

UNITED APPRENTICESHIPS

Complaints Policy

2026 | 28

Date of last review	May 2026	Review period	2 years
Date of next review	May 2028	Owner	HWS
Type of policy	Statutory	Approval	Compliance Committee
SLT member in charge	CLJ		

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Introduction

United Apprenticeships is committed to providing high-quality training and support to every learner. We work in partnership with schools and employers, and we want all of those relationships to be positive ones. We know that sometimes things go wrong, or you may not be happy with something we have done. If that happens, we want to hear about it. Telling us about a problem helps us put it right for you and improve what we do for everyone else. This policy explains what to do if you want to raise a concern or make a complaint, what will happen next, and how long each step should take. We will treat every complaint seriously, fairly and without blame. No learner will ever be treated unfairly for raising a concern in good faith.

Scope

This policy applies to:

Learners and apprentices currently with United Apprenticeships, and those who have recently left (where the concern relates to their time with us).

The schools and employers we work in partnership with.

Parents, carers or representatives raising a concern on a learner's behalf.

Some issues are dealt with under separate policies and are not covered here. These include:

- Safeguarding - if your concern is about the safety or welfare of a learner, it must be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) straight away, not through this complaints process. The DSL will deal with it under our Safeguarding Policy. If a learner is in immediate danger, call 999.
- Assessment appeals - appeals against an assessment decision or grade are handled under our Appeals Policy.

Central Office HR personnel may be involved where a complaint is about staff conduct.

Definitions

- Concern - something you are unhappy or worried about that can usually be sorted out quickly and informally.
- Complaint - a more serious or unresolved concern where you are asking United Apprenticeships to look into something and take action.
- Working days - Monday to Friday, not including weekends or bank holidays.
- Complainant - the person making the complaint.

Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a part to play in making sure complaints are handled well.

Learners, schools and employers

- Raise concerns as early as possible, so they can be sorted out quickly.
- Give us a clear description of the problem and what you would like to happen.
- Treat our staff with respect, just as we will treat you with respect.

United Apprenticeships staff

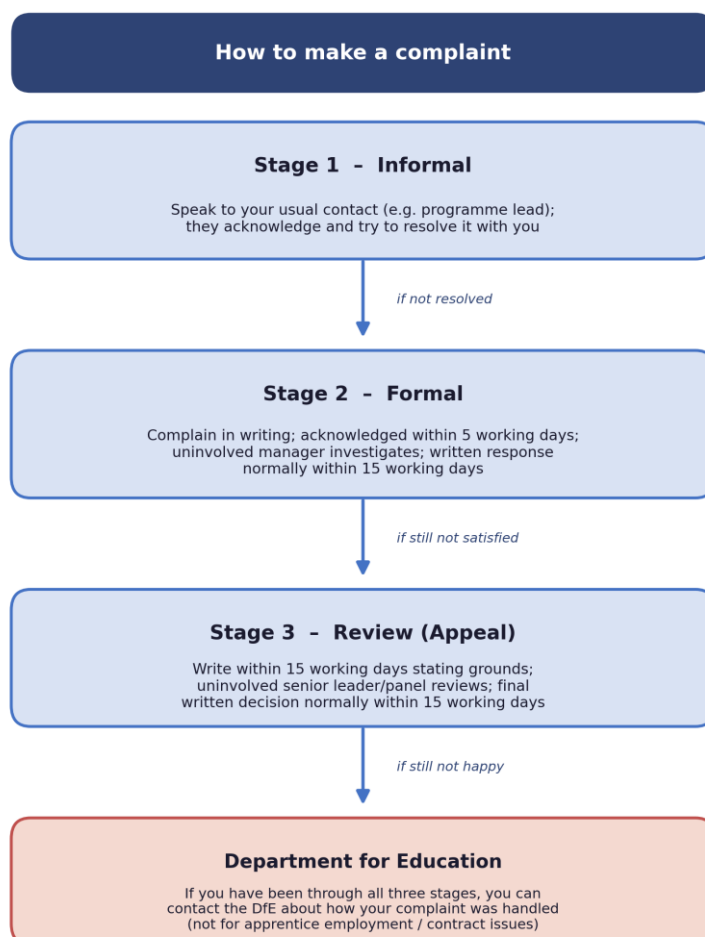
- Listen to concerns, take them seriously, and try to resolve them informally where possible.
- Keep the complainant informed about what is happening and when to expect a response.
- Record complaints accurately and pass them to the right person when needed.

Senior leadership

- Make sure this policy is followed fairly and consistently.
- Review complaints data to spot patterns and improve our service.
- Oversee the formal stages of the process and any final decisions.

Policy Detail - How to Make a Complaint

There are three stages. Most concerns are resolved at the first, informal stage. You only need to move to the next stage if your concern has not been sorted out.



Stage 1 - Informal

In the first instance, talk to the United Apprenticeships member of staff you normally deal with, such as your programme lead. You can do this in person, by phone or by email.

- Tell them what the problem is and what you would like to happen.

- They will acknowledge your concern.
- They will try to resolve it with you.

If you are not comfortable speaking to that person, or your concern is about them, you can go straight to Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Formal

If your concern has not been resolved informally, you can make a formal complaint in writing (by email or letter) to United Apprenticeships.

Email: Claire Jeens claire.jeens@unitedlearning.org.uk

Letter: FAO The Head of Apprenticeships at Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6SB.

We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.

A manager not previously involved will look into it. This may include speaking to you and to other people involved.

We will give you a written response, normally within 15 working days, explaining what we did, what we found and what action we will take. If we need more time - for example because a key person is on leave or we need to gather more information - we will tell you why and give you a new date.

If your complaint is about the Head of Apprenticeships, please send it instead to the Director of Professional Development, who will deal with it independently - the same stages and timescales apply.

Stage 3 - Review (Appeal)

If you are still not satisfied after Stage 2, you can ask for your complaint to be appealed.

Write to United Apprenticeships at within 15 working days of the Stage 2 response, saying why you are not satisfied.

You should explain why you are not satisfied. We can only review your complaint if at least one of the following applies:

- The correct process was not followed at Stage 2, and this affected the outcome.
- Not all of the information you provided was properly considered.
- New information is now available that was not available at Stage 2.
- The outcome or proposed action is unreasonable based on the facts.

A review is not a chance to repeat the original complaint from the start - it looks at whether Stage 2 was handled fairly and reached a reasonable outcome.

A senior leader or panel not previously involved will review how your complaint was handled.

You will receive a final written decision, normally within 15 working days. This is the end of the United Apprenticeships complaints process.

If you are still not happy

If you have been through all three stages and still feel your complaint has not been dealt with properly, you can contact the Department for Education about how your complaint was handled. You can make a complaint using [their customer help portal](#). The Department for Education does not deal

with complaints about employment issues (for example, a problem with your contract if you are working as an apprentice).

Confidentiality and Records

We will handle your complaint sensitively and only share information with the people who need it to look into the matter. We keep a written record of formal complaints, the action taken and the outcome, in line with data protection law and our Privacy Notice. Records are kept securely for six years and reviewed so we can learn from them.

Unreasonable or Repeated Complaints

We treat every complaint seriously. However, if a complaint has been through all stages and the same issue is raised again with no new information, we may write to confirm that the complaint is closed and that we will not respond further.

Related Policies and Documents

- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Appeals Policy
- Plagiarism policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Privacy Notice / Data Protection Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been made in accordance with the most recent legislation. It will be administered fairly and impartially. The Compliance Committee reviews this policy every 2 years, or sooner if the law or our practice changes. The owner of this policy (HWS) is responsible for the review.

Document History

Version	Review
1.3	May 2026
1.2	April 2025
1.1	August 2023
1	August 2021

Appendix 1: Complaint Form

Use this form to make a formal (Stage 2) complaint. If you have not yet raised your concern informally, please do so - most concerns can be sorted out quickly that way.

Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS and return it to the Head of Apprenticeships, who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken. You can hand it in, post it, or email it (see the Complaints Policy for contact details).

Your name	
Learner / apprentice name (if different)	
Your relationship to the learner	
Programme / employer / school	
Address	
Postcode	
Contact telephone number	
Contact email	

Please give details of your complaint below

What have you already done to try to resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to, when, and what was their response?)

What would you like to happen to put things right?

Are you attaching any paperwork? (YES / NO)	
If yes, please give details	
Signature	
Date	

For official use only			
Date acknowledgement sent		Resolved at which stage	
Acknowledgement sent by		Recorded in records	
Complaint referred to		Referred on (date)	