

Appeals, Complaints, and Whistleblowing Policy

1. Policy Statement

As an independent training provider delivering apprenticeships and skills bootcamps, we are committed to maintaining high standards in teaching, assessment, and learner support. This policy outlines how learners, staff, and stakeholders can raise concerns through our **Appeals, Complaints, and Whistleblowing** procedures.

2. Complaints Procedure

We encourage open dialogue and aim to resolve concerns informally wherever possible. However, if a formal complaint is necessary, the following steps apply:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

If you have a complaint, first try to resolve it by speaking directly with the person involved (e.g., trainer, assessor, or relevant staff member).

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If the issue is unresolved, you may submit a formal complaint to the **Quality Improvement Manager** in writing, by phone, or via email at:

Swatpro, First Floor Office, 6 Marsh Green Road North, Marsh Barton. EX2 8NY
dee.vickers@swatpro.org.uk
0793 694 1475

The Quality Improvement Manager will acknowledge the complaint within **three working days**.

A full investigation will take place, with a response provided within **10 working days**.

Stage 3: Escalation to Managing Director

If you are dissatisfied with the response, you may escalate your complaint to the **Managing Director**, who will review the case and respond within **10 working days**.

Stage 4: External Escalation

If you remain dissatisfied after internal escalation, you may contact the **Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)** at:

complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk

Complaints Team, ESFA, Cheylesmore House, Coventry, CV1 2WT

Apprenticeship learners may also escalate complaints to the **Department for Education**, via the customer help portal. Please see [Complain about a further education college or apprenticeship - GOV.UK](#)

3. Appeals Procedure (Assessment Decisions)

If you believe an assessment decision was unfair, you may appeal based on the following:

- The assessor did not consider all evidence.

- The assessment process was biased or unfair.
- The assessor misunderstood your evidence.

Appeal Stages

1. **Stage 1:** Speak to your assessor to resolve informally.
2. **Stage 2:** If unresolved, submit a written appeal to the **Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)** within **10 working days**.
3. **Stage 3:** If dissatisfied, your appeal will be reviewed by an **External Quality Assurer (EQA)** from the Awarding Organisation, whose decision will be final.

Learners will be supported throughout the process.

4. Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing refers to reporting serious concerns about illegal, unethical, or unsafe practices. We encourage staff, learners, and stakeholders to report concerns in good faith.

Protected Disclosures

Under the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**, individuals are legally protected from retaliation when reporting:

- Criminal offences (e.g., fraud, corruption, safeguarding breaches).
- Breaches of health and safety.
- Misuse of public funds.
- Unethical conduct.

How to Raise a Whistleblowing Concern

1. **Internal Reporting:** First, report concerns confidentially to the **Quality Improvement Manager** or **Managing Director**.
2. **External Reporting:** If internal reporting is not appropriate, you may contact:
 - **ESFA Whistleblowing Team:** help@protect-advice.org.uk
 - **Protect (Whistleblowing Charity):** 020 3117 2520

All whistleblowing reports will be treated confidentially.

5. Policy Review & Contact Details

This policy is reviewed annually or in response to legislative changes.

Last Reviewed: 26-March-2025

Next Review Date: 26-March-2026

Policy Owner: Quality Manager, Dee Vickers.

For further guidance, contact Swatpro at:

Swatpro, First Floor Office, 6 Marsh Green Road North, Marsh Barton. EX2 8NY
dee.vickers@swatpro.org.uk
0793 694 1475

Summary of Key Improvements in This Version:

- **Added a Whistleblowing Section** (with legal protections).
- **Clarified Complaint & Appeal Stages** (with response times).
- **Included ESFA & External Contacts** for complaints and whistleblowing.
- **Ensured Compliance with Current UK Regulations** (e.g., ESFA procedures, Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998).