

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND FEEDBACK POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Issued by Gemma Kemp

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1. Scope and purpose of policy

The Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy applies to all services provided by Salutem Ltd. It can be used by anyone who would like to provide feedback on our service. There are separate policies for dealing with matters such as:

- Safeguarding: Raising concerns
- Grievance or disciplinary offences (staff only)
- Appeals against the outcome of assessment decisions
- Whistleblowing: Making disclosures in the public interest

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 Salutem welcomes feedback from all its customers, both compliments and complaints, to help ensure high standards of service and to identify improvements needed.

2.1.2 Salutem is committed to openness and transparency by providing well publicised, accessible information on how to give feedback or make a complaint.

2.1.3 Complaints, compliments and feedback will be dealt with courteously, fairly, and objectively.

2.1.4 Complaints, compliments and feedback are addressed appropriately through Salutem procedures.

2.2 Compliments and Feedback:

What is a complaint?

A complaint is defined as something that is unsatisfactory or not acceptable.

Salutem welcomes feedback from all users of our services. There are several options available to all our customers to provide compliments and feedback, such as:

- Learner and employer surveys: Conducted annually and summary of the results are published to the employers and students.
- Learner Reviews: Frequency of these is set to meet funding provider requirements
- By emailing: Any member of Salutem staff
- By writing in confidence to Gemma Kemp, Operations Director, Salutem Ltd, Catherine St, Aston, B6 5RS

Compliments and feedback are used to identify what is going well and the aspects of our provision that need to be improved.

We use feedback to assist us in writing our self-assessment report and quality improvement plan.

2.3 Complaints:

Complaints can be raised by any student, parent, employer, visitor or member of the community who is unhappy with our service. Salutem operates a staged complaints procedure. Often complaints can be resolved at the first “informal” stage of the procedure. If your complaint cannot be resolved at the informal stage, then there are up to three further “formal” stages; Section 3 covers the procedure for all stages. Staff and learners must be informed during their induction, that they have the right to refer a complaint to a relevant external body once they have exhausted our own internal procedures.

2.2.1 Confidentiality: Where possible, confidentiality will be observed, throughout the operation of this policy. Where a complaint relates to specific individuals, Salutem may seek permission to share such details with them. If permission is not given, it may not be possible for Salutem to fully investigate or resolve a complaint.

2.2.2 Anonymous Complaints: Salutem does not normally accept or act upon anonymous complaints, due to Salutem not being able to collect all relevant information for investigation from such complaints and respond accordingly. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances where Salutem deems it appropriate to investigate a complaint from an anonymous source, which identifies risk to the Salutem community or the public.

2.2.3 Provoking or Malicious Complaints: A provoking or malicious complaint is defined as a complaint which is deemed unreasonable or untrue, having been put forward to abuse this procedure, or an attempt to attack the good name or reputation of another person. In case where a complaint is considered to be provoking or malicious, Salutem reserves the right to terminate the investigation of a complaint.

2.2.4 Permission to Disclose: If the complainant wishes for someone else to raise concerns with us, Salutem has a legal obligation under the Data Protection Act 2018 with regard to sharing information with third parties. Therefore, in some circumstances Salutem will require written permission to share this information with them.

Before permission is given to share the information with others, the complainant must consider whether our response will include any sensitive information about them. The complainant is required to contact us in advance to tell us which sensitive information we can and cannot share.

2.2.5 Multi-Issue Complaints: If a complaint identifies a number of issues which fall within the remit of other procedures, for example, an academic appeal or both, the content of such complaints will be reviewed. The complainant will then be notified and directed to the relevant policy and procedure.

2.2.6: Collective/ group complaints: Collective/ group complaints are expected to identify how each individual has been personally affected by the issues which are being brought to the attention of Salutem. Each individual named in the collective complaint must agree with the content of the complaint before it is submitted and individually sign to say that they are in agreement of the same. Only the nominated spokesperson will receive communication/ correspondence from Salutem.

3. Complaints Procedure

This procedure describes how Salutem Ltd will respond to a complaint to resolve it to the satisfaction of the complainant, prevent recurrence and improve the quality of service.

This procedure shall apply to complaints made by any student, parent, employer, visitor or member of the community using or affected by Salutem Ltd services or facilities. It covers all complaints unless your complaint is covered by its own special procedure. For example, separate procedures exist for issues relating to Safeguarding, Appeals, and Staff Grievance. All comments, positive and negative are welcomed.

3.1 Stage One: Informal Stage

Many issues or problems can be resolved informally through approaches to the member of staff involved, or their line manager. You should first approach the member of staff who seems best able to deal with the matter immediately. You can either speak to them or put your complaint in writing. The person you spoke to will try to resolve matters informally. They will investigate your complaint, and then contact you again, usually within five working days, to see if a solution can be found.

Alternatively, contact the main Salutem Office, who will advise you how best to make your complaint.

Additionally, Salutem Ltd encourages feedback from learners via several on-program methods, including surveys and regular reviews and 1:1 tutorial; these can also be used to feedback issues.

3.2 Stage 2:

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal Stage One of the complaints, you can take your complaint to **STAGE TWO**, which is the first 'formal' stage of the Complaints Procedure. You should do this within 10 working days of receiving your response at Stage 1.

An email or letter can be used to make a complaint. Alternatively, a complaint can be received over the telephone by the Salutem main office. If taken over the telephone, a note of your complaint will be completed on your behalf by the member of Salutem staff taking your call. A complaint can also be made by letter. If the complaint is by letter; the letter will be attached to a Complaints Form for processing. Postal correspondence should be sent to **Salutem Limited, Catherine St, Aston, Birmingham, B6 5RS**.

On receipt of a formal complaint, an acknowledgement will be sent within 5 working days.

- The complaint will be investigated, typically by the Managing Director, and a request may be made for additional information. Salutem would expect to receive the requested information from the complainant within 10 working days from the date of our request.
- We aim to provide a formal written response to the complainant within 15 working days of receiving the original complaint/ letter. If we are unable to do this, you will be kept informed of our progress.

3.3 Stage 3:

Should the complaint not be resolved at Stage 2, you can take your complaint to **STAGE THREE**, which involves a referral to an external body, such as an Awarding Organization or Funding Provider. This could involve one of the next steps, as applicable:

- A) Following the relevant Awarding Organisation's complaints procedure. If a learner remains unhappy with the Awarding Organisation's outcome, then their complaint can be taken to the relevant qualification regulator.
- B) Funded learners: Following relevant funding provider complaints procedure. If the learner remains unhappy with the funding provider's outcome, then their complaint can be taken to the overall funder of training, such as Skills Funding Agency.

Note: External bodies will not generally accept receipt of a complaint until the Salutem Ltd procedure has fully run its course.

6 TIME LIMITS

Salutem Ltd will endeavour to resolve complaints as expeditiously as possible and the time limits set out within this procedure offer a general indication of timescale. However, it may not always be practicable to adhere to a particular time scale, for example, because of holidays or illness or other intervening causes, in which case complainants will be given a written progress report and an estimate of the revised timescale. A complaint should be initiated within one month of the event or circumstances which are its cause.

7 REPRESENTATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

A complainant may be accompanied by a friend (which term includes a representative of the Students' Union or Trades Union Representative) at any stage in the procedure. The friend may speak on behalf of the complainant. The person presiding over the relevant level of complaint (e.g. Director) must be notified of the name of the friend, not less than 5 working days before the friend's first involvement. In general, those about whom complaints have been made have a right to know what is being claimed and who is making the complaint. Where a complaint becomes formal and is made in writing therefore, a copy will normally be supplied to the person who is being complained about and that person will have the right to be accompanied by a friend in any related investigation. If complainants are concerned about protecting their anonymity, they are advised to contact the Managing Director.

8 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The responsibility for implementing this procedure shall lie with the Managing Director.

9 Registering a complaint.

All formal complaints will be registered in a file using the complaint reference number as identification to show the status of the complaint. Any correspondence for the complaint is located in this file. Written documents are to be scanned and stored in the electronic file. The information will be saved until the enquiry and route cause into the complaint has been completed. On completion of the complaint and being closed on the register the evidence will be reviewed for disposal and a note added to the register for the conclusion.



Signed by Malcolm McDermott
Director