

Serco Education

Employer Complaints Policy

Apprenticeships:

Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (CMDA) for Schools

School Business Professional Apprenticeship (SBPA)

1. Introduction

This policy is to inform employers of apprentices that are completing their apprenticeships with Serco Education of the process to follow in order to make a complaint about the service provided by Serco Education.

A group of employers may use this procedure to make a collective complaint provided that one employer identifies as the main contact for purposes of communication.

It is the aim of Serco Education to settle complaints promptly, fairly and courteously in the best interest of all parties, and to address areas as needed. Serco Education is keen to ensure that the interests and well-being of all those associated with a complaint are properly safeguarded. However, it is also expected that employers will conduct themselves responsibly and treat the process and those members of Serco Education involved in the process with respect at all times.

Serco Education has a separate complaints policy for apprentices.

After the internal Serco Education processes have been exhausted, complainants have the opportunity to have their raise their complaint with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are not satisfied with Serco Education's response.

2. Definition

An "**informal complaint**" is defined as an issue which an employer wishes to raise with a member of Serco Education staff, without using the formal complaints process. Informal complaints are usually quick to resolve and unlikely to require an in-depth investigation.

A "**formal complaint**" is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about Serco Education's actions or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of, Serco Education.

3. Process of making an employer complaint

There are three levels to Serco Education's complaints procedure:

Level 1: Informal resolution

Level 2: Formal complaint

Level 3: Escalation review

We will record and monitor complaints in order to improve our apprenticeship programmes and to assist in identifying problems and trends across Serco Education. Records will feed our monitoring and evaluation procedure and will be included as a standing item on our Apprenticeship Operational Board agenda.

4. How to make an employer complaint

Stage 1: Informal Complaints

We hope that the majority of complaints can be resolved in this manner. Complaints should be raised immediately with the coach or facilitator or the Higher Apprenticeship Programme manager as appropriate. They will work with you to try to resolve the issue directly and informally at the earliest opportunity.

You will receive a written acknowledgement of your complaint within two working days and we aim to resolve the issue and provide a written response within two weeks.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If an employer is unable to resolve their complaint informally, or they are unhappy with the response, they should raise the matter in writing by emailing the Education Operational Manager via:

higherapprenticeships@serco.com

Or

Education Operational Manager, Serco Education, Room 201, Conway House, 31 Worcester St, Gloucester GL1 3AJ

The email/letter should be titled as 'formal complaint' and should set out clearly the details of the complaint in full; the action that has been taken to resolve the matter informally, and the resolution sought by the employer. The formal complaint must be raised within two months of receiving written response to Stage 1.

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within five working days and the Education Operational Manager will investigate the complaint. When investigating the complaint, the Education Operational Manager will review the information submitted by the employer and will meet with relevant members of Serco Education's Higher Apprenticeship delivery team to discuss. The Education Operational Manager may also meet with the employer complainant and/or apprentices to clarify facts or question further.

A written response will be issued by the lead investigator within two weeks of the date of the formal complaint where possible. If this is not possible, revised timescales for resolution will be agreed with the employer complainant.

Stage 3: Escalation review

If an employer is not satisfied with the response provided at Stage 2, they can escalate their complaint in writing to the Head of Serco Education via higherapprenticeships@serco.com. The email should be titled 'Stage 3 complaint'. The Stage 3 complaint must be received within one month of the employer receiving written response to Stage 2.

Unless new evidence is presented, the Head of Serco Education will not reinvestigate the complaint but will check that appropriate procedures have been followed and that the decision made at Stage 2 was reasonable.

If new evidence is presented, the Head of Serco Education will consider it in making their decision and may undertake further investigation.

A written response will be issued by the Head of Serco Education within four weeks of the date of the formal complaint where possible. If this is not possible, revised timescales for resolution will be agreed with the employer complainant.

5. Further action

After Serco's internal processes have been exhausted, complainants have the opportunity to raise their complaint with the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are not

satisfied with Serco Educations response. You must contact the ESFA within 12 months after the issue happened.

Email or post your complaint to the ESFA complaints team.

ESFA complaints team
ESFA@education.gov.uk
Complaints team
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

The ESFA will reply to let you know what will happen next.

If you're unhappy with the ESFA response

You can [contact the Department for Education](#) if you're unhappy with how the ESFA has dealt with your complaint.