

Complaints Policy

Version 5.0

OBJECTIVE

This policy is provided for the use of SIAS' customers, these include, but are not limited to, employers, training providers and apprentices who have taken or are about to take End-Point Assessment.

SIAS will treat all complaints seriously and respond in an appropriate manner. This policy outlines the timescales and processes to be followed.

WHAT'S COVERED BY THIS POLICY

The complaints policy's aim is to ensure that the process of complaint is properly and effectively implemented, and that service users feel confident that their complaint is listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

SIAS define a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of our service. The following are examples of things that are treated as complaints:

1. Claims of unfair treatment
2. Dissatisfaction about how we have dealt with a situation, for example, timeliness, clarity of information, confidentiality
3. Claims that a poor standard of service has been provided (for example, losing documents, resulting in time delays and extra effort for the complainant)
4. Claims that staff have been unhelpful or rude.

HOW SIAS USES ITS COMPLAINTS POLICY

SIAS aim to deal with all complaints promptly, politely and confidentially (where appropriate). We will inform complainants of relevant timescales and respond accordingly. We will treat all complaints seriously and respond in an appropriate manner. To deal with complaints SIAS aims to:

1. provide a fair complaints policy which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
2. publicise the existence of our complaints policy so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
3. ensure that everyone at SIAS knows what to do if a complaint is received
4. ensure that all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner
5. ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
6. gather information, as part of our continuous improvement policy, to help us to improve
7. ensure continued compliance with any complaints process established by Ofqual, in whatever form published, and to make the necessary improvements as a result of any such complaints.

PROCESS FOR RAISING A COMPLAINT

Informal approach

SIAS are a customer focused organisation and we would always encourage anyone thinking about raising a complaint to first of all discuss this with their SIAS contact or one of the key staff members (e.g. the Head of Operations, Head of Quality and Business Improvement or Managing Director), contact details for which can be found within the 'Team' section on the SIAS website www.siasuk.com

Formal approach

If you decide that you wish to complain formally or are not happy with the outcome from an informal approach, you should contact SIAS using the Complaints Form which is available at the end of this policy. When completing a Complaints Form the complainant needs to ensure all sections are completed and as much detail as possible has been included.

Complaints must be raised within 20 working days of the event giving rise to the complaint. If this is not possible, the reason for the delay must be given when making the complaint for SIAS to determine if any investigation can still go ahead.

WHAT IF IT'S NOT ACTUALLY A COMPLAINT?

Sometimes, a complaint may be raised (informally or formally) that is not actually a complaint and could instead be an enquiry, appeal, or allegation of malpractice. If this is the case, SIAS will inform you of this and direct you towards the appropriate policy and course of action.

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

Complaints will be acknowledged by SIAS within 3 working days of the complaint being received. The acknowledgement should state who is dealing with the complaint and when the complainant can expect a response. Complainants should receive a progress update from the person handling the complaint within 10 working days.

Complainants should receive a definitive reply within 15 working days of the complaint being acknowledged of being received. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

If the outcome is not accepted by the complainant, they have the right to appeal via the SIAS Appeals Policy.

SUCCESSFUL COMPLAINT AND/OR ISSUES BOUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION BY A REGULATOR

If any part of a complaint is upheld, as part of our review process, we will give due regard to the outcome and ascertain how best we can improve our service and/or processes. We will review our procedures to assess the impact on our product development, delivery or awarding arrangements and assessment process as appropriate.

In situations where the outcome of a complaint or a notification from the regulators indicates a failure in our processes, we will give due consideration to the outcome and we will take all reasonable steps to:

1. Identify any other individual who may have been affected by that failure
2. Correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure
3. Ensure that the failure does not recur in the future.

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