

## PMA Complaints Policy

The Complaints Policy provides a definition and examples of complaints which may occur for a Learner, Apprentice or PMA Contractor. However, PMA recognise that we may receive complaints from any member of the General Practice community in relation to our training and learning services. The process for making a complaint is described in detail.

### Definitions

PMA aims to give everyone an excellent experience when dealing with PMA, so we welcome your comments, suggestions and feedback about the training and learning services you have experienced when contacting us or when using any of our products or services.

Many matters can be resolved informally by contacting the Customer Success Team on 0330 111 6459 or email: [austin@practicemanagersuk.org](mailto:austin@practicemanagersuk.org) as we may be able to solve the problem straight away. However, if you feel the problem needs to be dealt with through a more formal procedure, please follow the process below.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from you about PMA products, services or the complaints handling process where it is clear that you expect us to identify the cause of the problem and to take some kind of remedial action.

### PMA aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response
- We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- We respond in the right way, for example, by giving you an explanation or an apology where we have got things wrong and communicate what action has been taken
- We learn from complaints and feedback and we use them to improve our service.

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of examples of complaints, but the following are examples of situations that may constitute a complaint:

- Incorrect invoicing – these can normally be resolved without a formal intervention
- Certificate spelling errors – these can normally be resolved without a formal intervention
- Lack of response to queries
- Unable to unsubscribe emails
- Website issues
- Incorrect products received
- Delay with receipt of certificates
- Non-compliance with stated PMA process e.g. not adhering to published timescales or processes.

### Investigation and Outcome

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

PMA's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated.

PMA will acknowledge your complaint within two working days and let you know who will be dealing with it. We will appoint an appropriate person to investigate the matter on your behalf. PMA aim to resolve complaints within eight working days but if it's going to take longer than that we'll keep you fully informed.

Once we have completed our investigation, we will explain what went wrong and why, apologise when it is appropriate and take appropriate action to remedy the situation as soon as possible.

The three stages to the PMA complaints process are:

### **Stage One**

If you have a complaint in relation to the service you have received from PMA please raise your concern by calling our Customer Success Team on 0330 111 6459 or email: [stacey@practicemanagersuk.org](mailto:stacey@practicemanagersuk.org) explaining the problem as clearly and fully as possible, including any action taken so far.

If there is an allegation of malpractice or maladministration please refer to the PMA Malpractice & Maladministration Policy.

Learners/Apprentices - in the first instance you must try and resolve your complaint with PMA Customer Success Team.

PMA contractors - in the first instance you must try and resolve your complaint with your PMA manager.

### **Stage Two**

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive to your complaint, you can take the matter further by contacting the PMA Education Lead by emailing [sarahburrows@practicemanagersuk.org](mailto:sarahburrows@practicemanagersuk.org) setting out why you are dissatisfied.

The Education Lead will undertake a full review of the original complaint, the evidence collected by the person who investigated the matter on your behalf and their initial response. Consultation with all parties will take place to provide you with PMA's response and any further actions that may need to be taken.

### **Final Stage**

If you are still not satisfied with the response you receive from the PMA Education Lead, you can take the matter further by contacting: ESFA Apprenticeship Service Support on 08000 150 600 or [helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk](mailto:helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk)

### **Confidentiality**

Except in exceptional circumstances, we will try to ensure that your complaint remains confidential, but in some cases the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may make it impossible to maintain confidentiality. In these situations, we will discuss this with you.

### **Continuous Improvement**

All complaints are reported and reviewed internally each month. They are also reviewed by the by the Quality and Regulatory Group on a quarterly basis to ensure our qualifications and programmes are accessible to all whilst maintaining quality in implementation.

PMA aims to improve its business processes and our response to customers in the light of learning from the feedback we receive.

This policy shall be the subject to an annual review cycle.

### **Further Information and/or Glossary from ILM Ofqual**

If your complaint relates to a qualification regulated by Ofqual you may complain directly to Ofqual if you have exhausted PMA's complaints procedure. Please refer to the following link which will explain how you can do this: <http://ofqual.gov.uk/complaints-and-appeals/>

### **Qualifications Wales**

If your complaint relates to a qualification regulated by Qualifications Wales you may complain directly to Qualifications Wales if you have exhausted PMA's complaints procedure. Please refer to the following link which will explain how you can do this: <http://qualificationswales.org/regulation/complaints/?lang=en>

### **Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)**

Learners/Apprentices registered on a Scottish Vocational Qualification have the right to complain direct to the regulator, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Particularly should they remain unhappy with decisions made by the centre and by further complaint to PMA.

### **Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO)**

Users of public bodies in Scotland have the right to complain to the SPSO as the final arbiter. Users have to exhaust the public body's own complaints procedure before the SPSO will consider their complaint, and it must usually have been raised within the previous 12 months. The complaint cannot be under consideration in a court of law.

The SPSO defines a complaint as "an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more customers about [the college's] action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by [the college2] or on its behalf".

The SPSO will not consider complaints about academic decisions, such as the outcome of an assessment. These types of complaints should be treated as an appeal and should follow awarding bodies' appeals processes.



The SPSO’s Further Education Colleges Model Complaints Handling Procedure can be found at: <http://\IVI\VIII.valuinqcomplaints.org.ukfwp-content\media\The-Further-Education- Model- Complaints-Handling-Procedure.pdf>

1 The SPSO’s rules apply only to public bodies (e.g. FE colleges and local authority centres). Students at centres that are not public bodies will not be able to escalate their complaints to the SPSO.

2 For some complaints, there will be no requirement for the college to escalate the complaint to awarding bodies, e.g. if the Complaint concerns the behaviour of a centre staff member (in this case, once the student has exhausted the college’s complaints process, they would go direct to the SPSO if dissatisfied).

**Main Contacts:**

Name	Job Title	Address	Mobile phone
Austin Ambrose	Client Services Director	<a href="mailto:austin@practicemanagersuk.org">austin@practicemanagersuk.org</a>	07726 921 685
Stacey Chapman	Head of Business Operations	<a href="mailto:stacey@practicemanagersuk.org">stacey@practicemanagersuk.org</a>	07802 735 238

**Should you have any concerns around Safeguarding please email:**

**PMA DSL, Stacey Chapman at:** [safeguarding@practicemanagersuk.org](mailto:safeguarding@practicemanagersuk.org)

**Please be assured your email will be treated in the strictest confidence and that you will receive a direct reply from the PMA DSL within 24 hours.**



Signed by Austin Ambrose \_\_\_\_\_

**Revisions control:**

Date	Summary of changes made	Changes made by (Name)	Version No.
20th July 2016	PMA Complaints Policy and Procedures created	Ian Jones	1.0
29th Oct 2016	Complaints Policy amended in accordance with the ILM guidelines	Ian Jones	2.0

5th April 2017	ILM intro paragraph changed and other minor edits	Ian Jones	2.1
26th Nov 2017	Process amended	Ian Jones	3.0
11th Dec 2018	Addition and removal of previous staff contacts	Natasha Sumner	4.0
December 2019	Removal of ref to Delegate Central and repetitive intro paragraph	Elaine Crowther	5.0
July 2020	Added to new template	Sue Chadwick	5.1
Oct 2020	Reviewed and updated	Sue Chadwick	V6.0
Jan 2022	Reviewed and updated	Stacey Chapman	V.7.0
June 2022	Updated	Karen Berry	V.8.0

**Next Review Due:** January 2023