

Policy number	1.2
Subject	Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy
Directorate responsible	Chief Executive's
Date last reviewed/by whom	November 2016 - CEO
Date to be reviewed	November 2018
Equality Impact Assessed	March 2015



Policy

Linkage Community Trust is committed to providing high quality services for all our learners, clients, their families and other stakeholders and we welcome their feedback. It enables us to maintain a high standard of customer care and to listen, respond and improve.

All feedback is welcome. We are pleased to receive compliments. It is always good to know that what we do is appreciated and to hear about positive experiences. This helps us know how well we perform, to say thank you to the staff concerned and to continuously improve the quality of our services. We will share compliments with the staff member(s) concerned and use them to share good practice within our organisation.

Other comments are equally helpful and can also be acted upon in order to develop and improve our services and make the Linkage experience the best it can be.

We realise that sometimes things can go wrong and complaints offer opportunities to listen, to respond and to improve. As an organisation that is committed to continuous improvement, complaints are a valuable tool for improving the quality of the service we provide.

If anyone wishes to submit feedback to the Trust, they are welcome to do so via the email address feedback@linkage.org.uk or by completing a Feedback Form. We also have a specific complaints e-mail address for people who wish to use it: complaints@linkage.org.uk. These are available on our website www.linkage.org.uk and also in hard copy in reception at our College campus at Weelsby and our campus/registered office at Toynton. Feedback Forms can be returned to reception, emailed to info@linkage.org.uk or sent to Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive at Toynton Campus, Toynton all Saints, Spilsby, Lincolnshire PE23 5AE.

Procedure

1. Comment

If Linkage receives a comment this will be recorded and reported to:

- The Senior Management Team

If appropriate, action will be taken to address / improve any issues raised.

2. Compliment

If Linkage receives a compliment, this will be recorded, acknowledged and sent to the appropriate Manager, who will contact the author of the compliment to thank them and indicate the positive impact of their feedback.

It will be reported to:

- The Senior Management Team
- The Board of Trustees

3. Complaints

If Linkage receives a complaint, it is important that the issue is dealt with as quickly as possible.

Complaints could include:

- an aspect of Trust policy
- the way an individual has been treated
- the provision and accessibility of a service.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone coming into contact with our services is aware we have an effective and responsive policy and procedure for responding to complaints.

We have a separate procedure for complaints to ensure that:

- complaints are properly investigated
- complainants are treated with courtesy and respect
- complainants receive:
 - assistance to enable them to understand the procedure in relation to complaints
 - advice on where they can get help
 - a timely and appropriate response
 - complainants are told the outcome of the investigation of their complaint
 - action is taken if necessary following the outcome of the complaint.

These procedures can be made available using a variety of mediums such as hard copy, web pages, audio and Easy Read, on request.

A Feedback Form is available on the Trust's website accompanied by an Easy Read version. We also have a separate complaints email address: complaints@linkage.org.uk.

We are committed to ensuring that the use of the complaints procedure does not result in any prejudicial or discriminatory action for the complainant or anyone connected with them. All complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated fairly and sensitively.

On all occasions, complainants should be reassured that their complaint will be considered objectively and constructively and that they will not be treated to any form of prejudicial treatment or victimisation as a result of their complaint.

It is recognised that students and clients may experience difficulties in expressing their feelings and this creates a challenge in assessing the nature and degree of their complaints.

Often, their complaint will be expressed through behavioural changes and as such, will be examined and explored with the individual concerned and / or their representative.

Evidence of an individual's behaviour which may be interpreted as a complaint is recorded. If this occurs in a client's house, it will be recorded in the Daily Records, which will also include written evidence of the action taken to address the complaint. Every house has a central register which details all complaints. If it occurs in College, it will also be recorded in a central register.

Every individual who receives a service from Linkage is entitled to advocacy support through local advocacy services. They also, of course, have the right to choose a friend or a family member to advocate on their behalf.

Clients, learners and / or their families can raise a concern with the appropriate manager of the service. If that individual is the subject of the complaint, any other manager can be contacted.

All complaints should be sent to the Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive, who will log them and forward them to the Chief Executive. They will then be investigated by the relevant Director, or nominated Manager as appropriate (see accompanying Complaints process chart).

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days and the complainant advised of the likely timescale by which the complaint should have been investigated and when a response will be made (normally within 21 days). If the investigation is likely to take longer than this, the complainant will be advised accordingly and kept up to date with the progress of their complaint.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the response, he or she has the right of appeal to the Chief Executive who will review the entire investigation within a timescale agreed with the complainant, usually with 21 days.

Thereafter, if the complaint remains unresolved, the complainant will be given details of the relevant regulatory authority.

Responses to complaints are normally made in writing, though additional methods of response are available on request.



Linkage Comments and Compliments Process

Recording and Monitoring

All comments, compliments and complaints will be logged by the Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive, who will report to the Senior Management Team and the Board of Trustees.

If the complaint relates to any issues covered by the policies or procedures below, please refer to the relevant document instead of this procedure, to ensure your complaint is dealt with appropriately.

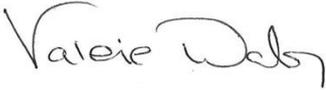
- Student/Client Anti-Bullying (for students and clients wanting to report harassment or bullying)
- Learner Disciplinary Procedures (for students who are subject to College Disciplinary procedures).

Matters relating to whistleblowing or safeguarding will be referred to other procedures. Concerns about safeguarding will be brought to the attention of the Director of Care, who may delegate the complaint to another appropriate manager, for example, the College's Safeguarding Officer.

Anyone who wishes to complain, but is uncertain of the appropriate procedure, should seek advice from the Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive.

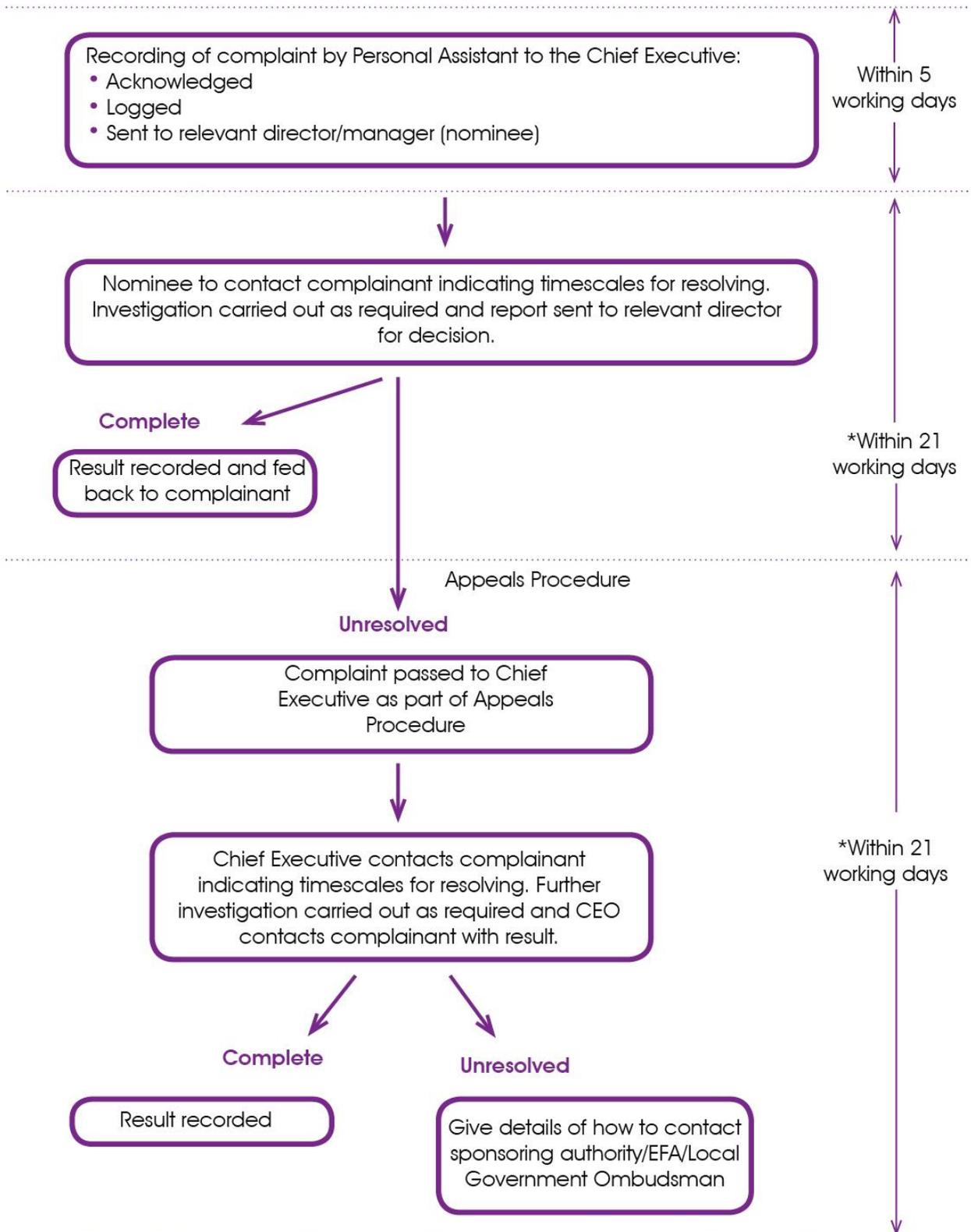
Any student or client who needs support to make a complaint will be provided with the appropriate level of assistance and referred for advocacy support as appropriate.

It is recognised that there may be occasions when a complaint is vexatious. This will be dealt with on an individual basis by the appropriate Director.

Signed:	
Position:	Chief Executive
Date:	07/11/16



Linkage Comments and Compliments Process



*If this timescale requires to be extended, complainant to be contacted with new timescale.



Linkage Comments and Compliments Process

