

Compliments, Suggestions, Appeals and Complaints Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1. This Policy sets out how Abbeydale Vetlink Veterinary Training (AVVT) receives, reviews and acts upon feedback.

2. Statement

2.1. AVVT welcomes feedback about its services from all users, including apprentices, learners, employers, staff and other stakeholders.

2.2. This Policy will ensure that all feedback is collected and reviewed promptly at the managerial level and that the directors have an overview of performance as indicated by the feedback collected.

2.3. The Policy will ensure that every formal complaint is managed by the directors.

3. Objectives, Principles and Scope

3.1. This Policy seeks to ensure that the review of feedback is used to inform planning and the continual improvement of the apprentice, learner and wider learning experience and AVVT services.

3.2. This policy sets out how learners and applicants can appeal decisions made by the organisation. It ensures that all appeals are handled fairly, consistently, and within reasonable timeframes. It applies to decisions about course acceptance, progression, reasonable adjustments, and findings of malpractice or maladministration.

3.3. This policy applies to:

- Applicants seeking entry to a course
- Current learners enrolled on any program
- Decisions made by assessors, tutors IQAs and senior staff
- Employers involved in work-based learning programs

Appeals may relate to:

- Refusal of course acceptance
- Progression decisions
- Refusal of reasonable adjustments
- Outcomes of malpractice or maladministration investigations

The key principles of fairness, transparency, timeliness, confidentiality and accessibility are explained below:

Fairness where all appeals are considered impartially and without prejudice, transparency where decision and reason are clearly communicated, timeliness where appeals are handled within published timeframes, confidentiality where information is shared only with those involved in the process and accessibility, where the process is open to all learners, including requiring support.

4. Implementation

Date reviewed:	11/04/2026	Date due for review:	April 2027
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4.1. All apprentices, learners and staff will be informed about this Policy and Procedure during induction.

4.2. Compliments and Comments (Tell Us!) cards (Appendix 1) are available for anyone to access on the front of Moodle.

4.3. Complaint forms (Appendix 2) are available for anyone to access on the front of Moodle.

4.4 This policy will be published on AVVT's Moodle platform for public access and transparency

5. Responsibilities

5.1. Compliments, Suggestions & Comments

5.1.1. The directors will:

5.1.1.1. Collate all compliments; and

5.1.1.2. Produce a summary report of all compliments on an annual basis for review

5.1.1.3 Present all findings to the Board of Governors.

5.1.2. Directors will:

5.1.2.1. Address any issues identified via any feedback mechanisms used within AVVT, (e.g. Tell Us! Cards) and, at the first available opportunity communicate actions taken

5.1.3. The Lead IQA will:

5.1.3.1 Review any complaints received about the directors

5.1.3.2 Present an anonymised report of the complaint to the directors and signpost to the necessary awarding/regulatory body

5.1.3.3 Advise the directors of any recommended actions to take to address the complaint

5.1.4. All staff will:

5.1.4.1. Advise AVVT users of the process for making compliments and comments or suggestions;

5.1.4.2. Forward all complaints and compliments to directors or the lead IQA if needed; and signpost to the necessary awarding/regulatory body

5.1.5. All AVVT Users:

5.1.5.1. are encouraged to talk to tutors or other members of staff to make their views known

6. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidance and Legislation

6.1. Disciplinary policy and Fitness to practise regulations

6.2. Teaching and learning Policy

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6.3. Appeals Procedure

6.4. Safeguarding and Prevent Duty Policy

6.5. Equality and diversity policy

6.6. Education and Inspections Act 2006

6.7. Education Act 2011

Please note: This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive

7. Compliments, Suggestions and Comments

7.1. All compliments will be forwarded to the directors and persons mentioned within the compliment if they have not received it directly.

7.1.1. If the compliment concerns a course all members of that group will also receive a copy.

7.2. Where requested, AVVT will acknowledge receipt within 2 working days of notification.

7.3. Informal Complaints

7.3.1. Apprentices/Learners who are dissatisfied with any aspect of AVVT are encouraged to take up the issue with a director, lead tutor, or lead Internal Quality Assurer

7.3.2. If a group of apprentices/learners wish to make an informal complaint, they must nominate a person to discuss the issues receive feedback from one of the directors and pass and feedback on to the rest of the group.

7.3.3. Where other AVVT users wish to make an informal complaint, they should be directed to a director

7.4. Formal Complaints

7.4.1. Where the matter is sufficiently serious that the complainant wishes to progress directly to the AVVT's formal procedure, a formal complaint must be submitted in writing, e-mail or letter to Kirsty Gwynne and/or Samantha Morgan.

7.4.2. If the complaint is made by telephone or in-person, notes will be completed from the conversation.

7.4.3. All correspondence will be with this individual, but the outcome letter will be copied to all in the group named in the initial complaint.

7.4.4. Parents/Clinical coaches, apprentices and employers are welcome to contact the AVVT on behalf of apprentices, learners and other AVVT users.

7.5. Appeals

7.5.1. An appeal may be submitted if the learner or applicant believes that a decision was made using incorrect or incomplete information, procedures were not followed correctly, a reasonable adjustment request was not considered fairly, progression or entry decision was

inconsistent with published criteria and were a malpractice or maladministration investigation was conducted unfairly or the outcome is unjustified.

7.5.2. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the AVVT's response, he/she will be advised to write to the directors giving reasons for their dissatisfaction within 10 working days of the date of the response letter.

7.5.3. A copy of this policy and procedure will be sent to them for reference.

7.5.4. Appeals by telephone will not be accepted.

7.5.5. The directors and the quality team will review the complaint and investigation by reviewing all the information against the appeal explanation received. We will then advise whether the AVVT's decision is supported or whether the matter needs to be reinvestigated. This will occur within 5 working days of receiving the appeal.

7.5.6. The directors' decision is final, after which the AVVT will consider the matter closed.

7.5.7. Only after all AVVT procedures for dealing with complaints have been exhausted, and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they are advised to contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for guidance on whether their complaint can be escalated.
ESFA contact details: esfahelp.education.gov.uk

8. Stages of the appeals/complaints process

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

The learner or applicant should first discuss the decision with the relevant staff member, e.g., tutor, assessor. Many issues can be resolved quickly at this stage. *Timeframe*: within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

Stage 2: Formal Appeal

If the issue is not resolved informally, a formal appeal/complaint may be submitted in writing. The appeal/complaint must include name and contact details, decision for appeal, grounds for appeal, any supporting evidence. *Timeframe*: within 15 working days of the original decision or informal outcome. A senior manager or designated representative will review the appeal, gather evidence, and may request a meeting with the learner or applicant. *Outcome provided within*: 20 working days.

Stage 3: Independent Review

If the learner or applicant is dissatisfied with the stage 2 outcome, an independent review may be requested. This will be conducted by a senior staff member not previously involved. The reviewer will consider whether procedures were followed, whether the decision was reasonable based on the evidence, and whether the appeal was handled fairly. *Outcome provided within*: 20 working days. The decision at this stage is final within the organisation.

Communication of Outcomes

An appeal outcome will be provided in writing, include clear reasons for the decision and outline any further steps available to the learner or applicant.

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9. Contact details

Abbeydale Vetlink Veterinary Training
Apex House,
Wonastow Road Industrial Estate (East)
Monmouth
NP25 5JB

Office phone number: 01600 737040

Directors email addresses: kirsty.gwynne@abbeydale-vetlink.org and sam.morgan@abbeydale-vetlink.org

Lead tutor email: emma.collins@abbeydale-vetlink.org

Lead IQA email: hil.varlow@abbeydale-vetlink.org

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Appendix 1

Appeals relating to Malpractice or Administration

Where the appeal concerns the outcome of an investigation:

- The organisation will review whether the investigation followed correct procedures.
- Evidence used in the investigation may be re-examined.
- If the qualification is regulated, learners may have the right to escalate the appeal to the awarding organisation after internal processes are exhausted.

Appeals relating to Reasonable Adjustments

If a request for reasonable adjustments is refused:

- The learner may appeal on the basis that the decision did not consider medical evidence, learning needs, or awarding body requirements appropriately.
- The organisation will review the evidence and may consult with the awarding body.
- Adjustments will be granted where they do not compromise assessment integrity and meet regulatory requirements.

Appendix 2

Tell Us! Compliments and Suggestions

Help us to identify good practice and continually improve our service. Tell us what we are doing right or comment on suggested solutions to problems. They are all most welcome.

Comments

Thank you very much for your comments.

If you would like an acknowledgement, please complete your details below and leave the card in the assignment trays.

It will be passed on to the directors.

Name: _____

Training Practice name; _____

Class (if applicable): _____

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please collect a Complaint Form. The form can also be downloaded from: <https://www.vetnursetraining.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AVVT-Compliments-Suggestions-and-Complaints-Policy-Procedure.pdf>

