

Complaints Policy

Hybrid is committed to providing a quality service to our apprentices, students and employers. If you are not satisfied with the level of service you have received from us, we would like you to tell us about it. All complaints are taken seriously and any feedback is appreciated as it provides us with an opportunity to improve our standards. All complaints and feedback are considered and reviewed by our Head of Student Experience. They are responsible for objectively reviewing and investigating any concerns you may have without delay.

1. **Complaint Definition**

'An expression of dissatisfaction with any individual, service or lack of service whereby a response is reasonably expected, and has not been resolved by an informal approach'.

2. **Introduction**

The following describes the Hybrid Customer Complaints Policy. This document will apply to customers (students/apprentices and employers) who are dissatisfied with the provision of a Hybrid service and wish to make a formal complaint. The procedure may be used by existing and prospective customers.

3. **Principles**

Hybrid constantly seek to improve services and aims, therefore, to deal thoroughly, objectively and fairly with any complaint about business services, and to offer an appropriate remedy to anyone who is adversely affected by a service which fails to meet our standards.

- Customers, either individually or collectively, are entitled to raise legitimate complaints. Hybrid will not penalise anyone for making a legitimate complaint. This entitlement is balanced by the requirement that the rights are not misused, and that the professional reputation of employees are protected. Action may be taken, if a complaint is shown to be malicious, frivolous, or vexatious.
- It is expected that the documentation generated during the complaint procedure will remain confidential and that this will be respected by all parties.
- Hybrid cannot deal fully with anonymous complaints, as a personal response would no longer be an option. Hybrid considers individuals about whom complaints are being made, have the right to know the basis of the complaint and what is being claimed. A copy of relevant documentation will be forwarded to the person who is the subject of the complaint. Hybrid will, however, always ensure that the complainants identity is not disclosed, or implied as the complaint is investigated, without informing the relevant party first.
- If the complainant is concerned about revealing their identity, advice may be sought from anyone at the local centre or another Hybrid employee who is familiar to the customer.
- Customers are advised to raise the issue informally and only once. It is anticipated that the vast majority of complaints will be resolved at this stage. This is the first and preferred method of resolution, without recourse to formal procedures. Informal complaints will be recorded at this stage, which will override any further informal approach made by any other individual subsequent to this.

4. **Types of complaint covered by this policy**

This is a single complaints procedure covering various types of customer complaints or grievances. The list is not exhaustive, but a complaint is likely to fall within the following categories:

- Complaints arising from an educational experience e.g. poor teaching or supervision
- Complaints in respect of academic and/or administrative support or other services
- Complaints from Apprentices or their employers may be investigated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency if they are not satisfied with the outcome of Hybrid's investigation. Further information is provided in section 11.
- The behaviour of another customer, student or member of staff

5. Complaints affecting a number of students

If the complaint is shared by a number of students, it should be raised collectively as a group and follow the procedure outlined above. If the group of students/learners will be submitting a letter of complaint, it should be signed by all concerned.

6. Customer Complaints Procedure

The Hybrid Senior Management team has overall responsibility for the complaints procedure. It monitors the complaints and comments received, and the effectiveness of this procedure in addressing them. Subject to complaints being dealt with on an individual basis, the Senior Management team will review any common causes, patterns and emerging trends of complaints.

The Complaints Team are responsible for arranging, recording and ensuring that decisions are conveyed to the Senior Management team. All detailed documentation will be kept confidentially.

7. How to make a complaint

You can make a complaint in a number of ways:

- By email: info@hybridtec.co.uk
- Or by post to: Hybrid Complaints Team, Unit 30, The Boxworks, Heysham Road, L30

You will need to provide:

- your name
- a contact address (and preferably telephone and email address)
- programme of study
- the date on which the problem arose
- the response you would like from us
- any supporting evidence.

Please note that certified copies of documents (e.g. medical certificates) may be requested. You will receive an acknowledgment that the complaint has been received within 24 hours.

Hybrid is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. You are encouraged to inform us at the earliest opportunity of any disability or specific learning requirements, enabling us to make the appropriate adjustments and support throughout the complaint process.

8. The investigation

The investigation will be undertaken by an independent Complaints Officer, who will respond within fourteen working days of receiving your complaint to let you know the outcome of the investigation and details of any action. If Hybrid is unable to provide you with a response within these timescales, you will be informed. You, and any individual against whom the complaint is being made, are entitled to submit written evidence to the Complaints Officer in support of your respective position.

9. The possible outcomes of the formal complaint

- a. Complaint not upheld (if the complaint is felt not to be warranted)
- b. Complaint upheld in whole or in part (if the complaint, or part of it, is felt to be fair in any of its elements)

In the event of a complaint being upheld in whole or in part, recommendations will be made in respect of remedial action required. A response may be required from the individuals concerned, within a set time frame.

Hybrid will respond by detailing how the complaint has been investigated, the evidence used, the conclusion reached, and, if appropriate, the steps to be taken to resolve the matter. Hybrid may not be able to give you the precise redress requested but you will have an opportunity to state if you are satisfied with the proposals.

10. Appeal against outcome

If, on receiving the response to the initial complaint, the customer considers that:

- not all the evidence has been considered in reaching an outcome;
- the decision you have received is unfair or unlawful; or
- despite your complaint being upheld, you have still been disadvantaged;

An appeal should be submitted in writing to the Complaints Team for the case to be reconsidered on any of these grounds. Both parties to any complaint have the right to appeal, within seven working days of learning of the outcome.

Grounds for appeal must include additional evidence to that submitted originally, and should indicate in writing why the response to the complaint is not satisfactory. Taking into account all the previous attempts at resolution, Senior Management will make the final decision. A review will be conducted and a decision will be provided within 10 working days of the appeal being submitted.

If an Apprentice or the Employer is dissatisfied with the processing of, or response received, in relation to any complaint submitted, the Apprentice or the Employer (as applicable) has the right to escalate the complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency [ESFA].



Any complaint, concerns or enquiries regarding the apprenticeship may be escalated to the ESFA via the ESFA Apprenticeship Service Support - helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk (08000 150 600).

Further information on the ESFA complaints policy is available here: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure

11. **External Regulation Bodies**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may be able to refer this through the qualifications awarding body or the regulators complaints procedure. Full details of these procedures will be provided upon request.