

Complaints & Compliments Policy

Policy reviewed : **April 2020**

Next Review date: **April 2021**

1. Introduction & Purpose

1.1 At GGS, we are committed to providing high quality services for all our service users. Taking account of stakeholders' views enables GGS to promote and develop capacity for sustainable improvement. This document details the Compliments, Complaints Policy, and Procedure that will be followed by GGS.

1.2 Complaints will be monitored and administered by the Management Team under the direction of the Director. The complaints procedure is designed to help us gain a clearer view of how learners and other users of GGS perceive us. It sets out to ask for compliments as well as complaints so that we can identify good practice in GGS as well as identifying those areas where we have fallen short of our high standards.

1.3 GGS defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- Standards of service
- Action or lack of action by GGS or its employees
- Actions caused by other learners
- Provisions of GGS affecting learners, visitors or other stakeholders

1.4 A complainant may be a student, prospective student, parent, employer, partner or visitor to GGS.

1.5 Learners may submit a 'group complaint'. Where a complaint is made by a number of learners, GGS may ask the group to nominate one student to act as group representative.

1.6 If the complainant is an employee, they should refer to GGS's Grievance Procedure as a means for ensuring that their issue is dealt with promptly and satisfactorily. For further information, please refer to the company employee handbook.

1.7 Academic appeals are not part of this policy or procedure. Please refer to GGS's Appeals Policy.

1.8 The objectives of the Compliments and Complaints Policy is to provide:

- A swift, open process, which is fair to all parties.
- A procedure designed to resolve problems quickly.
- A thorough investigation into complaints received.
- Improvements to services for learners and the quality of provision by acting on feedback and the recommendations made following investigations.
- Accurate recording, monitoring and reporting of complaints.

1.9 GGS will identify actions and trends from complaints received to improve and develop its services.

1.10 Learners individually, or in the case of a group of learners, the nominated Student Representative, should follow the procedures as described in Stages 1 - 4 below.

1.11 GGS will investigate complaints thoroughly and objectively using Managers and Senior Managers who are at an appropriate level within the organisation.

1.12 GGS aims to respond to complaints within 21 working days; however, some complaints, especially if the issue is more complex, may take longer to investigate. GGS will contact the complainant to advise them if the investigation is likely to take more than 21 working days and will keep them informed of progress.

1.13 GGS will ask for equality and diversity information (for example, gender and ethnicity) to help to ensure that all people are treated fairly.

1.14 Complaints should ideally be brought to the attention of GGS in writing. The decision to handle complaints made verbally will be at the discretion of the Director.

1.15 All complaints received by GGS staff must be brought to the attention of a Senior Manager immediately upon receipt. From this point, an investigating lead will be assigned within 3 working days. They will be provided with details so that they have all of the information required to undertake the investigation. Once the investigating lead has completed their investigation, all records must be sent to the designated Senior Manager overseeing the complaint.

1.16 If the complaint is considered to be an immediate/urgent safeguarding risk, this would immediately become a safeguarding incident and be dealt with in line with GGS's Safeguarding policy and procedures.

1.17 GGS reserves the right not to pursue any malicious, vexatious or abusive complaints (i.e. complaints that are not true or use offensive or abusive language in communication to staff).

1.18 GGS is unable to accept or act upon anonymous complaints.

1.19 All complaints must be raised within 1 month of the original issue so that evidence is available for investigation.

1.20 Compliments received by GGS will normally be passed on to the individual or individuals who are the subject of the compliment. The Academy Manager will maintain a central record. GGS will use compliments to motivate staff and, where appropriate support the promotion of GGS's activities. Compliments can be submitted directly to the individual or individuals or via info@glitzandglamsalon.co.uk.

1.21 This policy reflects the Education and Skills Funding Agency guidance relating to the management of complaints and the arrangements for appeals including the right of appeal to the funding agency when GGS's procedure has been exhausted.

1.22 Policy can be found on the following website www.glitzandglamsalon.co.uk

2. Responsibilities

2.1 The Director is responsible for the policy, for ensuring that GGS responds to compliments and complaints in accordance with the procedure set within the policy and for ensuring that analysis of complaints and compliments is reported to the Director and Management Team.

2.2 A relevant director or manager will be assigned as the investigation lead. The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, and the findings provided in a written response to the complainant.

3. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

3.1 GGS monitors complaints carefully. A termly report on complaints against GGS Will be produced and shared with the Management Team. In addition, GGS reports annually to its external governance on complaints against GGS and actions arising.

Procedure - How to Complain

If you have concerns about any of your experiences with GGS, please follow the procedure below in communicating your concerns so that GGS can support you in achieving a satisfactory resolution to your complaint and respond appropriately.

Stage 1 – Informal Procedure

GGS anticipates that the majority of concerns raised can be resolved at an early stage through informal discussion. This is referred to in this policy as 'stage 1 – informal procedure'. Therefore, if a concern arises, the first step is to bring it to the attention of the relevant staff member and discuss it with them. It should be noted that a written record or response to issues raised at this early stage would not normally be made if both parties feel satisfied with the outcome.

For learners, in the first instance, please discuss the matter with the person(s) concerned. For example, your Tutor or Assessor. If you are unable to do this, contact the manager responsible for GGS's Training Programmes via GGS's main telephone number **01708 732177** and they will be able to provide you with contact details if you do not have this.

For employers, in the first instance, please raise your concerns with the assessor or contact the manager responsible for GGS's Training Programmes. Contact GGS's main telephone number **01708 732177** and they will be able to provide you with contact details if you do not have this.

All other stakeholders, in the first instance please contact GGS's main telephone number **01708 732177** who will record your initial complaint and pass it on to a member of the Management Team.

If the issue remains unresolved, a formal complaint should be instigated through GGS Complaints procedure – see Stage 2 Formal Complaints.

Stage 2 - Formal Complaints

If your concerns are not resolved informally at stage 1, you may wish to make a formal complaint. Formal complaints should normally be made in writing by letter or email and addressed to info@glitzandglamsalon.co.uk

Formal complaints are forwarded to the Management Team for review and acknowledgement. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days of the complaint being received.

The investigating lead assigned to deal with the complaint will be named in the letter. You will also be given a date when you may expect to receive a response which is usually within our agreed service standard of 21 days from receipt of the complaint.

In order to facilitate a full investigation, the complaint may be shared with individuals named or implicated within the complaint.

The findings of the investigation will be considered, and the investigating lead will provide a response to the complaint within 21 working days. Where it is not possible to provide a formal response within 21 working days, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

The Manager will continuously monitor the complaint and the matter will be closed on the complaint system only when the issue has been resolved or at the end of stage 2. Access to the confidential file will be restricted.

Stage 3 - Appeals

Most complaints are resolved promptly and amicably and result in service improvements, however, should the complainant wish to appeal against the outcomes of Stage 2, formal complaint, they should submit this appeal in writing, within 10 days of the stage 2 outcome to: the Director at GGS – lisa.ford@glitzandglamsalon.co.uk who will acknowledge receipt, review the documentation, the investigation and the resolution to come to a judgement on the validity of the appeal. The possible judgements are:

1. Appeal rejected – the original resolution will be pursued
2. The appeal is upheld – the director will propose an alternative solution to the appellant.

Following the outcome of the appeals stage, a formal response will be sent to the complainant within 21 working days of receipt of the appeal.

Stage 4 - Final Stage Appeal to the Board of Directors

If the original complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction after an appeal to the Director, you may take your complaint to the external governance for GGS's. At this stage the decision is final and any resolution that is proposed will be implemented. External Governance will respond within 21 working days of receipt of a stage 4 appeal.

This is the final stage of GGS's complaints procedure

Formal Complaints – External Resolution

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaints process, they have the opportunity to appeal to the relevant external body.

If the complaint relates to a Further Education course funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the above complaints and appeals procedure has been exhausted, the complainant can contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency within three months of the complaint decision using the contact details below:

complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk

Or via: The Complaints Team, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton, Road, and Coventry, CV1 2WT