

Process for submitting complaints about AAT approved organisations

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. AAT approved organisations (including training providers and assessment venues) are required to meet rigorous quality standards before they are approved to deliver AAT qualifications and assessments. We also carry out on-going quality assurance activity to ensure that approved organisations continue to meet these standards.
- 1.2. Occasionally, a student may encounter a problem or experience poor quality of service at an approved organisation and, despite making a complaint to that organisation, remains dissatisfied. In these circumstances, students need to be confident that they can escalate their complaints to AAT for further investigation and resolution, where this is necessary.

2. Scope and applicability

- 2.1. This process is for student who wish to complain about the services provided by AAT approved organisations, including training providers and assessment venues.

3. Purpose and objectives

- 3.1. This document sets out the process that students need to follow to raise a complaint about AAT approved organisations, the steps that AAT will take to investigate student concerns, and what students can then do if they remain dissatisfied.

4. The process

- 4.1. Complaints from students about an AAT approved organisations must be addressed in the first instance to that organisation, using the organisation's standard complaints procedure.
- 4.2. Complaints that cannot be resolved by the approved organisation may be referred to AAT for adjudication, providing the approved organisation's complaints procedure has been exhausted.
- 4.3. All complaints referred to AAT must be submitted in writing to the Centre Compliance team, by email to aatquality.assurance@aat.org.uk.
- 4.4. The e-mail must include full details about the nature of the complaint and what outcome the student is seeking. Evidence that the approved organisation's complaints procedure has been exhausted should also be provided, such as a letter from the organisation confirming this.
- 4.5. Upon receipt of the complaint AAT will carry out an investigation as follows:
 - 4.5.1. Within five business days of receiving the complaint, the Centre Compliance team will write to the Principal/MD of the approved organisation, enclosing a copy of the complaint and asking them for comments. AAT will not be able to investigate complaints where the student wishes to remain anonymous.
 - 4.5.2. The Centre Compliance team will allow 20 business days for a response from the approved organisation. Upon receipt, the Centre Compliance team will consider the response from the organisation and decide whether the complaint can be upheld. In some instances, the Centre Compliance team may need to carry out further investigations before making a final decision, which may include undertaking a visit to the approved organisation.
 - 4.5.3. Once the investigation is complete AAT will write to the student informing them of the approved organisation's response and whether AAT is upholding the complaint.

- 4.5.4. If AAT does not hear further from the student within 20 business days of the date of the letter, AAT will consider the matter to be closed.
- 4.5.5. If the student is dissatisfied with the way in which AAT has dealt with the complaint, he or she may raise a separate complaint via AAT's **Complaints and feedback about the service provided by AAT** process.
- 4.5.6. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of AAT's investigation, he or she may escalate the issue to the appropriate regulatory body – **Ofqual** (in England), **SQA Accreditation** (in Scotland), **Qualifications Wales**, or **CCEA** (in Northern Ireland). International students should submit any complaints to Ofqual, except for students in Botswana, who should write to the Botswana Qualifications Authority at **customerservice@bqa.org.bw**.
- 4.5.7. For students that have complained about a public sector training provider in Scotland, such as a college, they may refer their complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Contact details for the SPSO are as follows:

In person

SPSO
Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS

By post

SPSO
Freepost EH641
Edinburgh
EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Mobile site: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>

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