

**SIGMA UK GROUP LIMITED**

**Complaints Policy**

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 1 of 7	

## Contents

1. POLICY STATEMENT	3
2. REASON FOR THE POLICY	3
3. POLICY OBJECTIVES	3
4. POLICY	3
5. DEFINITIONS	6
6. RELATED POLICIES	7
7. WHO WILL NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY	7
8. RESPONSIBILITY	7

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 2 of 7	

## Complaints Policy

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Sigma UK Group Ltd strives for excellence and aims to continually improve its standards of provision. However it is recognised that sometimes learners, employers and stakeholders will feel that they have cause to complain about the service they have received.
- 1.2 Sigma UK Group Ltd will aim to put things right quickly for our customers when they go wrong by keeping our customers informed of the progress of their complaint and the results of any investigation.

### 2. REASON FOR THE POLICY

- 2.1 Sigma UK Group Ltd is committed to resolving complaints quickly, fairly and effectively as it aims to provide a suitable learning environment that maximises the academic, social and personal opportunities for all its learners.
- 2.2 Any customer concerns about the standards of service provided by Sigma UK Group Ltd will be treated seriously and will be used by the Company as a means to improve its provision.

### 3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Sigma UK Group Ltd seeks to ensure that all complaints are dealt with seriously, fairly and consistently. To learn from each complaint to improve future performance and set performance targets for responding to complaints and monitor our performance against these targets.
- 3.2 Sigma UK Group Ltd will advise our customers of their right to appeal if they remain dissatisfied after their complaint has been through all stages of the internal Complaints Procedure.
- 3.3 Sigma UK Group Ltd will ensure that all learners, employers and stakeholders are aware of the process for making a complaint and that staff are aware of the process to be followed should a complaint arise.
- 3.4 All complaints will be handled sensitively and in line with the Company’s Equality and Diversity policy.

### 4. POLICY

#### 4.1 How should complaints be made?

Complaints may be made verbally, or in writing. Sigma UK Group Ltd commit to handling your complaint as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Verbal complaints can be made in two ways:

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 3 of 7	

- Telephoning the head office
- In person, by scheduling an appointment with a Senior Manager

4.2 You may also submit your complaint in writing, setting out the nature of your complaint in as much detail as possible and sending to [feedback@sigmaukgroup.com](mailto:feedback@sigmaukgroup.com)

#### 4.3 Response Times

- All telephone calls requesting a return call received before noon will be returned that same day; those received in the afternoon will be returned by the end of the next working day. Letters will be acknowledged within 3 working days on receipt and a full reply will be sent within 14 working days of receipt. Further response times are set out in the procedure itself.
- At all stages the complainant will be kept informed as to what is happening with their complaint or appeal. If for whatever reason it is not possible to deal with the complaint within the published timescale then the complainant will be informed of this, and a reason given.

#### 4.4 Stages of the complaints procedure

- **Stage One** - In the first instance, a complaint can be made to any employee of Sigma UK Group Ltd. That employee will either write down the details of the complaint if the complaint is being made verbally and forward it to the Director of Operations, any written complaints will be forwarded in the same manner.
- The complainant will be informed of the timescale within which they will receive a response as indicated above.
- If the matter is not resolved within the timescale or within a mutually agreed time, it will be referred to stage two.
- **Stage Two** - At this stage, a meeting will be convened between the person (and their representative if necessary) and an appointed employee who has not been involved in the complaint. This will take place within 14 days of the matter being referred to stage two.
- Following discussions with all relevant parties, the appointed employee looking into the complaint will prepare a written statement of their findings and any recommendations. A copy of the statement will be given to the complainant.
- If the person complaining is not satisfied with the decision, they then have the option to appeal within 7 working days of receiving the decision. The complaint will then be referred to stage three.
- **Stage Three** - A panel will be convened of independent persons who have the relevant skill and knowledge understand the issues surrounding the complaint being made. The person making the complaint along with their representative (if appropriate) will be invited to attend the panel hearing and present their complaint. The complaint will be heard again in its entirety.
- The panel will then inform the complainant in writing of their decision within 3 working days of the hearing.
- The decision from this panel hearing is final.

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 4 of 7	

- 4.5 **Recording of Complaints** - A record of a complaint and its outcome should be kept, and this should be filed separately from the individual's records.
- 4.6 **Complaints leading to disciplinary action** - This policy is concerned only with resolving complaints and not with the investigation of disciplinary matters.
- 4.7 The purpose of the complaints procedure is not to apportion blame amongst staff. It is to investigate complaints to the satisfaction of complainants (while being fair to any staff involved) and to learn any lessons for improvement in service delivery. Inevitably however, some complaints will throw up information about serious matters, which indicate a need for disciplinary investigation.
- 4.8 A case for considering disciplinary action can be suggested at any point during the complaints procedure, but consideration as to whether disciplinary action is warranted is a separate matter for management, outside the complaints procedure and must be subject to a separate process of investigation.
- 4.9 Relevant papers that have been accumulated during the investigation of the Complaint may be passed to the appropriate person in Sigma UK Group Ltd who will be considering the need for a disciplinary or other form of investigation.
- 4.10 The complaints procedure will not deal with matters, which are currently the subject of disciplinary investigation. If action is initiated under the disciplinary procedure the complainant should be advised accordingly.
- 4.11 When a decision is made to embark upon a disciplinary investigation, the processing of the complaints procedure does not automatically cease. There may well be other aspects of the original complaint, not covered by the disciplinary inquiry that should continue to be investigated.
- 4.12 On the other hand, there may be no outstanding issues from the original complaint to be investigated, in which case the complainant should be advised that no further action would be taken other than that through the disciplinary procedure. The complainant may well ask at this point to be informed of the outcome of the disciplinary inquiry.
- 4.13 A judgment will need to be made; on the one hand, in terms of reassuring the complainant, who will be concerned that the matter complained about has been dealt with seriously and satisfactorily; and on the other, the protection of the confidentiality of the member of staff.
- 4.14 The guiding principle will be that when the disciplinary procedure is invoked, the complainant receives the same consideration and level of information as if the matter had been dealt with through the complaints procedure. The complainant should be able to understand what happened, why it happened and what action has been taken therefore to ensure that it does not happen again. The complainant should be informed in general terms of any disciplinary sanction imposed on any staff member.

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 5 of 7	

4.15 **Monitoring and Reporting** - The Senior Management Team will oversee complaints received by Sigma UK Group Ltd including continued monitoring of complaints which will form part of the quality reviews.

4.16 Sigma UK Group Ltd will be required to make available information regarding the numbers of complaints as part of its annual report.

4.17 Arrangements for dealing with complaints will be monitored by the Director of Operations to identify trends and ensure that appropriate action has been taken. Procedures will be reviewed annually, both to consider any amendments that are necessary to services and procedures as well as to enable effective and satisfactory working arrangements to be maintained.

4.18 Sigma UK Group Ltd through its Monitoring and Reporting of the frequency and handling of complaints will constantly be looking for ways in which Complaints, Policies and Procedures can be improved. When such improvements are implemented, these will in turn be monitored by the Board of Director's and will become part of the quarterly quality report.

4.19 Spot checks will be made to verify that action resulting from a complaint has been implemented. All formal complaints should be in writing. Where the complainant is unable to put the formal complaint in writing, the HR Manager should ensure that a record of the complaint is made and ask the complainant to sign it.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 **Complaint** - is when a learner, employer or stakeholder informs Sigma that they are not happy with something that we have done or not done, and we have not put things right.

5.2 **Customer** - is anyone who contacts Sigma UK Group Ltd to request a service or is in receipt of a service.

## 6. RELATED POLICIES

6.1 Equality and Diversity Policy

6.2 Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

6.3 Assessment and Appeals Policy

6.4 Safeguarding Policy

6.5 Examination Regulations

6.6 Data Protection Policy

6.7 Employee Grievance Procedure

## 7. WHO WILL NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY

7.1 All staff

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 6 of 7	

7.2 All Managers

**8.0 RESPONSIBILITY**

8.1 The Senior Management Team and all those in managerial or supervisory roles are responsible for developing and encouraging good customer care handling practice within their teams.

8.2 Compliance with Customer Complaints Policy is the responsibility of all members of the Company who deal with customers

**Signed**

**Date: 01st August 2018**

**Brendan Hand - Approved**

**Chief Executive Officer**

SigmaUKGroup		Ref. No.	PP043	AOR	HR
Date	01/08/18	Version Number	1.0	Page 7 of 7	