when the Chair will be considering the complaint, which will be no more than 4 working weeks from the date of the acknowledgement of the escalated complaint, and is invited to make a written submission to the Chair.
- Should the Chair decide to seek advice from additional Board members, the Head of the CEO's Office will administer all arrangements and be the minute taker for any meeting/discussions.
- If attending the meeting in person, the complainant may be accompanied by an independent person for the purposes of support.
- The Board Chair will then proceed with review of the substance of the case and its handling.
- The complainant will receive a response from the ETF within 10 working days after the Chair's consideration.

- The Board Chair's decision is final.

Timeframe: Between 2 working days and, at the latest, 36 working days after escalation of complaint to the Board.

Method: written dissatisfaction notice, followed by Chair consideration, and written response.