

Feedback, compliments, and complaints policy

Products and service

Feedback, compliments, and complaints policy – products and service

Document properties

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Version | 1.3 |
| Owner/author | Customer Support Team Manager |
| Supersedes when issued | 1.2 |
| Date of issue | 3 November 2023 |
| Review date | 4 November 2024 |
| Circulation | Online www.aat.org.uk/ Central SharePoint |
| Format for circulation | Electronic (PDF), print as required, uncontrolled at time of issue |
| Classification | Unrestricted |

Change control

| Version no. | Page | Changes made | Date |
|-------------|------|---|----------|
| 0.1 | All | New document | Feb-2022 |
| 1.0 | All | Approved document | Feb-2022 |
| 1.1 | All | Updated to reflect new branding, timescales around when a complaint will be closed and process for obtaining feedback post-complaint closure. | Mar-2023 |
| 1.2 | 9 | 12.6 qualification regulator contact details | May-2023 |
| 1.3 | 8-9 | Updated section 11: process and timeline | Nov-2023 |

Associated regulations and policies

Complaints about AAT approved training providers

Complaints about AAT members

Assessment results, enquiries and appeals

Contents

| | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Introduction | 4 |
| 2. Scope and applicability | 4 |
| 3. Purpose and objectives | 4 |
| 4. Terms and definitions | 5 |
| 5. Our commitment | 5 |
| 6. Confidentiality | 6 |
| 7. Continuous improvement | 6 |
| 8. Providing feedback or compliments | 6 |
| 9. Complaint definition | 7 |
| 10. Raising a complaint | 7 |
| 11. Process and timeline | 8 |
| 12. If you are not happy with the outcome | 8 |
| 13. Further AAT complaint policies | 9 |

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to define the process for managing customer feedback about AAT products and services, compliments, and customer complaint handling. The policy serves as a set of standards to ensure we use and learn from feedback and compliments and ensure a fair outcome for our customers and stakeholders.
- 1.2. Feedback, compliments, or complaints can be provided by AAT customers including students, professional members, and external parties such as training providers and assessment venues.

2. Scope and applicability

- 2.1. This policy is applicable to all stakeholders of AAT who wish to provide feedback, compliments or raise a complaint relating to AAT, its products, or services, including regulated and non-regulated qualifications and end-point assessments. It outlines how to provide feedback, compliments or raise a complaint, the associated timelines, and our complaint escalation procedure.

3. Purpose and objectives

- 3.1. This document sets out the process AAT staff are required to adopt when handling customer feedback, compliments or managing complaints. General principles include:
 - a) we provide a clear and easy way for AAT customers to provide feedback, compliments or raise a complaint
 - b) we will investigate our customers, or their authorised representative* complaints free of charge
 - c) we do not consider social media as a direct channel for raising a complaint
 - d) complainants' information and personal data are treated with due care and respect in line with our fair processing notice (FPN).

* If an individual is raising a complaint on behalf of a customer, we would require prior consent from the complainant to start our investigations.

4. Terms and definitions

4.1. Policy:

A policy document usually consists of series of statements and commitments and/or requirements and expectations that must be followed, for example to ensure compliance with a legal obligation.

4.2. Commitment:

A commitment sets out its promise to customers outlining the standard of service that can be expected to be received.

4.3. Fair processing notice (FPN):

A legal document which the Information Commissioner can issue to a data controller, requiring him or her to supply information to the Information Commissioner so that he can assess whether the data controller is complying with the *Data Protection Act* or *Freedom of Information Act*.

4.4. Customer:

Throughout this policy where we reference 'customer' this is synonymous with 'you'.

5. Our commitment

5.1. Our aim is to exceed our customer expectations by providing outstanding service and support across each of our contact channels. We will do this by:

- a) adhering to our published service levels as set out in Section 11 (process and timeline)
- b) handling complaints in accordance with our *AAT Customer Commitment*
- c) sharing the details of who is handling a complaint
- d) providing accurate, clear information and advice in all communications
- e) providing regular updates throughout the process (as required)
- f) respond in a professional way, providing a clear explanation or an apology where things have gone wrong
- g) following appropriate regulatory guidelines
- h) learning from feedback, compliments, and complaints to continually improve our service.

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1. We will manage all complaints with respect and confidentiality. There may be a need to share the details of your complaint with other teams at AAT or with our regulators. More information on how we use your data can be found [here](#).

7. Continuous improvement

- 7.1. AAT is focused on delivering a high standard of service to our customers. We are also committed to continuously improving our processes and responses to our customers considering any feedback that we receive.
- 7.2. To help us continuously improve the service we provide, we may send you a short survey via email about the complaints process after you have received an outcome. Your feedback will help us to understand what we are doing well and how we can continue to improve.
- 7.3. All complaints are analysed on an on-going basis to identify and address any recurring or systematic issues.
- 7.4. Regular training, support and information is provided to AAT staff members on our complaints process and the feedback we receive.
- 7.5. Staff participating in complaint handling, are adequately trained to recognise and identify complaint indicators, deal with customer complaints and be aware of processes and procedures.

8. Providing feedback or compliments

- 8.1. At AAT, we aim to provide an efficient and effective service that is valued by all our customers. We strive for continuous improvement and so value all feedback or compliments about how we are doing or details about how we can improve our service either when customers contact us or when using any of our products or services.
- 8.2. The standard you can expect from us is set out in our [AAT Customer Commitment](#).
- 8.3. We are always happy to answer any questions customers might have and to listen to their ideas for improvement, compliments, or complaints.
- 8.4. If we have done something well or you have a general comment or suggestion about how we can improve things, we want to know. We review all feedback and aim to identify and act on any appropriate actions identified at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.5. Feedback or compliments can be provided via our online [feedback form](#).

9. Complaint definition

- 9.1. We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction relating to one of AATs products or services and where there is an expectation for us to investigate the cause of the problem and to provide a resolution or remedial action
- 9.2. We are committed to providing a high-quality service but understand that sometimes things can go wrong.
- 9.3. Many matters can be resolved informally so our Customer Support team should be contacted in the first instance as we may be able to resolve any concerns straight away.
- 9.4. We recognise that there will be occasions where a more formal complaint may need to be made whether that is relating to the service we have provided, one of our products or the complaints handling process itself.
- 9.5. Examples of complaints:
- 9.6. Examples of situations which may warrant a complaint to be raised are listed below (please note this list is neither definitive nor exhaustive):
 - a) a delay in receiving formal certificate
 - b) incorrect fees being applied
 - c) failing to adhere to our published timelines
 - d) quality or content of resources
 - e) incorrect product or service provided
 - f) quality of the service received when contacting us
 - g) processes not followed correctly.

10. Raising a complaint

- 10.1. A complaint can be made by completing our [AAT complaint form](#) or by contacting one of our dedicated Customer Support teams.

Students or professional members should call us on +44 (0)20 3735 2468

Training providers or Assessment Venues should call us on +44 (0)20 3735 2443
- 10.2. When completing the form, or contacting us, please provide us with as much information as possible so that we can investigate the complaint thoroughly. The completed complaint form will be assigned to the most appropriate member of staff, who will manage the investigation and share the outcome.
- 10.3. Complaints in relation to an AAT approved training provider or assessment venue must be addressed in the first instance in writing to that organisation using their standard complaints procedure.

-
- 10.4. If you still remain unsatisfied after registering your complaint with the organisation, a complaint can then be made to AAT for adjudication, providing the approved organisation's complaints procedure has been exhausted. Further information about this process can be found below in Section 13 (further AAT complaint policies).
- 10.5. Anonymous complaints will not be responded to, although we will respect anonymity should you wish to not be identified.

11. Process and timeline

- 11.1. Complaints will be acknowledged within one working day along with confirmation of AAT's complaint handling process (unless a full answer is possible at that time).
- 11.2. Complaints will be assigned, and the investigation managed by an appropriate member of staff, details of which will be provided.
- 11.3. All relevant information and evidence will be gathered to ensure a complaint is investigated in a fair way.
- 11.4. We aim to resolve a complaint and provide a response within 5 working days.
- 11.5. In providing our response, we will ensure that we have investigated the complaint thoroughly and provide an explanation and outcome to the concerns that have been raised.
- 11.6. Where this may not be possible, or in more complex cases, we will make contact to update you on our progress and indicate when our investigations are likely to be completed along with a deadline by which we should be able to provide a full response.
- 11.7. The outcome of a response to your complaint will be communicated in plain language, without technical language or abbreviations.

12. If you are not happy with the outcome

- 12.1. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may ask for the matter to be escalated.
- 12.2. Escalated complaints will be referred to the relevant member of AAT's senior management team to provide a further response.
- 12.3. To escalate a complaint, an explanation should be provided clearly stating why and providing any additional, relevant information that is appropriate.
- 12.4. If we do not hear back from you after 10 working days of providing our response, we will consider your complaint to be resolved and the case will be closed. However, if you come back after 10 working days, we may re-open your case, unless the nature of your complaint has changed, in which case a new complaint with a reference number will be opened.
- 12.5. For all escalated complaints:

Contact AAT by email at feedbackandcomplaints@aat.org.uk

The escalation, as well as any additional information provided, will be reviewed by the appropriate manager.

We will ensure that the correct processes were followed during the initial complaint process and relevant considerations applied where appropriate.

All escalations will be acknowledged within one working day, and a final response provided within 5 working days, thereby exhausting the AAT's complaint process.

- 12.6. Where you remain unsatisfied with the outcome and it relates to one of AAT's regulated qualifications, the complaint can be escalated further to the appropriate qualification regulator listed below.

Ofqual – Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, England,
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>

SQA Accreditation – Scottish Qualifications Authority, Scotland,
https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/About_Us/Complaints_Handling_Procedure

Qualifications Wales, Wales, <https://qualifications.wales/about/complaints/>

CCEA (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment), Northern Ireland,
<https://ccea.org.uk/contact/complaints>

Botswana Qualification Authority (for those based in Botswana), Botswana,
customerservice@bqa.org.bw

13. Further AAT complaint policies

13.1. Complaints about AAT approved training providers

- 13.1.1. We regularly check AAT approved training providers to ensure that they meet our rigorous standards. However, occasionally a student may encounter a problem, or have a complaint that has not been addressed effectively. To raise a complaint relating to an approved AAT training provider, our policy and process can be found [here](#).

13.2. Complaints about AAT members

- 13.2.1. A complaint about the conduct of an AAT member can be made to AAT's Professional Standards team.

- 13.3. If a complaint calls into question a member's conduct, or if we identify a breach of AAT regulations or policies during the investigation, we may take disciplinary action against the member. In other isolated minor cases, we may be able to help resolve the issue informally if we consider this to be more appropriate. Our policy and process in relation to a complaint of this nature is available [here](#). Assessment results, enquiries and appeals

13.3.1. AAT has robust quality assurance procedures in place to ensure that results issued to students are correct and are an accurate reflection of their performance. However, a student (or their training provider or employer acting on their behalf) can use AAT's enquiries and appeals procedure to request a review of their results where there is:

- a) reason to believe that the result and/or percentage score for an assessment, or the overall grade and/or percentage score for a graded qualification or apprenticeship End Point Assessment (EPA), is incorrect
- b) disagreement with decisions made regarding reasonable adjustments or special considerations for an assessment that has been taken (where an application has been made to AAT)
- c) disagreement with a result of an assessment carried out by the training provider.

Full details on our enquiries and appeals process can be found [here](#).

AAT
30 Churchill Place
London E14 5RE

aat.org.uk

AAT is a registered charity. No. 1050724