



Appeals and Complaints Policy

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1. Introduction

Riverlution is committed to delivering a high-quality learning experience. While regular learner feedback is encouraged and gathered, we recognise the importance of having a formal process in place for learners, Apprentices and stakeholders to raise complaints (regarding services and support) and appeals (typically concerning assessment outcomes). This document outlines how such concerns are handled promptly, fairly, and transparently.

2. Procedure Owner

Training Manager

(Supported by Riverlution's Training and Quality Assurance Team)

3. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a fair and accessible procedure for submitting appeals and complaints.
- Ensure complaints and appeals are handled fairly, consistently, and without fear of reprisal.
- Promote informal resolution wherever possible.
- Foster a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.
- Ensure confidentiality and timely communication throughout all processes.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Riverlution apprentices, trainees, and commercial learners.
- Employers, parents/carers, and other stakeholders involved in a learner's programme.
- Concerns relating to:
 - Assessment outcomes and grading
 - Training delivery and learning resources
 - Staff conduct
 - Equality, diversity, safeguarding, and learner wellbeing

5. Definitions

- Complaint: Dissatisfaction with a service, support, or individual conduct.

- Appeal: A formal request to review an assessment-related decision believed to be incorrect or unfair.

6. Guiding Principles

- Informal resolution is encouraged as the first step.
- All cases are treated confidentially and impartially.
- Learners may be accompanied by a representative during the process.
- Clear records of outcomes are maintained in accordance with our data protection policy.
- External escalation routes are available if internal resolution is not satisfactory.

7. Appeals Process

7.1 Initial Submission

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receiving the assessment decision.
- Direct appeals to:
Nicola.Charlesworth@riverlution.co.uk (Training Manager)

Include the following:

- Learner's full name and contact details
- Training/qualification title
- Date of assessment and result
- Full grounds for appeal
- Any supporting evidence

7.2 Review & Investigation

- The appeal is reviewed by a qualified assessor or IQA who was not involved in the original decision.
- Where necessary, the learner may be invited to provide further clarification or attend a review meeting.

7.3 Outcome

- A written response will be provided within 15 working days.
- The decision will either:
 - Uphold and amend the original assessment decision, or
 - Confirm the original decision with justification.

7.4 Further Escalation

- Learners unsatisfied with the outcome may:
 - Request a final independent internal review.
 - Escalate to the relevant Awarding Organisation or Regulator, including:
 - OFSTED
 - Ofqual
 - Department for Education (for apprenticeships)

8. Complaints Process

8.1 Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

- Learners are encouraged to first speak with their tutor, trainer, or a Riverlution programme coordinator.
- If the issue is not resolved informally, proceed to the formal process.

8.2 Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

Submit to: Nicola.Charlesworth@riverlution.co.uk

or post to: Training Manager, Riverlution, Unit 1, Newhall Industrial Estate, Sanderson St, Sheffield, S9 2TW

Details to include:

- Name and contact information
- Description of issue
- Dates, people involved, and desired resolution

Process:

1. Acknowledgement within 5 working days
2. Investigation by a senior staff member decided by Managing Director
3. Outcome issued in writing within 15 working days

8.3 Escalation (Stage 3)

- If dissatisfied with the outcome, escalate within 10 working days to a member of the Senior Management Team.
- A final decision will be made and communicated within 15 working days.

9. Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- All appeals and complaints are logged and monitored.
- Trends are reviewed to inform service improvements.

- An anonymised annual report is presented to the Senior Management Team.
- Where systemic issues are identified, corrective actions will be taken to prevent recurrence.

10. External Bodies (If Unresolved Internally)

If a learner is not satisfied after all internal stages, they may escalate to the appropriate regulatory body:

- DFE - [Department for Education - GOV.UK](#)
- Ofsted - [Ofsted - GOV.UK](#)
- Ofqual - [Ofqual - GOV.UK](#)
- LANTRA - [Home - Lantra](#)

11. Implementing the Policy

At Riverlution we will undertake to ensure that all staff and learners are made aware of the contents of this policy, both at the commencement and during their employment or apprenticeship.

All staff will be trained in the implementation of the policy. This means that they will be given specific training to ensure that they fully understand the contents of the policy, and how it relates to their specific role. This will usually take place at induction, with refresher training at appropriate intervals.

Likewise, all apprentices will also receive training to ensure that they understand how the policy relates to them. This training will form part of their induction and also be reinforced at regular intervals as part of their progress reviews, and off the job activity.

12. Review and Approval

This policy is reviewed annually or in response to any major regulatory or organisational change.

Revision History

Revision Number	Date	Document Change Details	Next review date	Name	Signature
1	22/05/25	First introduction	22/05/26	Nicola Charlesworth	