

Complaints Policy and Procedures

(This should be read in conjunction with the YES Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure, Harassment Policy and Whistle-Blowing Policy)

Policy

1. YES welcomes suggestions and comments aimed at improving its provision.
2. Complaints will be investigated and addressed promptly.
3. No person will experience discrimination as a result of raising a complaint.
4. Students/participants will be given appropriate support to lodge a complaint.
5. The YES Trustees/Directors will monitor complaints received and the outcomes.

Scope

This policy is concerned with identifying shortcomings in the performance of YES. Other complaints may be more appropriately managed under the YES Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

Dissemination of this Policy

This policy is described to new staff and volunteers at induction.

It is also explained in a simplified version to learners when they start at YES.

The policy is available on the YES website

Procedure

Informal complaint

Anyone who has a constructive comment/suggestion, or a complaint should raise it first informally with a member of staff, ideally the person directly responsible for the issue in question.

A member of staff who receives an informal complaint will

- immediately discuss the issue with the complainant with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion, there and then when possible
- explain what action they will take to resolve, investigate and resolve or refer the complaint
- If the complainant is a learner, they will be reminded of any opportunity they may have to take the complaint further (e.g. to the appropriate Awarding Body)

Recorded complaint

If a person wishes to place a formal complaint or is not satisfied with the outcome of an informal complaint, s/he may do this by letter or email as a 'Recorded Complaint' to the YES Director. For anyone unable to write independently, any member of staff will scribe the complaint, using the complainants' own words.

When the Director receives a 'recorded complaint' they will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 working days. The Director will consider the complaint, and decide if the nature of the complaint comes under the jurisdiction of this policy.

The complaint will be investigated and, if appropriate, action taken to improve provision. The Director will notify the complainant of the outcome, in writing, within one month. Where a complainant has reading difficulties, this information will also be conveyed by phone or face-to-face.

A log of all complaints should be kept. The progress of all complaints should be recorded by the Director. Records should be maintained on file in line with the YES document retention policy.

Discrimination against a person who has made a complaint will be subject to Disciplinary Procedure.

Learners may request the support of a member of staff, volunteer, peer, support worker or similar to make a complaint.

YES Trustees will be advised of any formal complaints and may be consulted on decisions where necessary/appropriate.

Referring to the YES Trustees

Anyone who considers that their complaint has not been fairly and/or effectively addressed may appeal against the outcome of a complaint to the YES Directors/Trustees, at 3, Hide Market, West Street, Bristol, BS2 0BH. Again, support will be provided if requested. This should be done within 7 working days.

Directors/Trustees will consider the complaint, decision and appeal and communicate a final decision in writing within 5 days.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, after the appeals procedure, Directors/Trustees may use the services of a professional arbitration service. Both the complainant and the Directors/Trustees must agree that the arbitration will be binding and that no further action of any kind will be taken.

The YES Management Group will monitor complaints making appropriate recommendations for action.

Performance Indicators

1. All complaints will be dealt with within the time scales set out in the procedure
2. All accusations of discrimination against a student because of raising a complaint will have proved unfounded or will have been fully managed through the disciplinary procedure
3. All complainants will perceive their complaint as having a fair outcome