

KSVN Complaints and Appeals procedure.

Formal Complaints Procedure.

Purpose:

To provide an effective Complaints and Appeals system in order to encourage feedback and improve the quality of facilities/services that KSVN provides.

Scope:

The Appeals Policy pertains to any/all KSVN activities, provision and services.

Complaints are deemed to involve notification of dissatisfaction, grievance or fault finding about KSVN.

Responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for dealing with all complaints, except those made regarding a Director. External mediator / consultants will be contracted should the complaint be regarding the Directors, or should the complainant be dissatisfied with the response by the Directors, to their initial complaint.

KSVN will thoroughly investigate any complaint, whether formal or informal, relating to the day to day operation of the School and the standards of the service we provide. The following areas are excluded from this procedure:

- Exam appeals are dealt with by the Awarding Body's exam appeals policy.
- Curriculum content are referred on to the Awarding Body.
- Employment issues for KSVN staff, which are covered in the details of the Job Description.
- Any matter that is the subject of legal action.
- Any complaint that is deemed to be malicious and without any supporting evidence.

Complaints:

Where a student makes a complaint against a student or member of staff, the KSVN Directors should ensure, as far as reasonable & practicable, that the student is not harassed/bullied by any third party (student, member of staff or member of public).

Staff may also submit a complaint against a student, member of staff or a stakeholder & the KSVN Directors should ensure, as far as reasonable & practicable, that the staff member is not harassed/bullied by any third party (student, member of staff or member of public).

Complaints could include a complaint about the language used in class, the behaviour of an individual (peer or member of staff) or feedback comments on an assessment. Complaints about workplace issues are referred back to the learner to discuss with the employer or employers representative initially and only if this processes does not resolve the issue and the learner's training will be affected, does the Centre team get involved (usually Head of Centre).

Informal Complaints.

Created Jan 20 and reviewed annually. Reviewed 25 Aug 20 CG. Reviewed 3.9.21. CG. Edited to V2 29.9.21. reviewed 28.9.22 CG & 24.9.23. CG

Effective from September 2023-September 2024

Complainants must endeavour to resolve a complaint informally before commencing with the Formal Complaints Procedure. This should involve a discussion directly with the relevant individual, team member or with the Lead Tutor or Director. This should take place within fifteen days of the issue arising.

If the complainant should wish to remain anonymous they should approach one of the two Directors. The informal complaint, related discussions and outcome must be recorded & placed in the individual's personal file. A letter noting the complaint, a summary of the conversation & the agreed outcome must be sent to the complainant within fifteen working days of the resolution.

Only if this has been attempted will the formal complaints procedure be initiated.

Formal Complaints

KSVN Ltd takes any complaints very seriously.

Formal complaints should be submitted in writing and sent, with supporting information to one of the Directors at: info@ksvn.co.uk

These will then be reviewed by one of the Directors who will send a written acknowledgement of the complaint (within 3 working days) & formulate a plan of action. Options include:

- To request clear & comprehensive information to support the complaint and to gather information (written, verbal testimonies / interviews and physical evidence).
- Procedure would then require a meeting be called with the individuals concerned within ten working days of receipt of the complaint. The individuals concerned may choose to bring a supporting person or witness with them. The Director may choose to invite an external advisor. All such documents will be filed securely.
- The full meeting will include full review & discussion of the information collected during the investigation phase and opportunities will be made for all parties to present their views on the subject. The Co-Director leading the investigation will summarise the outcome and any resulting decisions seeking further guidance if necessary.
- Details of the meeting would be recorded and distributed afterwards, provided a resolution be reached, within fifteen working days.

Information sharing:

Where a member of staff (or group of staff) is the primary subject of a complaint, then the designated Director dealing with the complaint, shall write to the identified member/s of staff indicating that they have been named in a complaint, together with the information below.

Where a student (or group of students) is the primary subject of the complaint, then the designated Director dealing with the complaint, shall write to the identified individual student/group of students and their employers indicating that they have been named in a complaint, together with the information below :

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- Date complaint was made
- Nature of the complaint
- Their role and likely interaction with the individual/s against whom the complaint is made
- What will happen in the process & the outcomes of the investigation
- The mechanisms by which the named individual/s may respond to the complaint

Note: At this stage the identity of the complainant may remain anonymous however there may be occasions when the complainant's identity may be required to be released which is a decision for the Directors. If the complaint is not upheld, then complainant should be made aware that external legal action may be taken.

The Directors must make it clear to the complainant that complaints are taken seriously, and that KSVN may take action to protect its employees.

The initial process of dealing with a complaint is for the Director dealing with the complaint to gather all possible information by interviewing all parties to establish an unbiased account of the incident. Records will be made of the information obtained and the details will be discussed between both Directors of KSVN. This will be completed within 15 days of the receipt of the complaint.

At this point a reasonable plan of action will be determined to facilitate resolution of the issue and a meeting arranged for this to be presented to both sides, enabling a frank & honest discussion of the scenario that resulted in the complaint and to mediate the offered resolution.

If the issue can not be resolved with dialogue as noted above, to the satisfaction of either party, a formal appeal should be logged in writing & is to be submitted to the Director who lead the complaint investigation, within 15 days of the receipt of the complaint mediation meeting record distribution.

Appeals and Complaint resolution decisions – how to appeal against a decision:

Appeals

Appeals may be made against decisions made by KSVN, including in response to formal complaints as described above.

Examples of appeals include:

- An individual applying for an advertised vacancy to join KSVN who is declined at shortlisting or following interview/s.
- A staff member who seeks career progression within the team structure but is declined.
- A student who feels appropriate Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has not occurred.
- A student who does not achieve an exam access arrangement / reasonable adjustment decision they feel they deserve.
- A student who is not provided with exam access arrangement / reasonable adjustment arrangement they are entitled to.
- An individual that feels a complaint that has been processed as described above, remains unresolved.

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If the issue can not be resolved with dialogue as noted above to the satisfaction of either party, a formal appeal should be logged in writing & is to be submitted to the Director who lead the complaint investigation, within 15 days of the receipt of the complaint meeting record distribution.

Upon receipt of a formal written appeal, the Directors of KSVN commit to obtain the services of an external mediator / external individual to review the information collected. The mediator will review the information previously gathered, interview the parties involved and in a collective meeting with all parties included, make recommendations. This process will be completed within fifteen working days. The decision by the mediator is final and will be communicated in writing.

If the issue can not be settled in this way, the complaint may be referred to:

*The Skills Funding Agency if the complaint refers to Further Education:
complaintsteam@sfa.bis.gov.uk

*Ofsted if the complaint refers to any service in relation to Further Education:
www.Ofsted.gov.uk

*VetSkill if the complaint relates to the Qualification
www.vetskill.com

*The Joint Council of Qualifications or VetSkill if the complaint relates to recognition of prior learning concerns or exam access arrangements e.g refusal of reasonable adjustment provision
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/>

*The Citizens Advice Bureau if the complaint is relating to a recruitment or career progression issue
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/>

or the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) if is a member:
<https://bvna.org.uk/>

*The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons if the complaint is of a VN professional nature:
vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk

Policy promotion

This policy will be displayed on the public page of the KSVN website: www.ksvn.co.uk