

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Apprenticeship Provision

Document Control

Field	Details
Organisation	Boomsatsuma Education Ltd
Policy Owner	Jo Trendall: Head of Apprenticeships
Approved By	Beth Griffiths: Operations Director
Version	1.0
Effective Date	22/09/2026
Last Review Date	18/09/2026
Next Review Date	18/09/2027
Review Frequency	Annually, or sooner where required

Version History

Version	Date	Author/Owner	Summary of Changes
1.0	13/08/2026	Jo Trendall	Standalone Complaints Policy developed for apprenticeship provision

1. Policy Statement

Boomsatsuma is committed to providing high-quality apprenticeship training and support. We recognise that concerns may arise and will ensure apprentices, employers and other stakeholders can raise complaints through a process that is accessible, fair, impartial and timely.

No apprentice, employer or other person will be disadvantaged for making a complaint in good faith. Complaints will be handled sensitively, investigated proportionately and used to improve the quality of apprenticeship provision.

This policy is available to apprentices and employers through induction, handbooks, the training plan and Boomsatsuma's website. It must remain published and accessible on the organisation's public-facing website.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- define what a complaint is and distinguish it from feedback, safeguarding concerns, appeals and employment disputes;
- explain how apprentices and employers can raise a complaint;
- set clear stages, responsibilities and resolution timescales;
- ensure complaints are investigated consistently and without bias;
- support early resolution wherever appropriate;
- provide an internal review and a route for external escalation; and
- use complaint themes and outcomes to inform quality improvement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to current and former apprentices, employers, prospective apprentices, parents or carers where appropriate, and other stakeholders affected by Boomsatsuma's apprenticeship provision.

A complaint may be made individually or jointly by a group. A representative may support or act for a complainant with their written consent.

4. What Is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about an action or lack of action by Boomsatsuma, or about the standard of apprenticeship training, support or service provided by or on behalf of Boomsatsuma, where a response or resolution is expected.

A complaint may relate to:

- the quality, delivery or administration of apprenticeship training;
- information, advice or guidance provided by Boomsatsuma;
- failure to deliver agreed training or support;
- the conduct or behaviour of an employee, tutor, coach, assessor, contractor or subcontractor;
- accessibility, reasonable adjustments or additional learning support;
- facilities, equipment, online systems or learning resources;
- communication, progress reviews, assessment support or employer engagement;
- discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment; or
- the way an earlier concern was handled.

5. Matters Managed Under Other Procedures

The following will normally be managed under the relevant alternative procedure:

- an immediate safeguarding or Prevent concern, which will be escalated through the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- suspected malpractice, fraud or financial irregularity, which will be escalated through the appropriate reporting arrangements;
- a protected disclosure concerning serious wrongdoing;
- an assessment or end-point assessment decision subject to an awarding or assessment organisation's appeals process;
- an employment matter such as pay, working hours, dismissal or the apprentice's employment contract; and
- a request for information or routine service query.

Boomsatsuma will explain the appropriate route and, where possible, help the person refer the matter correctly. Where a complaint contains safeguarding or other serious concerns, those elements may be addressed separately and urgently.

6. Principles

Accessibility. Reasonable adjustments and support will be provided to help people use this procedure.

Fairness. Complaints will be considered objectively by people with suitable authority and, wherever possible, no prior involvement.

Confidentiality. Information will be shared only where necessary to investigate and resolve the matter, subject to legal and safeguarding duties.

No disadvantage. A person will not be treated adversely for making a complaint in good faith.

Timeliness. Complaints will be addressed promptly and within the timescales stated in this policy.

Proportionality. The response and investigation will reflect the seriousness and complexity of the matter.

Learning. Outcomes and themes will be used to improve provision and prevent recurrence.

7. How to Raise a Complaint

7.1 Early Resolution

Where appropriate, the complainant should first raise the concern as soon as possible with their tutor, coach, assessor, apprenticeship manager or usual Boomsatsuma contact. Employers may raise a concern with their named apprenticeship contact. Many issues can be resolved quickly through explanation, correction or agreed action.

Boomsatsuma will aim to resolve an early-resolution concern within 10 working days. If it cannot be resolved, or if the matter is too serious for informal resolution, a formal complaint may be made immediately.

7.2 Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be made in writing and should include:

- the complainant's name and contact details;
- the apprentice's name, where relevant;
- a clear description of the complaint and relevant dates;
- the people, programme, employer or service involved;
- steps already taken to resolve the concern;
- supporting evidence, where available; and
- the outcome or resolution sought.

Formal complaints should be emailed to enquiries@boomsatsuma.com with the subject line “Apprenticeship Complaint – for the attention of the Head of Apprenticeships”, or posted to the Head of Apprenticeships at Boomsatsuma Education Ltd’s registered business address. A complaint may also be made verbally where the complainant needs assistance; an employee will make a written record and ask the complainant to confirm it is accurate.

Complaints should normally be submitted within three months of the event concerned, or the final event in a series. A later complaint may be accepted where there is a good reason for the delay and it remains possible to investigate fairly.

8. Website Publication and Availability

This Complaints Policy is published on Boomsatsuma’s public-facing website – Link here:

The policy will also be signposted through apprentice and employer induction, Employer Handbook and training plan. Paper or accessible-format copies will be provided on request.

9. Acknowledgement and Initial Assessment

Boomsatsuma will acknowledge a formal complaint within 5 working days. The acknowledgement will identify the person coordinating the complaint and explain the next steps and expected timescale.

The Head of Apprenticeships or nominee will assess whether the matter falls within this policy, whether urgent protective action is needed, and whether any conflict of interest exists. If another procedure is more appropriate, the complainant will be told promptly and given reasons.

10. Investigation and Formal Outcome

A formal complaint will be investigated by an appropriately senior person who is impartial and has not been directly involved in the matter. The investigator may review documents, speak to relevant people and request further information. The complainant may be invited to a meeting and may be accompanied by a supportive person who is not acting in a legal capacity.

The complainant will normally receive a written outcome within 20 working days of receipt of the formal complaint, or from the date all necessary information is available. The outcome will state whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld; explain the reasons; and identify any remedy or improvement action.

If the investigation cannot be completed within 20 working days, Boomsatsuma will explain the reason for the delay before the deadline and provide a revised completion date. The complainant will receive appropriate progress updates.

11. Possible Outcomes and Remedies

Depending on the findings, action may include:

- an explanation, clarification or apology;
- correction of an error or inaccurate information;
- additional training, support or reasonable adjustments;
- replacement or rearrangement of training;
- review of a decision that was not based on professional or assessment judgement;
- changes to procedures, communication or quality controls;
- employee management action under a separate confidential process; or
- no further action where the complaint is not upheld.

A complainant will be told what can appropriately be disclosed. Confidential information about another person, including employee disciplinary action, will not normally be shared.

12. Internal Review

If dissatisfied with the formal outcome, the complainant may request an internal review within 10 working days. The request must explain one or more of the following grounds:

- the complaints procedure was not followed correctly and this may have affected the outcome;
- the outcome was unreasonable in light of the available evidence; or
- significant new evidence is available that could not reasonably have been supplied earlier.

The review will be completed by a senior person who was not involved in the original decision. The reviewer may uphold the original outcome, amend it, or require further investigation. A written review outcome will normally be issued within 10 working days of receiving the request and all relevant information. This concludes Boomsatsuma's internal complaints procedure.

13. How Long Will a Complaint Take to Resolve?

Stage	Target timescale
Early resolution	Normally within 10 working days
Formal complaint acknowledgement	Within 5 working days
Formal investigation and outcome	Normally within 20 working days of receipt, or receipt of all necessary information
Request for internal review	Within 10 working days of the formal outcome
Internal review outcome	Normally within 10 working days of receipt, or receipt of all necessary information

A straightforward complaint should normally be resolved within 20 working days after it becomes formal. If an internal review is requested, the full internal process may take up to approximately 30 working days, excluding time taken by the complainant to request the review. Complex cases may take longer; any delay and revised date will be communicated.

14. External Escalation to the Department for Education

If an apprentice or employer remains dissatisfied after completing all stages of Boomsatsuma's internal procedure, they may complain to the Department for Education (DfE). Before contacting DfE, the complainant must normally have exhausted Boomsatsuma's complaints procedure, including the internal review.

Information and the DfE customer help portal are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-further-education-apprenticeship>

DfE normally requires contact within 12 months of the issue. DfE does not deal with employment disputes, such as concerns about an apprentice's employment contract. Boomsatsuma will cooperate with any appropriate DfE investigation.

15. Safeguarding, Whistleblowing and Serious Concerns

Where a complaint indicates that an apprentice or another person may be at risk of harm, the matter will be referred immediately through the organisation's safeguarding arrangements and will not wait for

the complaints timescale. Suspected fraud, malpractice or serious wrongdoing may also be referred through the appropriate reporting arrangements and to external authorities where required.

16. Anonymous and Group Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered where sufficient information is available, particularly where they indicate serious risk, safeguarding concerns or systemic failure. Anonymity may limit the investigation and the ability to provide an outcome.

A group complaint should identify the people represented and nominate one person to receive correspondence. Boomsatsuma may seek confirmation that the representative has authority to act for the group.

17. Support, Accessibility and Representation

Apprentices and employers may ask for help to understand or use this policy. Boomsatsuma will make reasonable adjustments and may accept complaints in an alternative format. An apprentice may be supported by a parent, carer, colleague, trade-union representative or other appropriate person, subject to consent and confidentiality.

18. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Complaint information will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation. Information will be shared only with those who need it to assess, investigate, decide or act on the complaint, or where disclosure is required by law, funding rules or safeguarding duties. Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with Boomsatsuma's retention arrangements.

19. Recording, Monitoring and Quality Improvement

The Operations Director maintains a complaints log recording the nature of formal complaints, dates, progress, outcomes, timescales and actions. Summary information will be reviewed by senior leaders and the Board to identify themes, repeat concerns, equality implications and opportunities for improvement. Personal information will be removed or minimised from management reports where appropriate.

Actions arising from complaints will be assigned, monitored and closed. Lessons learned will inform the Self-Assessment Report, Quality Improvement Plan, employee training, employer engagement and changes to delivery or procedures.

20. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors. Approves this policy and receives assurance on complaint themes, serious cases and improvement actions.

Head of Apprenticeships. Owns the policy, oversees fair implementation, maintains records and reports trends. Nominates an independent reviewer.

Employees. Recognise complaints, support access to the process, maintain confidentiality and escalate concerns promptly.

Apprentices and employers. Raise concerns promptly, provide accurate information and engage respectfully with the process.

21. Training and Communication

Relevant employees will be trained to recognise, record, respond to and escalate complaints. Investigators and reviewers will receive appropriate guidance on impartiality, evidence, confidentiality, reasonable adjustments, safeguarding and writing outcome letters. The policy and any changes will be communicated to apprentices and employers through normal induction and engagement arrangements.

22. Policy Review

This is a new standalone policy for future apprenticeship provision. It will be reviewed annually by the Head of Apprenticeships and approved by the Board of Directors. The first scheduled review date is 18/09/2027. It will be reviewed sooner following significant changes to legislation, DfE guidance or contracts, complaint trends, a serious case, or evidence that the procedure is not operating effectively.

As part of each review, Boomsatsuma will check that the current policy remains published and accessible on its public-facing website and is signposted to apprentices and employers.

Appendix A – Complaint Submission Checklist

- Your name and contact details
- Apprentice name and apprenticeship, where relevant
- Employer name, where relevant
- What happened and when
- Who was involved
- What you have already done to resolve it
- Supporting evidence
- What outcome you are seeking
- Any reasonable adjustment or communication support required

Appendix B – Complaints Process Summary

Step	Action
1	Raise the concern promptly with the usual Boomsatsuma contact where appropriate.
2	If unresolved or serious, submit a formal complaint to enquiries@boomsatsuma.com for the Head of Apprenticeships..
3	Receive acknowledgement within 5 working days and a formal outcome normally within 20 working days.
4	If eligible and still dissatisfied, request an internal review within 10 working days.
5	Receive the review outcome normally within 10 working days.
6	After exhausting the internal procedure, complain to DfE where the matter falls within its remit.

Policy Approval

Approved by; Beth Griffiths

Role: Operations Director

Signature: 

Date: 22/09/2026