Compliments & Complaints Policy

Our Commitment to Compliments and Complaints

At S&B Automotive Academy, we are committed to delivering a high-quality service where the learner is central to everything we do. We value all forms of feedback and actively encourage compliments, suggestions, and complaints to help us maintain and improve our standards.

We welcome recognition of good service, and any positive feedback will be shared with the relevant team members. We believe in celebrating and promoting best practice across the organisation.

Compliments and complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and transparently through clear and accessible procedures that ensure:

- Customers and learners understand the process and associated timescales
- Staff are clear about their responsibilities in responding to feedback
- Positive feedback is recognised and used to reinforce excellent performance

Our teams are trained to resolve most concerns quickly and informally. We recognise that even low-level issues may highlight broader trends, so all feedback is taken seriously and used as an opportunity to reflect and improve.

If an informal concern cannot be resolved, it may progress to a formal complaint. In such cases, we are committed to:

- Ensuring informal issues are addressed quickly and constructively
- Responding to all matters promptly, professionally, and with confidentiality
- Making the formal complaints process simple and accessible
- Providing full and meaningful responses, including explanations or apologies where appropriate
- Using complaints to support service improvement
- Reviewing our Compliments and Complaints Policy annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant

Everyone has the right to raise concerns in good faith. We are committed to ensuring that individuals feel confident to share feedback without fear of unfair treatment or victimisation.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all customers of S&B Automotive Academy services. Learners and employers are made aware of this policy during induction.

2. Responsibility

Informal Concerns

It is the responsibility of each manager to maintain the quality of S&B Automotive Academy's services in their area and it is therefore expected that they ensure issues are managed effectively and resolved as quickly as possible to avoid them turning into formal complaints.

Formal Complaints

The Quality team's responsibility is to:

• acknowledge the formal complaint in writing
• seek the learner's written permission to disclose personal information where the learner is being represented by a 3rd party, as per General Data Protection Regulations
• assign an investigating officer, usually the relevant manager
• ensure the response is formulated and sent within 10 working days

A complainant's responsibility is to:

• raise concerns promptly and directly with a representative of S&B Automotive Academy
• bring their complaint, in writing, to S&B Automotive Academy's attention normally within 4 weeks of the issue arising
• explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date
• allow S&B Automotive Academy a reasonable time to deal with the matter
• Respond to all communication from S&B Automotive Academy within 4 weeks of the communication being sent, after which time the complaint will be closed.
• recognise that some circumstances may be beyond S&B Automotive Academy's control

3. Compliments and Complaints

3.1 Compliments

A compliment is a positive expression of praise – whether it's about the quality of service received, a specific experience, or the attitude, professionalism, or helpfulness of a member of the S&B team.

We believe it's important to recognise and celebrate good service. Compliments help us highlight what's working well and share best practice across the organisation.

You can share a compliment with us through any of the following channels:

- Telephone
- Email
- Feedback forms
- Letter

- In person

If you would like to send a compliment, please contact us at:

Contactus@sandbaa.com
All compliments will be recorded and shared with the relevant team or individual. This helps us ensure that positive contributions are recognised and acknowledged appropriately.

3.2 Complaints
A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the quality of a service we have provided, a failure to deliver a service previously agreed, or the conduct or attitude of a member of the S&B team.

If a learner, employer, or customer is unhappy with any aspect of the service they have received – or if they have raised a concern and remain dissatisfied with the response – they may wish to submit a formal complaint.

S&B Automotive Academy takes all complaints seriously, regardless of how they are raised. However, anonymous complaints cannot be investigated, as we are unable to fully review the matter or respond appropriately without further information.

Our Complaints Procedure (see Appendix 1) sets out the steps to follow when making a complaint, including how it will be handled and by whom.

If a formal complaint is received, S&B staff will:
- Record the details of the complaint accurately
- Email the information to: contactus@sandbaa.com

The HR Team will then:
- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing
- Request written consent to share personal details if the complaint is being made on behalf of a learner, in line with GDPR requirements
- Assign the matter to a relevant manager to investigate
- Ensure a written response is provided within 10 working days

In some complex cases, additional time may be required to carry out a thorough investigation. In such instances, we will keep the complainant informed of progress and provide updates throughout.

3.2 Confidentiality
All complaints are handled with sensitivity and in strict confidence. Information is only shared with individuals directly involved in managing or investigating the concern, including:
- The person making the complaint
- Any individual(s) named in the complaint
- The line manager responsible for the area of concern
- The Chief Executive Officer

Where necessary, information may also be shared with others involved in the investigation, but only on a strict 'need to know' basis.
All documentation related to the complaint will be securely stored in an electronic complaints file and database. These records will be maintained by the HR Team and retained for a period of five years in line with our data protection and quality assurance procedures.

3.3 Right of appeal
Any complainant who is dissatisfied with the outcomes of the investigation when it has been through Stage 1 has a right to appeal to the Quality Director. These rights are explained in the Complaints Procedure (Appendix 1).

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or when deemed necessary for a change to the policy to provide continued support for all stakeholders.

Appendix 1 - Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Investigation

How to Submit a Complaint
If you are unable to resolve an issue informally, please submit your complaint in writing to: **contactus@sandbaa.com**

Your written complaint should include:

- A clear description of the issue
- Any actions taken so far to try and resolve it
- The outcome or resolution you are seeking

Please submit your complaint within **4 weeks** of the issue arising. In exceptional circumstances, complaints submitted outside this period may be reviewed at the discretion of the HR Team.

What Happens Next

1. **Acknowledgement**
    - The complaint will be acknowledged within **5 working days** of receipt by the **HR Team**.
2. **Investigation**
    - An investigating officer will be assigned (normally the relevant manager).
    - They will:
        - Clarify the nature of the complaint
        - Request further details or documentation if required
        - Contact involved parties (who may be accompanied, if they wish)
        - Keep written records of all steps taken
3. **Response**
    - A written response will be provided within **10 working days** of acknowledgement.
    - If further time is needed due to complexity, you will be notified with an updated timeframe.
4. **Written Outcome**
   The written response will include:
    - A summary of your complaint
    - An outline of the investigation process
    - The outcome and reasons for the decision
    - Any actions being taken or next steps

Stage 2 – Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 1, you may escalate your complaint to Stage 2.
To appeal, please email: **contactus@sandbaa.com**
Clearly state that you are requesting an escalation and include the reason you are not satisfied with the initial outcome.

The appeal process includes:

1. **Acknowledgement** within **5 working days**
2. **Review** by a **member of the Senior Management Team** not previously involved
3. **Response** issued within **10 working days** of acknowledgement

The Stage 2 response will include:

- A review of whether the complaint was managed in line with policy
- An assessment of whether the response was fair and appropriate
- Final conclusions and any additional action being taken

Learner Support

If a learner is required to attend a meeting or discussion during the complaints process, they have the right to be accompanied by:

- Their employer
- A parent or guardian
- A Lecturer or another member of staff
- A fellow learner

Record Keeping

- A written record will be maintained at each stage of the complaint by the assigned investigator or the SMT representative.
- All records will be stored securely by the Quality Team for **five years** in line with data protection regulations.
- Records may be made available, on request, to relevant parties, subject to confidentiality requirements.

Appendix 2: Flowchart

1	**Informal Resolution Attempted**
2	**Stage 1: Submit Formal Complaint** Email contactus@sandbaa.com Include issue, actions taken, and desired outcome
3	**Complaint Acknowledged** Within 5 working days by HR Team
4	**Investigation Conducted** By relevant manager (may include interviews and evidence review)
5	**Written Response Provided** Within 10 working days (or updated if extended)
6	**Stage 2: Appeal Submitted** If dissatisfied, email contactus@sandbaa.com
7	**Appeal Acknowledged** Within 5 working days
7	**Appeal Reviewed** By uninvolved LMT member
9	**Written Appeal Response** Within 10 working days