

Are you happy with our service?

As the national skills body for Scotland, Skills Development Scotland provides career information, advice, guidance and support for skills and lifelong learning to both individuals and employers. We're focused on delivering excellent customer services, and are committed to putting the needs of our customers at the heart of all we do.

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us.

Feedback

Handling complaints effectively is very important to us. It's also very helpful to us to know when we have delivered a good quality service to our customers.

Hearing about where you've really appreciated what we've done is as important to us as hearing about where things have not gone well – we can learn a lot from both.

Please tell us when and how we have delivered a good quality service at feedback@sds.co.uk



“What is a complaint?”

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

“What can I complain about?”

You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- bias/discrimination
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- our policies and/or procedures
- treatment by or attitude of a member of our staff
- our failure to follow proper procedure.

Your complaint may involve more than one service or be about someone working on our behalf.

“What can't I complain about?”

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service, e.g. a request for an appointment at an SDS Careers Centre
- requests for compensation
- things that are covered by a right of appeal e.g. a review of an Freedom of Information (FOI) response.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.



“Who can I complain?”

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section on ‘Getting help to make your complaint’.

“How do I complain?”

You can complain in person at any SDS Careers Centre, in writing via our online form at www.sds.co.uk, or by email to complaints@sds.co.uk



Customer Services Team
Skills Development Scotland



PO Box 27131
Glasgow
G2 9LJ

You can find the contact details of your local SDS Careers Centre at:

www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/contact-us

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So wherever possible please talk to a member of our staff regarding the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on-the-spot.

When complaining, please tell us:

- your full name and address and contact details, including your preferred method of contact
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you would like us to resolve the matter.

“How long do I have to make a complaint?”

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about
- finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to investigate a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint.

“What happens
when I have
complained?”

Our complaints procedure has two stages:

Stage One – frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage One in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage Two. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

Stage Two – investigation

Stage Two deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage One and those that are more complex and require a more detailed investigation.

When using Stage Two we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- where appropriate, discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

“What if
I’m still
dissatisfied?”

The SPSO cannot normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than 12 months ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court or a tribunal.

You can contact the SPSO:

In person:

SPSO
4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS

By post:

SPSO
Freepost EH641
Edinburgh
EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online: www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Mobile: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>



Getting help to make your complaint

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Tel: 0131 260 5380

Fax: 0131 260 5381

Website: www.siaa.org.uk



We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person at any SDS Careers Centre, in writing via our online form at www.sds.co.uk, or email complaints@sds.co.uk



Quick guide to our complaints procedure

Complaints procedure

You can make your complaint in person, in writing or by email.

We have a two-stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a more detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

Stage One: frontline resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within five working days.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at Stage Two.

Stage Two: investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage One. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are more complex or need a more detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than 20 working days unless we require more time to investigate.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

We will tell you how to do this when we send you details of our final decision.

**Skills
Development
Scotland**

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