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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
an Longfoirt agus na hIarmhí
Longford and Westmeath
Education and Training Board

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Longford and Westmeath Education & Training Board

Customer Service Complaints & Appeals Procedures

Introduction

Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB) is committed to providing the highest levels of service to all our customers in accordance with the principles of Quality Customer Service. The delivery of effective, quality customer service is a priority for LWETB.

The LWETB Customer Charter and Action Plan have been developed in line with the government policy on Customer Action Plans and Charters: Guidelines for Preparation in support of the Quality Customer Service (QCS) Initiative.

However, if you are dissatisfied with the standard or quality of service delivered within LWETB premises you are advised to refer to this Complaints and Appeals Procedures document. In certain circumstances and where appropriate, you may be referred to an alternative policy/procedure.

What is covered by our Customer Service Complaints Procedure?

The Complaints Procedure covers complaints about the quality of Customer Service itself or the manner in which the service was delivered.

What is not covered by our Customer Service Complaints Procedure?

The Customer Service Complaints Procedure does not cover matters of policy and related procedures such as:

- Complaint Procedure for Parents/Guardians of Students or Adult Learners
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Further Education and Training
- Grievance Policy
- Harassment and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy
- Matters which are the subject of litigation
- Matters which have been referred to the Office of the Ombudsman
- Refusal to enrol or expulsion of students under Section 29 of the 1998 Education Act
- Complaints arising from matters covered under GDPR (Data Protection Act 2018)
- Complaints arising from matters covered under Freedom of Information Act 2014

How to Make a Customer Service Complaint

Informal procedure

This procedure emphasises the resolution of customer service complaints at the earliest opportunity through informal means without recourse to the more formal stages of the procedure. Where a customer service complaint arises, the parties involved are encouraged to strive to understand the other party's position and should seek, as far as possible, a mutually acceptable solution through informal means. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your discussion you may request to speak to the Manager/Principal/Co Ordinator of the relevant department/ premises, who will try to resolve your complaint or direct you to the most appropriate procedure to resolve your complaint.

Formal Procedure

Should you feel that your complaint has not been resolved following the above, you may submit a formal complaint on the official complaint form (appendix 1), to the Customer Service Section, Corporate Services, Longford and Westmeath ETB, Block A, Marlinstown Business Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 RW96 or e-mail to: Customercharter@lwetb.ie

Customer Service complaints must generally be submitted no later than 6 months from the date of the incidence. You will be issued with an acknowledgement of your complaint within 5 working days, with a response no later than 28 working days from the date of submission.

Information You will Need to Provide

- Your name and address, e-mail and daytime telephone number
- Details of your complaint
- The name of the Department/ Premises and the official(s) who dealt with you
- Copies of all relevant documentation/correspondence that you may have relating to the matter
- If you are making a customer service complaint on behalf of someone else, you need to provide LWETB with their details. (Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to satisfy ourselves that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned)

Dealing with your Complaint

LWETB will treat your complaint confidentially, fairly and efficiently. We will provide a reply having fully considered the nature and extent of the complaint. We believe that the most effective way of dealing with complaints is through clear communication and understanding of both parties and it is in the interest of both parties that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

All complaints will be dealt with as follows:

- Written acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt
- Response, within 28 working days. If a comprehensive reply cannot be issued within this timeframe, then an interim reply will be issued, informing you that the matter is continuing to receive attention. A comprehensive reply will then be issued within a further 28 working days
- We will ensure replies carry details of the contact person and contact telephone number
- We will ensure that replies will be in clear, simple language
- Where a review/investigation is to be carried out into a matter, this will be conducted at an appropriate grade, appointed by the relevant Section Head. The customer will be made aware of the process, which may include interviews with relevant parties, and of the outcome of the review/investigation, including any recommendations to be implemented. The section Head will determine the level of review/investigation to be carried out, depending on the information provided by the customer.

Appeals procedure

Should you be dissatisfied with the response you have received to your complaint, you may appeal, in writing, to the Chief Executive, who then may nominate a Director as appropriate or to nominate the Director Organisational Support & Development, Longford and Westmeath ETB, Block A, Marlinstown Business Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 RW96. Where an internal review of the complaint will be undertaken and a final decision will be made.

For Noting

Where your complaint is dealt with under an alternative policy/procedure, you will not have recourse to this procedure. A full list is available on the LWETB website at www.lwetb.ie

Review and Implementation

This policy will be reviewed triennially by the Senior Leadership Team in line with best practice, or in light of changes in legislation and guidance from sources such as Internal Audit, C&AG, the Department of Education and the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform. The date of implementation is the date of approval by Chief Executive of Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board.

Appendix 1

LWETB Customer Service Complaint Form

Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB) is committed to providing the highest levels of service to all our customers in accordance with the principles of Quality Customer Service. This includes our internal and external customers. LWETB believes that the most effective way of dealing with complaints is through clear communication and understanding of both parties and it is in the interest of both parties that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

Please refer to the LWETB Complaints procedure before completing this form.

Section A: Your Details

Surname: _____ Forename: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Daytime Phone Number: _____ Mobile Number: _____

Please state by which of the above methods you would like us to contact you:

Section B: Please complete this section if you are completing this form on behalf of someone else. (Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to satisfy ourselves that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned)

Making a complaint on behalf of someone else: Their details:

Their name in full: _____

Their address: _____

Your relationship to them: _____

Why are you making a complaint on their behalf:

Section C: About your complaint (Please continue your answers on a separate sheet (s) if necessary).

Location relating to the complaint: _____

Department (if relevant): _____

Date of complaint arising: _____

Details of the complaint?

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Reference Number:		Date Response issued:	
Date Received:		Date Appeal received:	
Date Acknowledged:		Appeal Decision issued:	
Dealt with by:		Date resolved & Closed:	

When you have completed this form, please send it to: Customercharter@lwetb.ie or
 Customer Service Section, Corporate Services, Longford and Westmeath ETB,
 Block A, Marlinstown Business Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 RW96