

# Customer comments, compliments and complaints

## Introduction

Aspire Sussex Ltd welcomes all types of feedback from its students. Comments, compliments and, when necessary, complaints are valuable to us, helping us to recognise our strengths, whilst also identifying where improvements are required to ensure that we provide an excellent service for all our students. Aspire Sussex records, monitors and analyses feedback from students helping to ensure that it continues to deliver high quality learning opportunities and high standards of customer service. Aspire Sussex aims to resolve all complaints quickly and effectively to improve the services offered and to retain customer confidence.

As many of our courses are subsidised, from time to time we will contact students to ask them to complete surveys on behalf of organisations such as Ofsted and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

## Customer comments, compliments or complaints – how to give us your feedback

We like to know what you think so please tell us if:

- We have done something well, such as provided good customer service or if a tutor has made your learning particularly enjoyable. We will be pleased to pass on your compliments.
- You have any comments or suggestions to help us improve our service or ideas for new courses. We welcome your thoughts and will consider all contributions made.
- You need to make a complaint. Let us know at the earliest opportunity as this will enable us to resolve your issues as quickly as possible. We are keen to ensure that your learning experience is positive and will review all complaints fairly, appropriately and in confidence.

**You can register your comments/compliments by:**

- Speaking to your tutor or any member of staff.
- Using the “Tell us what you think” post boxes in Aspire’s main venues.
- Emailing [enquiries@aspireSussex.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@aspireSussex.org.uk)

## **Raising a Concern/Making a complaint**

### **Informal Stage**

If you are not satisfied with the standard of service or teaching that you have received, or are dissatisfied with something that we have done or have not done, please talk to your tutor or to a member of the Aspire administrative team in the first instance, explaining what the problem is and how you would like it to be resolved. We expect staff to listen to your concerns and to try and resolve them in a reasonable and quick way. However, we understand that it can sometimes be difficult to raise a concern directly with your tutor or another member of staff, particularly if the complaint relates to them. If you are in that position, please email your concern or complaint to [complaints@aspresussex.org.uk](mailto:complaints@aspresussex.org.uk) and your concern or complaint will be investigated and we will seek to resolve your concern or complaint as soon as possible.

### **Formal Stage**

If your concern/complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction at the informal stage, you may submit a formal complaint. Aspire would normally expect you to submit a formal complaint within three months of the matter about which you want to complain happening, unless there is good reason why you were prevented from submitting your complaint earlier.

To submit a formal complaint, you should write to:

**Customer and Learning Experience Manager**

Aspire Sussex,

Adult Education Centre

Marle Place

Leylands Road

Burgess Hill

RH15 8HZ

Alternatively, email [complaints@aspresussex.org.uk](mailto:complaints@aspresussex.org.uk) marking it for the attention of the Customer and Learning Experience Manager.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days and explain how it will be handled. You may be asked to provide further information or invited to a meeting to discuss your complaint. We will make every possible effort to provide you with an outcome within 14 calendar days, but this is not always possible. If the consideration of your complaint takes longer, we will explain why and let you know when we expect to send the outcome to you. As soon as the investigation is finished, we will send you a written outcome, usually by email. The written outcome will explain:

- How your complaint was investigated
- Whether your complaint has been upheld or dismissed, with reasons for the decision
- If your complaint is upheld, whether we are offering any practical or financial remedy

The written outcome will also tell you that, in certain circumstances, you have the right to appeal the outcome of your complaint.

## **Appeal**

If you are not satisfied with the written outcome following your formal complaint, you may be able to appeal against the outcome.

Appeals can be made where:

- There is new evidence which, for an acceptable reason, was not submitted when the complaint was investigated
- There is evidence that was submitted which requires further consideration
- The remedy offered is not considered acceptable/reasonable

Normally the appeal stage will not consider the issues raised afresh or involve further investigation. If you wish to appeal the outcome of a formal complaint you should write to the Chief Executive Officer, within 14 days of the formal complaint outcome. We will not usually consider appeals submitted after this time.

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Adult Education Centre  
Chichester High School Campus  
Kingsham Road  
Chichester  
PO19 8AL

Alternatively, email [complaints@aspireussex.org.uk](mailto:complaints@aspireussex.org.uk) marking it for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or another member of Aspire's Executive Team who was not involved in the original consideration of your complaint, will review the issues that you raise.

Your appeal will be acknowledged and we will make every possible effort to provide you with an outcome within 14 calendar days, but this is not always possible. If the consideration of your appeal takes longer, we will explain why and let you know when we expect to send the outcome to you. As soon as the consideration of the appeal is finished, we will send you a written outcome, usually by email. The written outcome will explain:

- Whether your appeal has been upheld or dismissed, with reasons for the decision
- If your appeal is upheld, whether we are offering any practical or financial remedy

This will normally be the final stage of the process, however, in certain circumstances where the complaint relates to a course funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and delivered by Aspire under their contract with West Sussex County Council (WSCC), you may be able to lodge a further appeal to WSCC. You will be advised if this applies to you.