

2026

KLP 008 Complaints Procedure – Apprentices



Policies and Procedures

Complaints Policy & Procedure

(APPRENTICESHIPS)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all complaints relating to apprenticeship provision at Group Horizon Ltd are managed fairly, consistently, and in a timely manner.

This procedure provides a clear and structured process for raising, investigating, and resolving complaints, ensuring compliance with ESFA/DfE funding rules and Ofsted expectations.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to complaints raised by:

- Apprentices / learners
- Employers
- Prospective learners
- Staff (where appropriate)
- Any other stakeholder involved in apprenticeship delivery

This includes complaints relating to:

- Programme delivery
- Staff conduct
- Safeguarding and wellbeing
- Quality of training or assessment delivery
- Learner experience
- Communication and partnership working
- Processing of personal data
- Exercise of UK GDPR rights
- Subject Access Requests
- Data sharing concerns
- Privacy and confidentiality concerns
- Personal data breaches

If a complaint relates specifically to assessment decisions (e.g. grading or outcomes), this must be addressed through the Learner Appeals Procedure (KLP 005).

3. Principles

All complaints will be:

- Taken seriously and handled objectively
- Managed in a professional, respectful, and impartial manner
- Investigated using appropriate evidence
- Resolved within defined timescales

Raising a complaint will not disadvantage the learner or employer.

All parties are expected to engage with the complaints process in a professional and respectful manner

Where concerns arise regarding employer conduct impacting staff, learners, or programme integrity, these may be escalated internally as a professional conduct matter separate from the complaints process.

Group Horizon Ltd reserves the right to manage or restrict engagement where behaviour is considered unreasonable, abusive, or inappropriate. This may include limiting communication to formal channels or declining to respond outside of the complaints process.

4. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns should first be raised informally with the relevant member of staff.

Staff should seek to resolve concerns quickly and proportionately at this stage.

Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, it must be progressed to a formal complaint.

Ongoing email correspondence or repeated challenges will not be treated as a formal complaint unless submitted in line with the formal process below.

Group Horizon Ltd reserves the right to determine whether a concern has been formally submitted in line with this procedure.

5. Formal Complaints Process

Stage 1 – Submission

A formal complaint must be submitted in writing and include:

- Name of the complainant
- Learner name (where applicable)
- Full details of the complaint

- Relevant dates, evidence, or examples

Complaints must be submitted to:

communications@grouphorizon.co.uk

A Complaint Submission Form is provided in Appendix 1 to support the submission of complaints. Use of this form is recommended but not mandatory.

Stage 2 – Acknowledgement

- Complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days
- The complainant will be informed of the next steps and expected timescales

Stage 3 – Investigation

The complaint will be reviewed by an appropriate senior member of staff who has not been directly involved in the matter.

The investigation may include:

- Review of documentation and records
- Review of learner progress reviews and session evidence
- Discussions with relevant staff
- Consideration of safeguarding and compliance requirements

Stage 4 – Outcome

A formal written response will be issued within 10 working days of acknowledgement.

The response will include:

- Summary of findings
- Decision
- Any actions taken or required, where applicable

6. Appeals

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal within 5 working days of receiving the decision.

The appeal must be made in writing and will be reviewed by a senior leader not previously involved.

A final response will be issued within 10 working days.

7. Closure of Complaint

Once a formal response has been issued, the complaint will be considered closed unless an appeal is submitted within the stated timeframe.

Repeated correspondence regarding the same matter outside of this process will not be responded to.

The outcome of the appeal stage represents the organisation's final position.

Where a complainant continues to correspond outside of the formal process, Group Horizon Ltd may limit further communication to formal complaint responses only.

8. External Escalation

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after exhausting Group Horizon Ltd's internal complaints procedure, they may escalate the complaint to:

- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- Department for Education (DfE)

The DfE will normally only consider complaints once the provider's internal process has been completed.

Where relevant, complaints relating to assessment may also be escalated to the relevant Awarding Organisation and Ofqual.

Complaints regarding quality of provision may be raised with Ofsted.

Where a complaint relates to the processing of personal data, privacy rights, Subject Access Requests, data sharing, retention, or data protection compliance, the complainant may also raise concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

External bodies will normally only consider complaints once this internal process has been fully completed.

9. Safeguarding

Any complaint that includes a safeguarding concern will be immediately escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in line with the Safeguarding Policy (KMP 002).

Safeguarding concerns take priority over standard complaint timescales.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The Quality Lead is responsible for:

- Oversight of the complaints process
- Ensuring compliance with timescales

- Escalating risks to senior leadership
- Monitoring themes and trends

Investigating managers must:

- Conduct impartial investigations
- Ensure evidence-based decisions
- Maintain clear records

11. Recording and Reporting

All complaints, including data protection complaints, will be:

- Logged on the central complaints register
- Tracked through to resolution
- Retained for audit purposes

The Quality Lead will:

- Review complaint trends
- Report findings to the Senior Management Team
- Identify actions for inclusion in the Business Improvement Plan (BIP)

12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled with appropriate confidentiality and sensitivity.

Information will only be shared with those directly involved in investigating and resolving the complaint.

All personal data will be processed in line with GDPR requirements.

12a. Data Protection Complaints

Individuals may raise complaints regarding the collection, use, storage, sharing, retention or disclosure of personal data by Group Horizon Ltd.

Such complaints may be submitted through the complaints process described within this procedure or directly to the Data Protection Lead.

The organisation will:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint;
- investigate the matter appropriately;
- respond without undue delay;
- communicate the outcome and any actions taken; and

- advise individuals of their right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if they remain dissatisfied.

13. Governance and Review

This procedure forms part of the organisation's quality assurance framework and may be reviewed during:

- ESFA/DfE audits
- Internal quality assurance activity
- Ofsted inspection

This procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness.

Appendix 1 – Complaint Submission Form

This form is designed to support the submission of complaints in a clear and structured way.

You may use this form to raise a formal complaint. Use of this form is not mandatory, but it will help ensure we have all the information needed to investigate your complaint fully and respond as quickly as possible.

1. Your Details

Printed Copy Is Uncontrolled

File Name: KLP 008 Complaints Procedure Apprentices

Version 15 May 2026

Path to Digital Copy: <https://grouphorizon.sharepoint.com/policies/>

Name:

Organisation (if employer):

Contact Email:

Contact Number:

Please provide your contact details so we can acknowledge and respond to your complaint.

2. Learner Details (if applicable)

Learner Name:

Programme / Apprenticeship Standard (if known):

Only complete this section if your complaint relates to a specific learner.

3. Details of Your Complaint

Please describe your complaint clearly below:

You may find it helpful to include:

- What happened
- Who was involved
- Where and when it happened

Please focus on factual information and your experience. If your complaint relates to a safeguarding concern, please indicate this clearly.

4. Key Dates / Timeline

Please list any important dates related to your complaint:

For example:

- Date of review meeting
- Date of email or communication
- When the issue first occurred

5. Evidence

Please list or attach any evidence that supports your complaint:

This could include:

- Emails
- Documents
- Screenshots
- Notes from meetings

6. Outcome You Are Seeking

What would you like to happen as a result of your complaint?

For example:

- Clarification of a situation
- Review of how something was handled
- A change to how something is delivered

7. Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed:

Date:

Submission of this form does not guarantee the outcome requested. All complaints will be reviewed and responded to in line with the Group Horizon Ltd Complaints Procedure (KLP 008).