

PfP Thrive Academy

Complaints policy

Document History: to be reviewed on at least an annual basis or sooner if there are significant changes required

Approval should be the Academy Director or a relevant member of the Academy Governing Board.

Version	Date	Action	Amended By	Reviewed By	Approved by and Date
V1.0	September 2024	New Policy Creation	Rebecca Edwards		

Link to policy on website:

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Introduction

PfP Thrive Academy is committed to ensuring high quality training for your apprentices and appreciates all feedback, positive and negative.

We will regularly seek feedback from learners and employers through continual engagement and progress meetings as well as conducting additional surveys and interviews and collating relevant management information.

We will act upon any feedback provided to make the necessary improvements.

If improvements are not satisfactory or in the event you wish to make a formal complaint of our services, we have a formal appeal and complaints procedure.

Purpose of the Procedure

PfP Thrive Academy has a staged complaints procedure which aims to resolve concerns swiftly and fairly.

The purpose of the procedure is to investigate complaints in a way that:

- encourages informal resolution of issues and concerns if possible;
- is fair and equitable;
- treats complaints with appropriate levels of seriousness.

Scope & Responsibility

This procedure covers complaints relating to:

- Any PfP Thrive Academy policy, procedure or process;
- Academic and support services or facilities including our Derby Academy premises, our tutors, assessors and systems;
- The conduct or actions of any member of staff within the Places for People group;
- Misleading or inaccurate information regarding academic programmes, fees, services or facilities.

This procedure is not used for:

- Complaints about academic judgements, examination decisions, academic appeals or assessment outcomes;
- Appeals against disciplinary actions;
- Any kind of bullying as defined in Places for People's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Whistleblowing.

Definitions

PfP Thrive Academy uses the following definitions specific to this procedure:

- a complaint is the expression of a specific concern;
- 'days' refers to Monday – Friday
- timescales specified will be adhered to wherever possible but may be extended during seasonal holiday periods. On these occasions the complainant will be notified.

Procedure

Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the events or actions (or lack of actions) which have prompted the complaint.

PfP Thrive Academy will not normally consider complaints that are made more than one calendar month after the incident or event complained about. In exceptional circumstances, a complaint may be considered outside this timeline with the agreement of the Director of the Academy.

A complainant may be invited for a meeting as part of any investigation relating to the complaint and may be accompanied by a parent/carer, employer or other representative. Details of any support needs will need to be declared prior to any meeting.

PfP Thrive Academy will make reasonable adjustments, where necessary, to ensure that the complaints procedure is fair, equitable and accessible to all.

Where it is inappropriate or not possible for a learner or other stakeholder to make a complaint, this may be done on their behalf by another person, who has a legitimate interest in the complaint and has the complainant's knowledge and written consent. That interest must be made clear to PfP Thrive Academy.

Stage 1 (Informal)

1. Every attempt should be made to resolve any complaint on an informal basis in the first instance. Learners should discuss the issue with an appropriate member of staff who may be connected with the complaint. If this is not possible, it may be discussed with any of the following:
 - PfP Thrive Academy Tutor
 - PfP Thrive Academy Operations Manager
 - PfP Thrive Academy Business Operations Manager
 - Academy Director.
2. Any potential concern by an employer or other stakeholder should be raised in the first instance with the relevant manager for the area or service concerned.
3. All members of staff dealing with any informal complaint must endeavour to resolve the issue within 10 working days. If longer time is needed, this should be communicated to the complainant and the agreed outcome logged in relevant documents, in order that a record is maintained.

Stage 2 (Formal)

1. A complaint may be progressed to Stage 2 if it has not been possible to resolve the issue informally.
2. Stage 2 complaints must be made in writing to **EMAIL** identifying, where possible;
 - The nature of the complaint;
 - If appropriate, the individual against whom the complaint is being made;
 - Independent evidence supporting the case;
 - An indication of the action sought from PfP Thrive Academy.
3. The complaint will be logged and acknowledged within five working days.

4. An appropriate manager will be appointed by the Director of the Academy to investigate the complaint. The complainant will be informed of the progress of the investigation at key points throughout the process.
5. The outcome of the complaint will be communicated in writing within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement, unless previously stated otherwise. If more time is needed to investigate the complaint, the complainant will be informed and given a revised deadline.

The outcome from the investigation and proposed response will be sent to the Director of Academy for approval before responding to the complainant. All correspondence relating to a formal complaint at Stage Two must be logged and stored centrally.

6. The response must include one of the following decisions:
 - Dismissal of the complaint as unfounded;
 - Determination that the complaint is trivial and that no further action be taken;
 - Proposal of a resolution to the complaint.

Stage Three (Appeals)

1. A complainant may appeal the outcome of Stage 2 within 10 days. The appeal should clearly state the reasons for the appeal, which may be that:
 - There is a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the complaint investigation;
 - There is new evidence to support the complaint that can be substantiated, including extenuating circumstances, which were not known at the time, and may have affected the outcome had it been known and there is valid reason for not making it known at the time.
2. An appeal should be sent to the Director of the Academy in writing (via email). A response will be issued within 10 working days, where possible.
3. The Director of the Academy will appoint an independent person to review the complaint, and once the investigation has been completed, a report and its findings will be forwarded to the Director of the Academy for approval.
4. The Director of the Academy will make a decision as to the final outcome of the appeal and recommendations (if any). This will be communicated in writing to any parties involved. This is the final stage of the PfP Thrive Academy's Complaints Procedure.

External Appeal

If a complaint remains unresolved after appeal, PfP Thrive Academy can provide the appropriate external contact, including awarding body or funding body details, in order for an external appeal to be made.

Contact should be made to the Director of the Academy for relevant details. Before this is done, all stages of the PfP Thrive Complaints Procedure must have been exhausted.

Complaints received by an external funding body or arbitration service e.g. Skills Funding Agency or Department for Work and Pensions, will be referred to the Director of the Academy.

Contact information

Learners can take advice and support from the PfP Thrive Academy either prior to making a complaint or during the complaints process at:

PfP Thrive Academy
1 Centro Place
Pride Park
Derby
DE24 8RF

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