

Complaints Policy

1. Objective

This policy will ensure that all learners and clients can raise concerns or complaints easily and receive a prompt, fair and transparent response. BMS Progress aims to:

- Address issues quickly and put things right when they go wrong.
- Maintain accountability, fairness and proportionality in all investigations.
- Use complaints as a source of feedback to improve the quality of our services.
- Ensure clients and learners understand their right to escalate concerns to external bodies if they remain dissatisfied.

2. Introduction

BMS Progress is committed to providing high-quality services, but we recognise that sometimes customers may feel dissatisfied or believe that the service received has fallen short of expectations.

This policy outlines:

- How complaints can be made
- How they will be managed
- The steps involved in escalating a complaint
- The rights of learners and customers throughout the process

This policy applies to all learners and clients.

3. Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, relating to the services, actions or behaviours of BMS Progress or its staff. This may include concerns about:

- Quality of service
- Communication or conduct
- Delays or administrative errors
- Learning delivery or support
- Decisions or actions taken by staff

A complaint may be raised verbally, in writing or via email.

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4. Compliance with Legislation

This policy aligns with relevant regulatory expectations, including:

- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requirements for handling complaints for funded apprenticeship provision
- Awarding Organisation and Qualification Regulator procedures for formal escalations (e.g., Ofqual)
- General principles of fairness, transparency and learner rights

Complainants retain the right to escalate concerns to the ESFA only after following the full internal procedure.

5. BMS Progress Responsibilities

BMS Progress is responsible for:

- Providing clear information on how to submit a complaint.
- Acknowledging complaints promptly and responding within published timescales.
- Ensuring complainants receive a clear explanation in their preferred format.
- Recording, monitoring and reviewing complaints and outcomes.
- Learning from complaints to improve future service delivery.
- Ensuring all staff comply with this policy and support effective complaint resolution.

The Managing Director holds ultimate responsibility for promoting good complaints-handling practice. Compliance with this policy is required from all staff.

6. Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Learners or clients should first attempt to resolve the issue directly with their Development Coach or Account Manager where appropriate.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint to Head of Quality

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should submit a formal complaint to:
Katie Vincent – Head of Quality
Email: yourvoice@bmsprogress.com
Mobile: 07800 681821

Or in writing to:

BMS Progress, 310 Europa Boulevard, Gemini Business Park, Warrington, WA5 7XR

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The written complaint should include:

- Details of the issue
- Date and location of the incident
- Full name and contact details of the complainant
- Consequences of the issue
- Proposed remedy

Timescales:

- Acknowledgement within 24 hours
- Full response within 10 working days

Stage 3: Escalation to Managing Director

If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, the complainant may escalate to:

David Bill – Managing Director
Email: davidb@bmsprogress.com
Telephone: 01925 645332

Or in writing to:

David Bill, BMS Progress, 310 Europa Boulevard, Gemini Business Park, Warrington, WA5 7XR

Escalation must occur within 10 days of receiving the Stage 2 response.

Timescales:

- Acknowledgement within 24 hours
- Full response within 15 working days

If the matter requires more time, an interim update will be provided.

Final Stage: Escalation to Board of Directors

If dissatisfaction remains after Stage 2, the complaint may be escalated to:

Board of Directors
BMS Progress
310 Europa Boulevard
Gemini Business Park
Warrington
WA5 7XR

Or by calling 01925 645332 to request contact with a Board Director.

Escalation must occur within 10 days of receiving the Managing Director's response.
The Board will respond within 10 working days outlining next steps and the investigation timeline.
This constitutes the final internal decision.

7. Concerns & Investigation Process

Investigations will be conducted fairly, objectively and confidentially. This may involve:

- Reviewing relevant documents or evidence

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- Speaking with staff involved
- Speaking with the complainant for clarification
- Reviewing policies, procedures or service standards

If more time is required, interim updates will be provided outlining the revised response timeframe.

BMS Progress will record:

- The nature of complaints
- Investigation outcomes
- Actions taken
- Learning identified

Patterns or recurring issues will be monitored for service improvement.

8. Support

BMS Progress will:

- Make the complaints process easy to access
- Provide responses in the complainant's preferred communication format
- Offer guidance on how to escalate concerns
- Ensure no complainant is disadvantaged for raising a concern
- Uphold fairness, equality and dignity throughout the process

Learners and clients will be treated respectfully, without discrimination, and in line with Fundamental British Values.

9. Policy Enforcement

All staff are required to comply with this policy. Failure to follow the procedures may result in:

- Delayed complaint resolution
- Inaccurate record-keeping
- Escalation to senior leadership
- Formal performance management processes

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Complainants who remain unsatisfied after exhausting all internal stages may escalate externally to:

Ofqual
Earlsdon Park, 53–55 Butts Road, Coventry, CV1 3BH
Email: complaints@ofqual.gov.uk
Phone: 0300 303 3344

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
(For funded provision after internal routes have been completed)
Complaints, ESFA
Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

This policy is reviewed annually.

This policy has been approved by the Directors of BMS Progress and will be reviewed and updated as required.

Any questions should be directed to:

David Cooper (Operations Director) – 07812037117 / davidc@bmsprogress.com

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