

Complaints Policy and Procedure

POLICY STATEMENT

ACCESS is committed to delivering high-quality training, consultancy, and research services. We welcome feedback and take complaints seriously, recognising them as opportunities to improve our work. This policy sets out how complaints are managed across all areas of our activity, and how specific issues relating to CPD training courses are addressed.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals and organisations who engage with ACCESS, including but not limited to:

- Learners on training or CPD courses
- Consultancy and research clients
- Commissioners and project partners
- Other stakeholders

DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of ACCESS' services, staff, or activities that requires a response. Complaints may relate to:

- The quality or delivery of training, consultancy, or research
- Conduct of staff, facilitators, or associates
- Administrative processes or communication
- Accessibility or inclusivity of our provision

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

Where possible, complaints should be raised informally with the staff member or facilitator involved at the time of the issue. Many concerns can be resolved quickly and constructively at this stage. All complaints, whether resolved informally or not, are logged to support monitoring and continuous improvement.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, it should be submitted in writing to complaints@consultaccess.co.uk. Complaints may also be submitted verbally (by phone or in person) and will be recorded by ACCESS staff in the same way as written complaints.

- **Acknowledgement:** Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- **Initial response:** A written response will be provided within 10 working days where possible.
- **Formal investigation:** If more detailed investigation is required, a full response will be provided within 1 calendar month.

Complaints will be investigated by someone not directly involved in the matter to ensure fairness.

ASSESSMENT APPEALS (TRAINING COURSES ONLY)

For training and CPD courses, appeals relating to assessment decisions (e.g. eligibility for certificates of completion) must be submitted in writing within 14 days of notification. Appeals will be reviewed by a second facilitator not involved in the original decision.

ESCALATION ROUTES

- **Internal escalation:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint will be referred to the Board of Directors of ACCESS to review.
- **External escalation** (CPD courses only): For courses approved under the BPS CPD Quality Mark Scheme, unresolved complaints may be raised with the British Psychological Society (BPS). The BPS has the right to review complaints and, if necessary, withdraw recognition of a course that does not meet the required standards. Contact: cpd@bps.org.uk (Professional Practice and Development Team, BPS)
- **Other services:** For consultancy, research, or commissioned work, external escalation may follow contractual arrangements agreed with commissioners or clients.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORD KEEPING

- All complaints will be handled sensitively and in line with UK GDPR.
- Information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the complaint.
- Records of complaints and outcomes will be retained securely for 3 years.
- Data will only be shared where legally required or as part of external review processes (e.g. BPS Quality Mark audits).
- Alternative formats (e.g. large print, easy read) are available on request to ensure accessibility.

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

ACCESS Learning aims to resolve complaints in a fair, timely, and constructive manner. Outcomes may include:

- An explanation or clarification of the issue raised.
- An apology, where appropriate.
- Corrective action, such as amending course materials, adapting delivery, or addressing staff conduct.
- Practical remedies such as rescheduling training or providing a refund in line with our Booking and Cancellation Policy.
- Identification of lessons learned, which are shared with the team to improve services and prevent recurrence.

Where appropriate, we will agree actions with the complainant to ensure resolution is satisfactory. Complaints that relate to issues of discrimination, harassment, or inclusivity will be managed in line with our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

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Complainants Policy and Procedure	Reviewed on: 1/9/2025 Reviewed by: Amanda Carr	Next review date: September 2026