

## **CAST COMMERCIAL ACUMEN LIMITED**

### **Complaints, compliments, and comments policy**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Cast Commercial Acumen Limited (“CAST”) is committed to providing excellence in all aspects of our learning provision and services. However, it is recognised that sometimes things can go wrong. The views of our learners, employee, associates and other stakeholders, whether positive or constructive, are an important part of learning, adapting and improving in order to provide a better service.
- 1.2. The CAST Complaints, Comments and Compliments policy is not designed to apportion blame but ensures that we are able to continuously improve our services, levels of customer service and satisfaction. CAST ensures that there are sufficient platforms to facilitate complaints and that the process is easy to follow, fair and sensitive to both members of the CAST team and the complainant.
- 1.3. All formal complaints will be centrally evaluated to inform continuous improvement of CAST’s undertakings.

#### **2. Scope of Policy**

- 2.1. This policy applies to complaints, comments and compliments arising from any activities and services undertaken by CAST. This policy cannot be viewed in isolation and must be read in conjunction with the following documents and policies, which may be found on the CAST website:
  - Anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy.
  - Code of conduct (team).
  - Data protection policy.
  - Diversity, equity, and inclusion policy.
  - Grievance policy.
  - Malpractice and maladministration policy.
  - Public Interest Disclosure / Whistleblowing policy.
  - Quality strategy.
  - Safeguarding policy.
  - Teaching, learning and assessment policy.
  - Anti-bribery policy.

### 3. Impact on the Learner

3.1. The implementation of this policy will ensure that all learners are able to raise concerns related to their learning programmes in a safe, supportive, and fair environment.

### 4. Definitions

4.1. A complaint is defined as a statement that something is perceived as unsatisfactory or unacceptable. A complaint may be informal or formal and may vary in nature and severity.

#### **Complaints may be about:**

- A failure to provide a service or an inadequate quality or standard of service.
- A request for a service or for information which has not been actioned or answered.
- Policies and procedures not being available or followed correctly.
- Incorrect information being provided.
- The quality and availability of facilities and learning resources
- Accessibility of buildings or services
- CAST Team member or learner conduct
- Treatment by, or attitude of, a member of the CAST team or a learner

#### **A complaint is not:**

- A routine first-time request for a service
- A request for information or an explanation of a policy or practice
- A disagreement with an assessment decision
- A claim for compensation from the provider
- Issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or tribunal.
- A request for information under the Data Protection and / or Freedom of Information Acts
- A grievance by a member of the CAST team

## **5. Anonymous Complaints**

5.1. All feedback is valued, and all complaints will be investigated and actioned as appropriate, including those made anonymously, when possible, based on the information provided. Where insufficient information is provided such complaints will be recorded but marked as no further action to be taken.

## **6. Vexatious Complaints**

6.1. A complaint may be considered to be vexatious if it is deemed to have been made with the sole purpose of causing inconvenience, harassment, or expense to the organisation. A vexatious complaint is an unjustified, inappropriate, or improper use of formal procedure. For example, a vexatious complaint may be:

- Where there is evidence which indicates that the complainant has a personal grudge and correspondence is targeted towards a particular member of the CAST team.
- Where a complainant is unreasonably persistent in attempting to reopen an issue which has already concluded.
- Where a complainant is using abusive or aggressive language which is beyond the level of criticism that could be reasonably expected.

6.2. If we believe we have received a vexatious complaint, we reserve the right to review this independently and outside the normal Complaints procedure.

## **7. The Designated Complaints Officer (DCO)**

7.1. The Managing Director will appoint an appropriate DCO, upon receipt of a complaint, who will be responsible for the appropriate handling of any complaint assigned to them to investigate.

7.2. The DCO will have a suitable level of authority to ensure that the correct complaints process is followed and to appoint an Investigating Officer, where necessary.

7.3. The DCO will ensure that complaints are resolved as soon as possible in line with this policy.

7.4. The DCO may allow reasonable extension of timescales in exceptional circumstance to ensure full and fair investigation but must ensure the complainant is advised in writing should this be required.

7.5. The DCO will act with impartiality throughout the complaints process.

## 8. Complaints Procedure

8.1. Complaints are not defined by the process through which they are reported but by the severity of their nature. Complaints can be made verbally in person, by phone, writing by email or letter or through our website. Complaints may be made in English or Welsh and will be treated equally.

Telephone: 07495 818618

Email: [Learn@castcommercialacumen.co.uk](mailto:Learn@castcommercialacumen.co.uk)

### 8.2. Stage One - Informal Complaints

- i. Every effort is made to resolve a complaint as quickly and easily as possible. Depending on the severity of the complaint, it may be possible to address the matter informally through discussion with a member of the CAST Team. Any member of the CAST Team will be happy to discuss a concern and will take action accordingly. Anyone making a complaint should be made to feel comfortable in doing so, without fear that it may have an adverse impact on their learning or relationship with CAST.
- ii. Whilst learners are encouraged to discuss any informal complaints with their trainer, should any learner feel unable to do so they will be supported to speak to an appropriate manager.
- iii. Stage One complaints not requiring investigation will be addressed within 15 working days.

### 8.3. Stage Two - Formal Complaints

- i. If it is felt that a complaint has not been addressed fully at stage one, or if the nature of the complaint is sufficiently serious it may be more appropriate to make a formal complaint in writing, support in doing so will be provided on request.
- ii. A complaint which may be classified as requiring formal investigation could include, but not be limited to:
  - An allegation of corruption against a member of the CAST team
  - An allegation of fraud or other illegal activity
  - A claim of dereliction of duty
  - A potentially significant risk to the CAST operations
  - A claim of personal injury
  - A claim of discrimination in relation to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act (2010)
  - A serious failure in service delivery such as major delays or repeated failures
  - Significant and ongoing press interest

- iii. If a complaint is related to an allegation of significant harm or abuse, or where there is a suspicion that someone may be at risk of significant harm, an immediate referral must be made to Clayton John Ainger on 07495 818618 or by email to [clayton@castcommercialacumen.co.uk](mailto:clayton@castcommercialacumen.co.uk).
- iv. If someone is believed to be in immediate danger of harm, contact the police immediately by calling 999.
- v. Upon receiving a complaint at this stage, the nature of the complaint and the complainant's anticipated outcome will be recorded in writing and the CAST Managing Director will allocate a DCO to investigate.
- vi. Investigation of the complaint will commence within one working day of receipt and the complaint will be acknowledged, in writing, within five working days by the appointed DCO.
- vii. The DCO will appoint an Investigating Officer (IO) who will record the details of the complaint on the CAST Complaints Record Form and undertake investigations as appropriate.

#### **8.4. Stage Three**

- i. The complaint will be investigated, and contact will be made with all relevant parties to gather information and supporting evidence. The IO will advise the complainant, DCO and the CAST Managing Director of progress at each stage.

#### **8.5. Stage Four**

- i. Within fifteen working days the complainant will receive written notification of the outcome of the complaint or details of any ongoing investigations as appropriate. The IO will also ensure the DCO, and the CAST Managing Director are copied into the communication.

#### **8.6. Stage Five**

- i. If it has been necessary for the investigation period to be extended beyond fifteen working days, the complainant will receive written notification of the outcome within 6 weeks. This outcome will be the final decision unless the complainant chooses to appeal.
- ii. In order to learn from all complaints, even if it is something that can be addressed informally, the CAST team member to whom the complaint was reported will complete the CAST Complaints Record to record the nature of the matter and how it has been resolved and document lessons learned. This will be submitted for central evaluation to determine whether changes need to be made to prevent re-occurrence.
- iii. For analytical and evaluation purposes all, formal complaints will be recorded and categorised.

### **8.7. Nature of Complaint**

- CAST team member conduct
- Business development
- Communication
- Equality of Opportunity
- Examinations or tests
- Health and Safety
- Registration Process
- Safeguarding
- Support
- Teaching and Learning
- Other

### **8.8. Source of Complaint**

- Employer
- Key stakeholder
- Learner
- Associate
- Other

## 8.9. Overview of CAST’s Complaints Procedure

	Action and Timetable
<b>Stage One - Informal Complaint</b>	Resolution by a member of the CAST team receiving the complaint withing 15 working days.
<b>Stage Two - Formal Complaint</b>	<p>Complaints record completed and sent to CAST Managing Director with the timescale on receipt of complaint.</p> <p>MD to appoint DCO within 1 working day.</p> <p>DCO to ensure written acknowledgement of complaint to complainant within 5 working days.</p>
<b>Stage Three</b>	Investigation to commence withing 1 working day and appointing an IO.
<b>Stage Four</b>	Outcome of complaint to be sent in writing to Complainant and MD within 15 working days.
<b>Stage Five</b>	Complainant advised in writing of any extension to investigation timescales, including reasons for delays. Maximum time between complaint and outcome: 30 working days.

## 9. Appeals

- 9.1. If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they have the right to appeal. An appeal may be made on the grounds of the resulting decision or the improper application of process.
- 9.2. In the first instance, an appeal should be made, in writing, to the CAST Managing Director (England or Wales, as appropriate). If the CAST Managing Director is implicated in the complaint, the appeal should be made, in writing, to the Chair of the CAST of Directors.
- 9.3. If the complainant is unhappy with the appeal outcome, in the first instance they must contact the Designated Complaints Officer to clarify the rationale behind the decision. If the response remains unsatisfactory, the complainant can contact the relevant external agency below:

**Complaints Team** - Education and Skills Funding Agency  
 Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT

Webform: [Complaint Form](#)

## 10. Responsibilities

### 10.1. The Board of Directors

- Ensuring CAST, its team members, contractors, and associates fully meet associated legal requirements.
- Ensuring this policy meets the requirements of relevant legislation and regulations.
- Ensuring effective implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy is fully supported by all members of the CAST team.
- Creating an open culture which values complaints as an opportunity to improve provision and services.
- Supporting DCOs in undertaking actions as part of this policy.
- Working with DCOs to understand complaint trends and themes and the identification of areas for improvement.
- Monitoring the number and type of complaints and identifying and responding to any themes arising from complaints.

### 10.2. The Designated Complaints Officer

- Monitoring and reporting to the CAST Managing Director in relation to the nature of the complaint and actions taken.
- Raising awareness of the complaints process across CAST.
- Ensuring that appropriate complaints records are maintained including the complaints log.

### 10.3. Managers

- Ensuring that both formal and informal complaints are effectively supported and recorded.
- Ensuring that all members of the CAST team are fully aware of this policy and associated procedures.
- Ensuring that all formal complaints are reported to the organisation's DCO.

### 10.4. CAST Team Members

- Ensuring that straightforward complaints are addressed appropriately and promptly where possible and reported / recorded.
- Escalating complaints to an appropriate manager and / or the DCO.
- Co-operating fully with the DCO and those investigating a complaint.



## 11. Communication

- 11.1. This policy is available on the CAST website and may be provided in hard copy upon request.

## 12. Monitoring and review processes

- 12.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or when statutory guidance changes, to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the organisation and its stakeholders. The review will be conducted by the CAST board of directors.

## 13. Registering compliments and comments

- 13.1. Where learners and all other partners wish to register a compliment or comment, rather than make a complaint, they can do so either by email, through our website or writing to the details listed in **section 14** of this document. Any comments or compliments received verbally will be logged, together with those received by letter, by the Customer Service team.

### 13.2. Compliments

- i. It is important that our learners and partners are happy with the service we provide and that we can learn from the things that go well. Any compliments you may wish to make about what we do or the members of the team who do it will be passed on to those concerned, or you may just wish to compliment CAST on a job well done.

### 13.3. Comments

- i. We welcome constructive comments and suggestions about what we do. Your ideas will be listened to and given careful consideration. A comment could relate to how any part of our service can improve.


## 14. Contact Details

Clayton John Ainger  
Managing Director  
Cast Commercial Acumen Limited  
52, Blu Bracknell, Wokingham Road, Bracknell, RG42 1AD

**Email:** [clayton@castcommercialacumen.co.uk](mailto:clayton@castcommercialacumen.co.uk)  
**Mobile:** 07495 818618

## 15. Policy Review and Implementation

- 15.1. This Policy will be updated as necessary to reflect current best practice, official guidance, and in line with current legislation.
- 15.2. This Policy shall be deemed effective as of 13th April 2023. No part of this Policy shall have retroactive effect and shall thus apply only to matters occurring on or after this date.

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<b>Review date:</b>	April 2025
<b>Owner:</b>	Managing Director
<b>Approved by:</b>	Clayton John Ainger
<b>Signature:</b>	

**This Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy is not contractual and may be varied by Cast Commercial Acumen Limited at any time.**