
Purpose

This policy outlines how GATR will respond to complaints received from Delegates and Learners/Candidates and follow up with corrective action, where appropriate.

GATR are committed to providing high-quality services and will endeavour to resolve any problems in our services as quickly as possible. We also consider complaints to be an important source of information for improving our services for the future.

Definitions

- A complaint is a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
- Complaints are defined as any issue raised by Delegates, Candidates or a Third party with regard to an actual or potential failure in our services which is not covered by other policies in place.
- Delegates are defined as persons attending a GATR theory or practical course or workshop.
- Candidates and learners are defined as persons who have a legitimate interest in the qualification or type of qualification made available by SFJ Awards and offered by the GATR Assessment process and may include learners and learners' representatives.
- A complaint by a Third Party is a formal complaint made by someone other than a learner or delegate.

Please Note:

GATR Assessment Centre has an Enquiries and Appeals policy in place. This should be used if the complaint relates to a request for clarification or exemplification on specific or general issues relating to the assessment centre process; or allows learners to question a decision or judgement. An appeal is a process through which the outcome of a decision may be challenged.

SFJ Awards has its own Complaints policy which can be accessed here:

<http://sfjawards.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SFJ-Awards-Complaints-Policy-COM1-0116.pdf>

Roles and Responsibilities

Qualification user/Learners/Candidates/Delegates:

- Must familiarise themselves with the GATR's complaints policy.

All GATR Personnel (including assessment centre staff and training staff):

- Must familiarise themselves with the centre's complaints policy and procedure.

Director Assessments Centre:

- Ensure the centre has a complaints policy in place to meet centre approval requirements.
- Ensure centre staff and learners are aware of the complaints policy.
- Ensure complaints are investigated and handled consistently, in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure that complaints are investigated and processed in accordance with this policy.
- Identify weaknesses and implement new processes as a result of lessons learnt.

¹ *Terms are used synonymously for GATR course or GATR assessment participants*

Director Training Centre

- Ensure training staff and delegates are aware of the complaints policy.
- Ensure complaints are investigated and handled consistently.
- Ensure that complaints are investigated and processed in accordance with this policy.
- Identify weaknesses and implement new processes as a result of lessons learnt.

Director Policies – GATR Board

- Ensure that this policy is regularly reviewed and updated.

Making a Complaint (All Complaints)

In dealing with our clients, GATR staff endeavour to provide a service which is, courteous and quick to respond to clients' needs. Nevertheless, at times, there may be situations where a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received and wish to make a complaint.

Complaints received by GATR will be dealt with openly, fairly and efficiently. Qualification users and delegates can submit complaints to GATR by:

E-mail: enquiries@gatr.co.uk

Telephone: 0758 184 3737

Post:

Gardiner Associates Training and Research (GATR)

Phoenix House,

251 Carr Road,

Northolt, UB5 4RN

A Complaints form G202/GA213/F1 is available to record the nature of complaint and is available on GATR's website. The complainant should be provided with access to this form.

Responding to complaints from delegates

- GATR will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within 2 working days.
- GATR will then appoint a GATR Director independent to the area of the complaint to investigate the complaint.
- As part of their investigation, GATR will examine the procedures used to investigate the complaint submitted by the delegate.

Responding to complaints from candidates/learners

- GATR will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within 2 working days.
- GATR will then appoint a GATR Director independent to the area of the complaint to investigate the complaint.
- As part of their investigation, GATR will examine the procedures used to investigate the complaint submitted by the delegate.

In the case of Assessment Centre complaints, candidates must follow and exhaust the GATR's complaints procedure fully before making a direct formal complaint to SFJ Awards.

If the complaint relates to a request for clarification or exemplification on specific or general issues relating to the assessment centre process; or allows learners to question a decision or judgement, the GATR assessment centre Enquiries and Appeals policy should be followed.

Should the complaint remain unresolved, the learner may make a formal complaint to SFJ Awards.

Responding to complaints from Third Parties

A complaint by a Third Party is a formal complaint made by someone other than a learner or delegate.

- GATR will investigate complaints received by a third party within their scope.
- GATR will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within 2 working days. GATR will then appoint a Director independent to the area of the complaint to investigate the complaint.
- Should a complaint fall outside the scope of GATR, the complainant will be informed of this in writing within 2 working days of receiving the complaint.

Complaint Procedures (all complaints)

- Once GATR is satisfied that all information and documentation is made available, it will be considered, and a conclusion will be reached. A log of actions taken by the responsible GATR Director will be kept using form G202/GA213/F2.
- A response will be issued in writing to the complainant within 10 working days of receiving the initial complaint. (If the process is expected to take longer, the complainant will be advised of this, the reasons, and the likely amended timescale).
- Complainants have 20 working days to respond to GATR's response. Should no further comment be received from the complainant, the conclusion will be confirmed as final.

Mitigation and corrective action

Following the investigation and resolution of any complaint (or potential failure identified by a candidate or delegate) GATR will take all practicable steps to mitigate the effect of the complaint and prevent any recurrence of the failure.

Where a complaint leads to the discovery of a failure in the assessment process, GATR will take all reasonable steps to:

- identify any other learner(s) who has been affected by the failure
- correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure, and
- ensure that the failure does not recur.

Where the outcome of a complaint questions the validity of assessment results GATR will take action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the award of units/qualifications. This may involve a further/independent review of learners' work. This may include, as appropriate (the list is not exhaustive and is intended for guidance only):

- a further review of learners' work by a GATR Quality Assurer not involved in the final verification of the awards; and/or
- a review of the unit(s) of assessment through its review process;

The Head of Centre will take responsibility for initiating the most appropriate course of corrective action in the case of complaints regarding the assessment process. Corrective action regarding all other complaints will be initiated by GATR's Managing Director or Deputy Managing Director.

Appeal

Appeals against decisions can be made. In this case GATR's Enquiries and Appeals policy will be initiated.

Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Director Policies on a regular basis as part of GATR's self-evaluation/management review arrangements and revised as necessary in response to lessons learnt, client feedback, changes in legislation and guidance from the Awarding Bodies.

GATR's review of the policy will ensure that GATR's procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied appropriately and equitably.

Policies and formal amendments to policies are approved at GATR Board Meetings.

Location of the Policy

Copies of this policy is available for download from our website: www.gatr.co.uk/policies