

Complaints Procedure

We hope you are happy with the service we provide. However, there may be times when you wish to raise a concern or make a complaint.

All feedback is important to us, and we are committed to dealing with complaints fairly, consistently, and as quickly as possible.

Please note that this complaints procedure is not intended for use when you are concerned about the safety of a child or adult at risk.

Any safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately in line with our [Safeguarding Policy](#).

Our Commitment to You:

- We will use any feedback and complaints to help improve our services
- Complaints will be handled honestly, politely and in confidence
- We aim to resolve concerns quickly and informally wherever possible
- We will keep you informed about what we are doing to put things right
- We aim to provide a full response within 10 working days

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is **an expression of dissatisfaction that cannot be resolved immediately.**

You may wish to make a complaint if you are unhappy with:

- The standard of service you received
- Our response to a request
- Our actions or decisions
- The behaviour of a member of staff
- How you have been treated (including bullying, harassment or unfair treatment)
- Concerns about fraud or financial irregularity

How to Make a Complaint

Step 1 – Contact Us

You can raise a complaint by emailing: feedback@sslcic.co.uk

This email address is also used for general feedback and compliments, so please include: **Subject line: COMPLAINT**

This helps us ensure your complaint is identified and responded to promptly.

Informal Concerns

You also raise a concern:

- In person
- With a member of staff
- Via other communication methods

We will try to resolve concerns quickly and informally at this stage where possible. If your concern is not resolved immediately, it will be logged and treated as a **stage 1 complaint**. You may be asked to email your complaint to the address above so it can be handled formally.

Our Complaints Process

We follow a three-stage process to resolve complaints:

Stage 1 - Initial Response (10 working days)

- Your complaint will be handled by the appropriate member of staff
- We will aim to resolve the issue quickly or provide a clear explanation
- We aim to respond within 10 working days

Stage 2 - Management Review (10 working days)

If you are not satisfied with the outcome:

- Your complaint will be reviewed by a member of the Management Team
- A future investigation will be carried out
- You will receive a response within 10 working days, or we will let you know if more time is needed

Stage 3 – CEO Review (10 working days)

If you remain dissatisfied:

- The Chief Executive Officer will review your complaint and how it has been

- handled
- A final response will be provided within 10 working days, or we will inform you if more time is required

External Escalation

If your complaint remains unresolved after completing all three stages, you may refer to the Department for Education (DfE). This applies to complaints relating to DfE-funded provision or Advanced Learner Loan-funded courses.

Useful links (EXTERNAL Websites)

- [Complaints procedure - Education and Skills Funding Agency - GOV.UK](#)
- [Guidance for Complaints about post-16 education and training provision funded by DfE - GOV.UK](#)

Financial Impropriety

Any complaints relating to:

- Fraud
- Financial irregularity
- Breaching of funding rules

Will be referred to the CEO and managed in line with Department for Education requirements. In some cases, these may be investigated by the relevant government authority.

Data Protection Complaints

Learners who believe that SS&L has not processed their personal data in accordance with applicable data protection legislation (including the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025) have the right to submit a data protection complaint.

Complaints may relate to:

- The collection of personal information
- The use, storage or sharing of personal information
- The accuracy or retention of personal information
- The security of personal information
- The exercise of an individual's data protection rights

Data protection complaints should be submitted in writing using the process set out in this policy.

- All complaints will be acknowledged within 30 calendar days of receipt.

- Complaints will be forwarded to our Data Protection Officer (DPO) Emma Street
- The DPO will investigate the complaint without undue delay and take appropriate steps to address any identified issues
- If you have complained verbally, as part of their investigation, the DPO may want to speak with you to ensure that all information has been properly recorded.
- The DPO will then provide the learner with a written outcome

External Escalation – Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO)

If the learner remains dissatisfied following SS&L’s response, they may raise the matter with the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Complaints can be made to the ICO via [a form on their website](#) or by calling them on 0303 123 1113.

Confidentiality

- All complaints will be handled in confidence
- Information will only be shared with staff who need to investigate and resolve the issue

Cross-service complaints

Where a complaint applies to more than one team within SS&L, the relevant teams involved will agree whether to respond separately or to appoint a single lead responder.

Safeguarding

Please note that this complaints procedure is not intended for use when you are concerned about the safety of a child or adult at risk.

Any safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately in line with our [Safeguarding Policy](#).

However:

- If a safeguarding concern is identified as part of a complaint, it will be prioritised and referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Safeguarding concerns will be managed in line with SS&L’s Safeguarding Policy, which may override the complaints process timescales.
- All staff involved in handling complaints have received appropriate safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities to identify and report concerns.

Where appropriate, the complaint will continue to be addressed alongside safeguarding actions.

Supporting Feedback

We also welcome positive feedback and suggestions via:

feedback@sslcic.co.uk

Please use the subject line:

Complaint – for complaints

Feedback – for general comments or compliments