

Complaints procedure

You are entitled to complain about any aspect of the course delivery and administration. Throughout your studies you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire where you will get the opportunity to comment on both what you are happy with and areas where you feel dissatisfied. The centre is committed to listening to the experience of their students and where they can act positively on feedback.

If, however, you feel dissatisfied with an area of the course it is really important that this is voiced so that you can stay focused on your studies.

The first point of contact is with your tutor. Try and be as clear as you can about what it is that you are unhappy with. Think about what you want the outcome of the conversation to be – you might need something to change or simply being listened to is enough. Even though this pre-complaint stage is informal your tutor or centre manager may need to gain advice in order to ensure correct action is or has been taken. This advice could be from the BACP, CPCAB, legal advice, supervisor or a trusted colleague. You will remain anonymous, however, issues that you've raised may be discussed.

If you go away still dissatisfied then the complaints procedure can be followed:

Stage One -Put your complaint in writing, as a pdf document, and email to the Centre Manager at kate_wil2000@yahoo.com. Kate will meet with your tutor (if other than herself) to address the issue and will contact you to discuss moving forward. The Centre Manager will respond in writing within three weeks of the date the written complaint is received. Where advice needs to be sought (this may be ethical or legal advice) or during holiday periods the written response may take up to a month; you will be notified if the response will take longer.

Stage Two - If you are still dissatisfied then a formal letter needs to go to the Internal Verifier, within 10 working days of the centre manager's reply at stage one at, pauline.wolfenden@btinternet.com who will respond to you within three weeks of receipt. The Internal Verifier will discuss the issues raised with the tutor and centre manager and assess it against the systems in place. Again, during holiday periods or if advice is required responding may take up to a month or longer in some cases. The Centre Manager will do their best to update you on response times.

- It may be possible that there needs to be a three-way conversation between yourself, the tutor and the centre manager or Internal Verifier to help bring about a positive resolution.

Stage Three - If no resolution has yet to be found BCTS will bring in an external Tutor – Kelly Porch, Reg. MBACP, who will assess the complaint and responses and will make one of two decision:-

- carry out an investigation.
- Take no further action.

For stage three to be active the complainant is required to put this in writing within 10 working days of the date on the letter from the Internal Verifier. The decision of the external tutor is

final and may take up to one month. However, in the holiday period or where advice needs to be sought a response may take longer. Should no further action be required, Kelly, will outline why this is so.

Please note the following taken from CPCAB's complaints policy:

- a) Candidates are not contracted directly to CPCAB and should therefore address all complaints about internal assessment or any aspect of their teaching or learning experience to the centre using the centre's own internal complaints procedure. It is the centre's responsibility to make this procedure available to candidates and tutors and to inform the complainant of the result of the complaint. Candidates and tutors who contact CPCAB directly on these issues will normally be directed back to their centre. However, if an individual has exhausted the centre's own complaints procedure without reaching a satisfactory resolution and/or if the complaint relates to the integrity of CPCAB qualifications (see b and c, below), he or she may contact CPCAB using the procedure outlined overleaf. Complainants should be aware that CPCAB does not act as the governing body of the centre: and cannot take action if the complaint relates specifically to the candidate's relationship with the centre.
- b) CPCAB is obliged to take action to maintain the integrity of the unit or qualification where there is evidence of alleged or suspected malpractice¹ or maladministration² or where there is evidence that certificates may be invalid. The centre must immediately notify CPCAB of all cases of suspected internal malpractice or maladministration where linked in any way to courses leading to CPCAB units or qualifications. Any centre that fails to report, investigate or co-operate in the investigation of malpractice or maladministration may be prohibited from registering further candidates or have their Approved Centre status withdrawn.
- c) CPCAB will also investigate and take action where required if there is evidence that the awarding organisation or its qualifications have been brought into disrepute.
- d) CPCAB does not refund candidate registration or centre fees in relation to the outcome of this procedure.

Further information can be found at www.cpcab.co.uk

¹ Malpractice is defined as any act by candidates or staff that threatens the integrity and/or validity of assessment and certification leading to a recognised qualification/unit.

² Maladministration is defined as a lack of care, judgment or competence by any person(s) involved in the development, delivery, assessment or award of CPCAB units/qualifications. On-going maladministration could constitute malpractice.