

A customer complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.

Introduction

1. This procedure is the mechanism for customers to raise concerns or complaints about F-TEC services or partner organisations. The aim is to prevent unnecessary delay whilst ensuring a full and fair assessment of the particular circumstances of an individual complaint. A formal complaints procedure should be seen as a last resort in the search for a solution to a problem. Before using the formal Complaints Procedure, each customer should normally raise the issue with his or her normal contact within F-TEC. Where, in the complainant's opinion, the matter is too sensitive, personal, or confidential to discuss with their normal point of contact the issue(s) can, in the first instance, be presented directly to the Complaints and Compliments Office. The following procedure applies to any of our customers. These can be applicants, apprentices, employers, and parents.

2. Operating Principles:

- 2.1.1 F-TEC acknowledges that there are two sides to every dispute. This procedure intends to provide both parties with the opportunity to provide evidence to substantiate their version of the issue/incident. Full disclosure of any allegations or evidence will be made to both parties.
- 2.1.2 Where issues cannot be resolved informally, The Complaints and Compliments Officer will consider the evidence of the complaint. The Complaints and Compliments Officer is from outside the area of the complaint and will have had no previous involvement in the issue or concern.
- 2.1.3 All information supplied by customers will remain confidential for use within the complaints process. Only staff directly involved with the complaint / investigation / resolution will be given access to the facts of the case. Complaints provide an important source of feedback on the performance of F-TEC services. F-TEC monitors the registration of each complaint and the progress towards reaching a satisfactory resolve.
- 2.1.4 Complaints will be monitored by the F-TEC senior management team to ensure they are dealt with promptly and efficiently.
- 2.1.5 Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
- 2.1.6 Customers will receive a written acknowledgement from F-TEC for any Complaint received either written or verbal.
- 2.1.7 Any party involved in a complaint has the right to be accompanied and represented by a person of his or her choice at every relevant stage of the procedure.
- 2.1.8 F-TEC staff have the right to be accompanied by their immediate line manager or colleague.
- 2.1.9 All staff that are dealing with complaints shall where appropriate, seek guidance and advice from internal/external sources in order to resolve a complaint. The identity of all parties will be protected, wherever possible.



3. Making a Complaint

- 3.1.1 All complaints shall be dealt with within a two-week time limit (10) days of the alleged incident, matter, or concern. To support any allegation that is made the complainant shall provide evidence. Where supportive evidence is not provided, F-TEC reserves the right not to progress with the complaint.
- 3.1.2 Each complaint will be recorded on a Complaints record.
- 3.1.3 All communications relating to a complaint shall be submitted in writing where reasonably practicable.
- 3.1.4 Where a matter is not fully resolved within the two-week period, the Complaint will be reviewed by the Managing Director.

4. Investigating a Complaint

- 4.1.1 The Complaints and Compliments officer, will investigate to consider the facts of a case. Supportive evidence shall be provided along with related documentation to substantiate the allegations. A summary of the complaint and details of any evidence considered will be recorded on the Complaints record.
- 4.1.2 Any persons that are interviewed are entitled to be accompanied by a representative of their choice at all stages of the process.
- 4.1.3 Once all of the evidence has been collated and the facts of the case have been identified, the Complaints and Compliments office will present the necessary recommendations to the Operations Director. The complainant will be notified of the decision and any relevant proposals for addressing the complaint.
- 4.1.4 Customers shall note that the decision whether to initiate disciplinary action against a member of F-TEC staff, is a management decision and does not impact upon the outcome of the complaint. The outcome of any disciplinary action will remain confidential and is a F-TEC management decision.
- 4.1.5 If disciplinary action is taken the complainant may be required to attend a formal disciplinary hearing in the capacity of a witness to substantiate allegations.

5. Appeal

- 5.1.1 If a customer feels that the procedures have not been followed or a decision is unreasonable, they have the right to appeal to the Managing Director within (21) days of the announcement of the decision.
- 5.1.2 The grounds for the appeal should be clearly stated and evidenced in writing and sent, in the first instance, to the Managing Director. Supporting papers should be included with the submission at this stage.
- 5.1.3 The Managing Director will review the papers and re-interview relevant parties where necessary.
- 5.1.4 The Managing Director will respond to the appeal within 21 days of the appeal being received.



5.1.5 The Managing Director's decision will be final.

F-TEC OPERATING PRINCIPLES

- The Complaints and Compliment officer is responsible for dealing with complaints.
- F-TEC shall consider its duty to promote equality and diversity throughout this process.
- F-TEC shall endeavour to deal with all complaints informally in the first instance, aiming for a quick and satisfactory resolution.
- All information that you give will be treated fairly and in the strictest confidence in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Any information relating to a third party will also be treated in confidence and in accordance with the Act. The information provided will only be used for the purpose of dealing with complaints and for monitoring.
- All complaints that are submitted to F-TEC will be dealt with in accordance with this procedure.
- Once your complaint has been received, F-TEC will:
 1. Acknowledge receipt of your complaint by telephone or in writing.
 2. Tell you who will be dealing with your complaint.
 3. Tell you what action will be taken.
 4. Tell you when you can expect a resolution.
 5. Keep you informed of the advances being made with your case.

As a company we are always encouraged when clients, customers, dealers, and Apprentices are pleased with the service that we provide. We encourage any positive feedback or comments as this gives us an insight into the way we work with our clients and how well we deliver on our programmes and projects. It also helps us to consistently maintain our high level of customer service and satisfaction.

Testimonials

Testimonials are the greatest compliment we can receive. We usually receive testimonials verbally, in the form of letters and also in the form of an email.

We will always endeavour to take Apprentices comments seriously and will consider suggestions and improvements. This also gives Apprentices a chance to see that we have listened to their comments and suggestions and that changes have occurred as a result.