

Complaints Policy

1 General

BIIAB Qualifications Limited aims to establish and maintain professional working relationships with Centres, learners and any other User of our products and services. However, occasionally disputes and other matters of contention may trigger an expression of dissatisfaction about our qualifications, end-point assessment (EPA), our standard of service, our actions or lack of action, or the complaints handling process.

We aim to deal with all expressions of dissatisfaction quickly and efficiently avoiding the need for a formal written complaint wherever possible.

The purpose of this policy is to describe how BIIAB Qualifications Limited learners, Centres and other Users can approach us to make a complaint, so that all complaints are handled in an open, timely and consistent manner.

It provides information about what we will do on receipt of a complaint, and the process we will undertake to resolve the complaint, identify the cause of the problem, and implement any necessary mitigation or remedial action.

The process for escalating a complaint to the relevant qualification regulator is also described.

We specifically encourage contact and feedback from individuals or groups if they feel that any aspect of our qualifications, EPAs, assessment arrangements or support materials may have discriminated against users with a particular protected characteristic.

We regularly review complaints and feedback we receive to learn from any mistakes made and to improve our services.

2 Scope of Complaints

We will consider complaints regarding our regulated functions and any other service we may provide to stakeholders. This may include but is not limited to the following:

- The behaviours of either our staff or sub-contractors;
- Services that would include failure to take action or unreasonable delay.

Complaints about our

- independent assessment decisions;
- external quality assurance decisions;
- actions taken as a result of confirmed malpractice/maladministration;

- refusal to grant Special Arrangements;

are dealt with under our Enquiries and Appeals Policy.

3 Making a Complaint

Complaints can be submitted in writing addressed to the Compliance and Regulation Team using the contact details below by letter or by email to ComplianceandRegulation@BIIAB.co.uk

Compliance and Regulation Team
BIIAB Qualifications Limited
Robins Wood House
Robins Wood Road
Nottingham
NG8 3NH

When submitting your complaint, please include the following information:

- Your name, address and contact details
- Full details of your complaint i.e., what happened, where it happened and when it happened
- Any information or evidence that supports your complaint
- The resolution you feel is warranted

As part of the BIIAB Qualifications Limited Centre approval process, all Centres must have an internal policy and procedure in relation to complaints and, therefore, if a complaint relates to a specific Centre, you/your learners must exhaust that policy in the first instance.

If you feel that a Centre has not investigated the complaint fully or correctly, you can raise a complaint with BIIAB Qualifications Limited to investigate under the terms of its agreement with the Centre.

If a complaint involves an allegation of malpractice or maladministration, please refer to BIIAB Qualifications Limited published Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

We will investigate complaints from anonymous sources only where there is sufficient detail provided to identify the issue/concern, individual or centre involved, and the qualification(s) implicated in the complaint.

BIIAB Qualifications Limited handles personal data in accordance with the most up to date Data Protection legislation.

4 Investigating a Complaint

All complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt.

We aim to resolve complaints with 20 working days and, should the issue be complex, inform you if resolution is not possible within that timeframe.

Complaints should be made within 1 month of the occurrence or within 2 weeks of an unsatisfactory outcome.

If your complaint is upheld, we will, subject to the requirements of confidentiality, advise you of the actions we propose to take. If your complaint is not upheld, we will explain why.

If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint has been handled, then you can request a review of it within 10 working days of the date of our decision. The request will be referred to our Deputy Director of Awarding Services.

Only your original complaint and your dissatisfaction about how it was handled will be reviewed. Further consideration of your complaint will only be made if the review considers the complaint was not handled according to our procedures or failed to take account of some critical evidence. Any decisions made at this stage will be signed off by the Chief Executive and will be final and the complaint closed.

If, because of the complaint, we identify a failure in any of our services, policies and procedures we will take all reasonable steps to:

- Identify other learners/centres who have been affected by the failure
- Correct the failure or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure
- Put arrangements in place to ensure that the failure does not recur in the future
- Put arrangements in place to notify all relevant stakeholders of any changes that affect them and why

5 Unreasonable Behaviour and Vexatious Complaints

We will not engage with abusive complainants or persistent and repeated contacts from complainants.

Repeated contact with no new evidence and / or abusive correspondence from a complainant will be considered as vexatious correspondence.

Where correspondence and / or behaviour are deemed to be vexatious, we will refer the complainant to this policy, explaining that if the communication continues in this manner all correspondence will cease.

6 Regulatory Requirements

Where a complaint relates to a regulated qualification and a Centre / learner remains dissatisfied either after the BIIAB Qualifications Limited Complaints Policy has been exhausted or with our actions, the complaint can be escalated to the relevant qualifications regulators.

For qualifications and EPAs regulated by Ofqual:

Ofqual
Earlsdon Park,
53-55 Butts Rd,
Coventry CV1 3BH
Email: public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk

For qualifications regulated by Qualifications Wales:

Qualification Wales
Q2 Building
Pencarn Lane
Imperial Park
Coedkernew
Newport
NP10 8AR
Email: enquiries@qualificationswales.org

For qualifications regulated by CCEA Regulation:

CCEA Regulation
29 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast
BT1 3BG
Email: ccearegulation@ccea.org.uk

In Scotland, learners have the right to make a complaint directly to SQA Accreditation, regardless of whether an awarding organisation complaints process has been exhausted. All BIIAB Qualifications Limited approved centres delivering qualifications that are regulated by SQA Accreditation should inform learners as part of their induction process, of the opportunity to submit complaints to both BIIAB Qualifications and the regulator.

SQA Accreditation
The Optima Building
58 Robertson Street
Glasgow
G2 8DQ
Email: accreditation@sqa.org.uk

7 Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

The SPSO considers complaints about public services in Scotland which includes further education colleges, local authority centres and higher education establishments i.e., universities and SQA Accreditation. If a complaint relates to a Centre that is not a public body, a complaint cannot be escalated to SPSO.

In all cases, complainants must have exhausted the complaints process of the organisation against which it wishes to make a complaint before the SPSO accepts the complaint for investigation. However, if a complaint concerns the behaviour of a public service Centre staff member, once the Centre's complaints process has been exhausted, a complaint can be made to the SPSO without the need to escalate the complaint to BIIAB Qualifications Ltd or the regulator.

8 Policy Review Arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier, should any feedback or concern be brought to the attention of BIIAB Qualifications Limited, to ensure it remains fit for purpose and the process and its outcomes are deliverable.

It is also reviewed as part of BIIAB Qualifications Limited continuous improvement monitoring through its annual self-assessment arrangements.