Enquiries and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy

Sport Structures is committed to providing excellent customer service, mirrored with our company value of 'excellence'. However, we recognise there may be occasions where customers feel Sport Structures falls short of expected standards. This policy sets out how customers can make a complaint and how that complaint will be managed

Scope

This policy applies to complaints that relate to any aspect of the customer experience, so long as they are submitted within the deadline for complaints

Roles and responsibilities

- The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for this policy
- Staff and associates are responsible for following this policy when they receive a complaint from a customer
- Staff and associates who deal with any complaint should respect data protection policy and confidentiality
- Managers are responsible for reviewing customer complaints in line with this policy
- If the receiver of the complaint has any conflicts, they must identify this immediately.
- All complaints and the outcomes of these complaints will be recorded in the company complaints log to be used as learning and improvement

How can complaints be submitted?

Customers can submit complaints:

- in person to any staff member or associate
- by phone - our phone number is 0121 455 8270
- via an enquiry form on our website
- by email - the address to use is info@sportstructures.com
- by post - our postal address is Suite 8, The Cloisters, 12, George Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 1NP
- Through any of our social media platforms

Stage 1: Informal complaints

A customer should submit their complaint using one of the methods identified above. The customer should provide:

a. A summary of their complaint – what happened and when?

b. If relevant, supporting evidence

c. A preferred contact method

If the complaint does not have this information following a further request to the complainant then Sport Structures reserves the right to make a decision based on the information provided. The complaint will be acknowledged by Sport Structures on receipt and will be told at that point, when they can expect to receive a response.

The complaint will be investigated by a Manager within 5 working days.

The customer will then be told the outcome of the investigation via their preferred contact method. Possible outcomes are:

- The complaint is fully or partially upheld and some form of resolution is provided to the customer. We may also commit to changing policies, procedures or staff training in response to a complaint.
- The complaint is not upheld. If so, the customer will be told why.

If at the end of this stage, the complainant is still unsatisfied with the decision, they should follow stage 2 of the procedure.

Stage 2: Formal complaints

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complaint will be raised to a Senior Manager. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within **3 working days** of receipt.

The member of staff handling the complaint will investigate the matter within **5 working days**. This may include speaking with the complainant to clarify their statement if it is unclear.

Where the complaint is found to be valid, the 'Investigator' will recommend any further action thought necessary related to the complaint.

The 'Investigator' will produce a written outcome on the complaint within **the allocated period**. A copy of the outcome will be sent to the complainant, to the person about whom the complaint was made (where applicable) and to the Chief Executive and Operating Officer and the Finance and HR Officer.

The decision is final. However the complainant has an opportunity to use the appeals process if they so wish following the complaints procedure being exhausted.

In addition where individuals (learners) have accessed training through funded or non-funded provisions. For non-funded provision, learners have the right to take their complaint to the awarding organisation (if applicable) within **20 working days** of the decision being communicated to them by the recognised centre and the contact details can be provided on request.

For government funded provision such as apprenticeships, learners have a right to take the matter to the appropriate regulator and they can contact the Department for Education (DfE) via this online form here.

The DfE will appoint an officer with appropriate knowledge and expertise to investigate the complaint. If they agree to investigate, they will e-mail a summary of the complaint to the complainant and may ask for agreement to the summary. Where this happens, the complainant will have 5 days to respond. Within 10 working days of agreeing with the summary, they will send the information that you have provided along with the summary of the complaint to Sport Structures. They will ask to share the following:

- Details and copies of the relevant procedure.
- Confirmation that the procedure has been exhausted.
- A response to the summary of the complaint, together with relevant documents.
- Confirmation that they can share the information provided with the complainant.

The DfE will aim to finalise the findings within 25 days of the complaint summary being agreed and they will notify the complainant of the outcome and findings, and that will conclude the investigation. If the complainant is not satisfied with the way the DfE have handled your complaint, the complainant can complete a complaint form to issue a formal complaint about the DfE.

Where the complaint was found to be of a safeguarding nature, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a record in the safeguarding folder. The Finance and HR Officer will be notified of this so that the complaint log may be updated with the outcome.

Vexatious and Persistent Correspondence

We offer a transparent complaints procedure and will keep complainants informed throughout any investigation. However, complainants must allow sufficient time to carry out a thorough investigation.

We will not engage in abusive or persistent correspondence from complainants once a decision has been reached.

Repeated contact with no new evidence and /or abusive correspondence from a complainant will be considered vexatious correspondence.

Where correspondence and /or behaviour are deemed to be vexatious, we will refer the complainant to this policy, explaining that if the communication continues in this manner all correspondence will cease.

Individuals who remain dissatisfied with an outcome of a complaint may take their complaint to our Regulators (Ofqual.

Timescales and recording

The timescales within this policy are provided as a guide only and it may not always be possible to work within them due to several variable factors such as the complexity,

availability of individuals, etc. Where timescales cannot be met, the complainant will be notified of the reasons for the delay and an estimated timescale for response.

All complaints will be logged and reviewed by the Human Resources Manager to support a culture of continuous improvement