



Complaints Policy

1. Policy purpose

This procedure applies to all 1st for EPA Ltd staff, contracted assessors, apprentices, training providers, employers and stakeholders. This document sets out guidance of how to lodge a complaint to 1st for EPA Ltd and the procedure to follow.

2. Introduction

1st for EPA Ltd is committed to delivering a high standard of customer service. We recognise that apprentices should have access to fair and reliable assessment practices.

It is important to define a complaint:

A complaint is a report of 1st for EPA Ltd or its staff carrying out its activities in a way that the complainant is not satisfied with, but that does not directly affect the outcome of assessment.

For example, a complaint may arise where results have not been issued within the agreed timescale.

A complaint is not referring to the grade awarded for EPA. This should be raised as an appeal.

All complaints will be reviewed as follows:

- All complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
- We will investigate fairly and thoroughly.
- No Apprentice, Employer or Training provider will be disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint.
- All parties involved in the complaint will be given an opportunity to present their case.
- We will seek to resolve the complaint at the earliest possible opportunity.

3. Complaints process

1st for EPA Ltd's procedure for complaints involves:

- Submitting a complaint
- Acknowledgement
- Review
- Response
- Notifying the regulators, if applicable
- Recording the complaint and any outcomes on 1st for EPA Ltd internal systems.

3.1 Informal Stage

Where possible, issues will be addressed at an early stage by discussing them with a member of staff.

- Where an apprentice has a complaint about any part of their on-programme learning, they should discuss the complaint with their training provider. Where the complaint is about end point assessment, this should be directed to 1st for EPA.



- Complaints can be made by phoning 01642 205207 or emailing quality@1stforepa.co.uk. If the complaint is about an Independent Assessor, please email quality@1stforepa.co.uk
- 1st for EPA Ltd will contact the complainant within 5 working days of receipt to acknowledge the complaint.
- Issues must be raised within 28 calendar days of the event taking place and we will aim to resolve the issue, where practicable, within 28 days, with details of any preventative or corrective action to be taken.
- Any delay to this timing will be communicated to you by 1st for EPA.
- 1st for EPA will keep a record of action taken in response to the complaint and investigation.

3.2 Formal Stage

If your concerns are not addressed after the informal stage you can lodge a formal complaint as follows:

- The [complaints form](#) must be completed and submitted, together with evidence that you have previously raised the issue informally. The form can be found here: <https://forms.office.com/r/RBD38ZRCXd>
- The Quality Team will check the eligibility of the complaint to ensure that the Complaints Procedure is applicable.
- You will be provided with written acknowledgement by the Quality Team within 5 working days of submitting the complaint.
- The complaint will be investigated.
- You may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint, where an administrator will be present to take notes.
- You will be notified of the outcome by the Head of Quality & Compliance, detailing the decision and an explanation for it.
- This response will be communicated to you within 28 days of receipt of the complaints form. Any delay to this timing will be communicated to you.

Note: If you are not satisfied with the outcome following the complaint process, then you may further escalate your complaint in writing to the Head of EPA: john@1stforepa.co.uk.

3.3 Appeal Stage

If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint, you have the right to appeal.

Complaint appeals must be submitted within 2 weeks of receiving your response from the Head of Quality & Compliance. To appeal the complaint outcome, please forward the original outcome email to john@1stforepa.co.uk, stating your intention to appeal the outcome.

You may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint appeal, where an administrator will be present to take notes.

Either the Head of EPA or Managing Director of 1st for EPA will review the case. We aim to do this within two weeks of receipt of the complaints appeal.

You will receive confirmation of the outcome in writing.



4. Notifying the regulators

In cases where there could be an adverse effect (e.g. cases with alleged fraud or serious threat to the integrity of the end point assessment service or 1st for EPA Ltd as an organisation), 1st for EPA Ltd is required to escalate the matter immediately to our regulators, Ofqual.

5. Confidentiality

1st for EPA will take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance with GDPR.

6. Further Action

If you have exhausted this Complaints Process and are not satisfied with how 1st for EPA have handled the complaint, you have the option to escalate this to our regulator Ofqual, using the link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>

Document Details	
Document Name	Complaints Policy
Purpose of Document	Details Complaints policy
Document Version Number	V1.0
Document Status	Live
Document Owner	Product
Next Scheduled Review Date	April-25

Version History		
V1.0	5 th April 2024	Separating Complaints from Appeals