

The Education People

CUSTOMER GUIDE TO COMPLAINTS

2022

**THE EDUCATION
PEOPLE**

Principles of The Education People's complaints policy

The Education People is committed to putting customers at the heart of everything we do. We aim to provide products and services of the highest standard. However, we realise there could be times when you may want to complain about an aspect of our work.

We have a genuine desire to learn from what our customers tell us and use it to improve the services we provide, the policies we develop and how we behave as an organisation.

All complaints will be investigated fully, fairly and in confidence.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, either written or spoken, about the standard or delivery of a service or the actions or lack of action by the company or its staff which affects an individual service user or group of users.

Who can make a complaint?

This procedure is for any organisation or person that uses or receives a service provided by The Education People. If your complaint is regarding a service that The Education People provides on behalf of Kent County Council (KCC), as listed below, please also refer to this policy.

- Early Years and Childcare
- Education Safeguarding
- Governor Services
- Inclusion Support Service
- Outdoor Learning
- Primary School Improvement
- Professional Development
- Schools Financial Services
- Secondary School Improvement, Special Schools and PRUs/Skills and Employability
- Skills and Employability
- Specialist Employment

If you have a complaint regarding services supplied by KCC please visit <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/complaints-and-compliments> for more information on how to proceed.

Confidentiality

Any complaint processed will be dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act.

Recording Complaints

All formal complaints will be logged. The Customer Services team will be responsible for ensuring a record of all complaints is maintained in a format agreed by the Chief Executive's Office. These will be reviewed by The Education People Executive board on a monthly basis.

We will collaborate and share learning from customer feedback across the organisation and where the complaint concerns a service provided on behalf of KCC, we will share that information and learning with KCC. This will help us to improve our services for our customers.

How to complain

Complaints should be made to The Education People within six months of when a customer feels that something has gone wrong with a product or service they have received.

There are three stages that you can go through to try to resolve the given issue(s). If you require the response in an alternative format or a different language, please let the person dealing with the complaint know and every reasonable effort will be made to provide it. Please find below details of where to complain.

Online: <https://www.theeducationpeople.org/contact-us/>, select Enquiry and choose complaint from the drop down box

Email: customerservices@theeducationpeople.org

Post: The Education People, Customer Services, Room G78, Sessions House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ

Phone: 0345 604 1699

Stage one (informal)

Where feasible, you should initially communicate your dissatisfaction directly to the team from which you have received the service. You can speak to the service representative themselves or their line manager.

For further clarification on how to make contact with the relevant service please email your request to customerservices@theeducationpeople.org or phone 0345 604 1699.

Stage two (formally registering a complaint)

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received at stage one (informal) you should outline the details of your complaint in using one of the options outlined in 'How to complain'. Your complaint will be acknowledged within three working days from the date received. The acknowledgement will contain the following:

- Name, address and telephone number of the person who will investigate the complaint. (Please note – if your complaint refers to a statutory provided service you will be passed to Kent County Council’s complaints process, and contact details will be provided)

You will receive a full response to your complaint within 20 working days from the when complaint was received by The Education People. The response will include the following:

- Details of the investigation
- A decision about whether the complaint was upheld or not
- The reason(s) the decision was made
- The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you
- Any other action that may be taken in light of the complaint

If it is not possible to provide a full answer to your complaint within 20 working days, the letter will outline the reasons why and give you a date by which a full answer is expected. The total time taken to investigate a complaint shall not exceed 65 working days from the date the complaint is received by The Education People.

Stage three (appeal)

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint received in Stage two please outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction in writing, marked for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer, using one of the following methods:

Online: <https://www.theeducationpeople.org/contact-us/>, enquiry box and select complaint from the drop down list.

Email: customerservices@theeducationpeople.org

Phone: 0345 604 1699

Appeals should be made within twenty working days of receiving the response.

The CEO will reply within 20 working days of The Education People receiving your appeal and will explain the following:

- Whether or not the procedure has been followed fairly and correctly
- The reason for the decision
- The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you
- What action may be taken in light of the review

If it is not possible to provide a full answer to your appeal within 20 working days, the letter will outline the reasons why and give you a date by which a full answer is expected. The total time taken to investigate an appeal shall not exceed 65 working days from the date the appeal is received by The Education People.

Local Government Ombudsman

For all **statutory** services received, if you are unhappy with the response provided and have been through stages one to three, then you have the right to take your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. You can either telephone on 0300 061 0614, or complete the online form <https://www.lgo.org.uk/complaint-form>.