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APPROVED BY	Gaye Hutchinson
SIGNATURE	
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P0010: Complaints and Compliments Policy

1. Policy Statement

Release Potential Ltd tries hard to provide quality in all its activities. However, there may be times when you feel that you have not received the high quality of education or level of service which you might reasonably expect. In those circumstances, you are entitled to complain, and to make known your concerns, without fear of reprisal or victimisation.

2. Objectives of this Policy

This policy is designed to ensure any activity carried out by Release Potential Ltd, its staff and learners has a level of accountability. You can expect us to deal with a complaint seriously, fairly, within a reasonable timescale and, where appropriate, in confidence.

3. Organisational Commitment

Our policy is visibly led and driven by its senior management team and governing body. If after reading this guide you are still unsure of how to proceed, advice can be sought from Sharon Jackson, Director of Operations at

Designated Officer: Sharon Jackson, Director of Operations

Email: Sharon.jackson@release-potential.co.uk

4. General

A complaint can often be resolved relatively easily and informally at an early stage. You should normally talk in the first instance with the person(s) most directly concerned with your complaint. Course tutors, Managers and other staff are always prepared to discuss any problems or concerns that you have, before they become major complaints. Although the following procedure sets out a series of steps open to you in raising, lodging and pursuing a complaint, a satisfactory resolution can often be found at the first, informal, stage.

Our Learner Complaints procedure includes a series of steps which you should follow in order to find a way forward to a mutually agreed solution. After going through an appropriate number of steps to consider your complaint, which may not be all of those detailed below, we will advise you of the outcome.

Your rights and responsibilities as a learner making a complaint are detailed at the end of this procedure. If a group of learners wish to make the same complaint, we will require one learner to be nominated as a point of contact for all.

You must ensure you follow the correct procedure so that the complaint can be dealt with appropriately.

5. Special Note

The Complaints Procedure does not apply if you wish to appeal against a mark, termination or other academic decision. If you are uncertain whether you wish to proceed with an appeal or a complaint, please seek advice from Sharon Jackson before you begin.

If you believe that you have grounds for appeal against the result of an examination or assessments, a requirement to retake an examination, a decision to terminate your programme of study, or any other academic decision, please refer to our Academic Appeals Policy.

6. Making a complaint – the procedure

6.1 Stage 1 The Informal Approach

If you wish to make a complaint, or are considering doing so, you should first contact the Director of Operations, Sharon Jackson by:

Telephone: 01661 843 819

Email: Sharon.jackson@release-potential.co.uk

6.2 Stage 2 The Formal Approach

If the substance of your complaint cannot be solved informally, or if the matter is considered particularly serious, the Director of Operations will ask you to submit your complaint in writing. The letter must be signed, and be addressed to Sharon Jackson, Director of Operations, who will act as your contact in relation to the complaint. Please do not write directly to any other member of staff. The submission of your letter, and its date of receipt, will represent the commencement of consideration under the Formal Complaints Procedure. Your submission will be referred by the Director of Operations, for consideration, to an appropriate senior member of staff. This member of staff will be asked to investigate your complaint and to advise the Director of Operations accordingly in writing of their response and any action proposed. The Director of Operations will advise you of this outcome by letter, and of any action you should take in relation to it.

You will have the right to reply to this 'Outcome Letter' containing the initial decision about your complaint. If in the light of the response you still feel that the complaint remains unresolved, you should notify the Director of Operations by letter, stating clearly your reasons for wishing to pursue the matter further.

6.3 Stage 3 Pursuing the Formal Approach

If the Director of Operations finds that your grounds for pursuing your complaint are not justified, you will be advised why, and a 'Letter of Completion' will be issued to you. This letter will advise that Release Potential has completed its investigation of your complaint, has provided its final decision and does not intend to take the matter any further.

However, if your reasons for pursuing a complaint are considered to be justified, the Director of Operations will arrange a hearing of the complaint by a panel of three senior staff of Release Potential. The Director of Operations will ensure that all panel members will have had no previous connection with the investigation of your complaint. The panel will interview both you, and any persons complained against, and will determine a decision on the complaint.

The Director of Operations will confirm the decision of the panel, and any recommendations. A 'Letter of Completion' will be issued, indicating that Release Potential Ltd has completed the investigation of your complaint, has provided a final decision and does not intend to take the matter any further.

7. Timescale

- We will make every endeavour to deal with your complaint quickly. Where there is a delay because of the nature of your complaint, or due to staff availability, you will be kept informed of progress as follows:
- You will receive an acknowledgement of any written submission within five working days of its receipt, if you have followed the guidelines
- You will normally receive an initial written response to your written complaint within 28 days of its receipt, providing you have followed the guidelines
- You will normally receive a final response to your complaint within three calendar months from receipt of a formal submission, provided that you have followed the guidelines; but if your complaint is complex, or involves several departments, this timescale may be extended.

If there are any exceptional time constraints relating to responding to your complaint, you will be advised at the earliest opportunity. Please note that these may emerge during consideration of your complaint, and it may not be possible to advise you of them at the beginning of the process.

8. Rights and Responsibilities

8.1 When making a complaint you have the right to:

- Be notified of the reasons for a complaint being upheld or not upheld, or any delay in decision
- Be interviewed by a Complaints Panel, at an appropriate point in their proceedings (only if you get beyond Stage 2)
- Be accompanied by a friend at meetings related to the Complaints procedure

8.2 When making a complaint you have to:

- State clearly the substance of your complaint
- Indicate as clearly as you can the remedy that you seek
- Follow the correct procedures as advised
- Provide written statements on request

- Attend a Complaints Panel, or any other meeting about your complaint, when requested

8.3 When writing to the Director of Operations, address your letter to

Sharon Jackson
Director of Operations
Release Potential Ltd
The Bridges
Lead Road
Stocksfield
Northumberland
NE43 7SF

Please note that any complaints about the Director of Operations should be referred in the first instance to Gaye Hutchinson, CEO at the above address.

9. Contracting organisations

Where you are on an DfE, Mayoral Combined Authority, or other funded programme of learning, you have the right to take your complaint to them in writing, where you have exhausted our procedure. We can advise you on how to do this on request or you can find their procedures online at their website. Note each organisation is likely to have its own complaints policy and you should refer to this before submitting your complaint to ensure it is dealt with as quickly as possible.

10. Compliments

We love to hear about outstanding customer experiences and welcome your feedback. Please use the following email to share:

Email: info@release-potential.co.uk