



COMPLIMENTS, COMPLAINTS & SUGGESTIONS POLICY

Athena Policies

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Review date
2	15/03/2023	Athena Board	13/03/2024

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Aims

Manchester Athena (Athena) is committed to excellence in the delivery of our services. We welcome feedback from participants, apprentices, employers or other stakeholders, whether that feedback is positive or critical.

We treat any expression of dissatisfaction which requires a response regarding any part of our service or team members as a complaint.

We will always take complaints seriously whilst seeking to provide redress and learn from the experience whenever appropriate.

Feedback is important to us because it helps us to improve, by establishing the full circumstances of a complaint we can identify what we could do to prevent the problem occurring again. Equally compliments can help us focus on what we do well and how we can share aspects of good practice.

Athena endeavours to provide a consistently high-quality service at all times. If, however, any participant, apprentice, employer (including for learners on a work placement) or other stakeholder is unhappy with the service or provision and wishes to make a complaint on the grounds of the quality of provision of that service, or conduct of one of our staff, we will aim to resolve the complaint as quickly and equitably as possible.

Where possible we will strive to resolve the complaint informally. Where an informal resolution is not possible, we will follow the procedure set out below. In all circumstances we will seek to act sensitively and maintain confidentiality whenever possible.

Objectives

- to establish a clear framework for addressing all complaints and compliments
- to ensure all complaints are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner
- to provide a channel for complaints available to a wide range of service users
- to ensure impartial consideration
- to resolve issues raised to the satisfaction of both the Complainant and the company
- to learn lessons from all complaints and make recommendations which will support our policy of continuous improvement.

Scope of the Policy

The Policy covers a wide range of issues relating to participants, apprentices, employers or other stakeholder satisfaction (or not) with Athena services and performance. I

It does not cover issues relating to staff grievance which are covered by our procedures for dealing staff grievance respectively.

Roles and Responsibilities

Managerial responsibility sits with the Business Growth Manager.

To ensure a consistent approach to complaints and compliments and subsequent action across Athena activities all formal complaints and compliments are directed through the Business Growth Manager.

This accountability ensures:

- the maintenance of accurate records to enable clear analysis of matters affecting people within Pathway Group and the central collation of data enables Pathway Group to identify trends, raises awareness increases awareness and helps us to improve our services.
- the most impartial perspective possible, allowing a fair and objective consideration of all issues.
- a mechanism for ensuring that the most appropriate department initially investigates the complaint
- continuous improvement in business processes.

Process

Anyone may make a complaint or compliment to an Athena team member at any time about any aspect of Manchester Athena activities.

Compliments and complaints are logged with the Business Growth Manager in the central database.

Participants, apprentices, employers or other stakeholders can make complaints/compliments in various ways including: writing, email, phone, in person, via the Comments and Feedback suggestion boxes situated at our delivery locations or by the Customer Feedback section of our Web pages.

The contact details for making either a complaint or compliment are:

www.manchesterathena.co.uk/contactus

Postal Address:

Manchester Athena
C/o Stockport Homes Group
Cornerstone
2 Edward Street
Stockport
SK1 3NQ

Email address: hello@manchesterathena.co.uk

Athena aims to make a complaint or expressing dissatisfaction as easy as possible.

In the first instance team members may try to resolve the complaint informally. If a swift and adequate response cannot be offered the formal process will be followed.

In all cases complaint information must be recorded in section 1 of the Feedback Form by the staff member receiving the complaint.

In all cases staff must inform the Business Growth Manager of the complaint and complete a copy of the Complaints Form so that it is duly recorded in the central Athena Central Register and a copy placed in the Complaints Folder.

Time scales

- We will acknowledge all written complaints within 2 working days of receipt.
 - It is Athena commitment to seek to resolve all complaints within 14 working days from the date the first complaint was made.
 - However, if we need more information or responses from a Complainant, we will allow up to 14 working days for the Complainant to respond and then the completion time for the complaint will be within 30 working days.
 - Allowing for complex cases with several such interactions, may mean investigations for Pathway group may take up to 60 working days to fully complete.
 - An Appeal against the outcome of the complaint must be made by the Complainant within 14 days of the outcome of the complaint. Complaints Procedure.
- i. When a complaint is received, the person who receives the complaint must complete in full the Athena Complaints Form. (Please note; it is the responsibility of the person completing the form to ensure it is fully completed).
 - ii. Inform the Business Growth Manger and give them a copy of the completed form to be filed and registered.
 - iii. The Business Growth Manager will establish which department is the most appropriate to deal with and resolve the complaint. This will include consideration of which department would be most suited to dealing with the potential for complaints that may relate to any external bodies such as those, for example, for funded provision.
 - iv. The Complainant is to be provided with an acknowledged of the complaint within 2 working days (48 hours) of receipt and evidence of the contact is to be sent to the Chair of the Performance and Oversight Committee within 5 days working days. If no information received by Day 6, this will be escalated to the Chair of the board.
 - v. The Business Growth Manager will investigate the situation and whenever necessary obtain statements from all those involved.
 - vi. In all cases the Business Growth Manager should try to establish what took place and where the responsibility lies.
 - vii. Copies of any letters sent to the Complainant must be attached to the complaint documentation for any future reference.

- viii. A written response should be issued detailing the outcome of the investigation and any subsequent actions to be taken Athena, where applicable.
- ix. Once the complaint has been resolved and if the Complainant is satisfied –the case is closed.
- x. On closure of a complaint the central register is to be updated by the Business Growth Manager.
- xi. If the matter is not resolved by the investigation or if the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, the Business Growth Manager will inform the Complainant that they may appeal the decision.
- xii. Any complaints that have had no Manager input over 7 working days will be escalated by the Business Growth Manager to the Performance and Oversight Committee.
- xiii. Any complaints that may have a safeguarding or well-being concern, must include handling from a Safeguarding Officer, and reported to necessary authorities, if applicable. Appeals Procedures
- xiv. If the matter is not resolved by the investigation or if the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they wish to appeal and have notified the Business Growth Manager of this within 14 working days of Athena’s response, who will notify the Performance and Oversight Committee, who will appoint a Review Manager.
- xv. The Review Manager will be a member of the Athena membership and who has had no involvement in the complaint at any stage.
- xvi. The Complainant’s request for a review will be acknowledged within 48 hours from the date of appeal.
- xvii. The appointed Review Manager will consider all aspects of the complaint and how it has been handled by Athena.
- xviii. The findings of the review will be communicated to the Complainant within 14 working days.
- xix. If the review is complex and likely to exceed this timescale the Complainant must be kept informed of progress at least every 10 working days.
- xx. Copies of any correspondence with the Complainant must be included with the complaint documentation for any future reference.
- xxi. A written response should be issued detailing the outcome of the investigation and any subsequent actions to be taken by Athena where applicable.
- xxii. Once the complaint has been resolved and the Complainant is satisfied, the complaint is to be closed and there is no further action.
- xxiii. On closure of a complaint the central complaints register is to be updated by the Business Growth Manager.

If the complaint is not substantiated and the Complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal to The Chair of the board within 14 working days of Athena’s response to the Appeal.

This is the final stage of Pathway Groups internal complaints procedure.

Should the complaint involve matters that relate to funded provision or accredited qualifications, the Complainant will be advised of any relevant external body and their contact details.

Monitoring and Recording Complaints and Compliments It is an essential part of Athena's Management System that all compliments and complaints are recorded and monitored.

Even if they are resolved easily and quickly there may be opportunity to learn from the situation and improve working practice, processes, or procedures as a result. The subject of complaints once resolved will be monitored by the Senior Management Team monthly for the purposes of learning and improving working practices, processes, and systems.

The compliments will be monitored by the Senior Management Team monthly for the purposes of learning and improving working practices, processes, and systems. Copies of all compliments should be forwarded to the Business Growth Manager who will maintain a central register of compliments.