

employer's satisfaction, the employer may make a formal complaint under the Formal Stage of the procedure.

Formal stage

17. To make a formal complaint, the employer must submit a completed Complaint Form (available on the University of Suffolk website) to the Apprenticeships Hub (apprenticeships@uos.ac.uk). The employer will need to clearly define the resolution they are seeking and provide any supporting evidence, including evidence of any attempt at early resolution where applicable. Appropriate evidence may include published materials, correspondence, or other written evidence to demonstrate the matter being complained about. The Head of Apprenticeships or nominee may ask the employer for further clarification and/or additional evidence. Where additional evidence and/or clarification is requested from the employer, this should be submitted to the Apprenticeships Hub by the given deadline. Should it not be received by this date, the complaint will be considered on the evidence provided with the original submission.

18. The Apprenticeships Hub will acknowledge the complaint and inform the employer who will be dealing with the complaint (the Investigating Officer), normally within five working days of receipt. The Investigating Officer will have been trained for the role and will normally be the appropriate manager, for example the Dean of School or Head of Service or their nominee, providing they are sufficiently removed from any earlier process. Where there is the potential for a conflict of interest or perception of bias, the Head of Apprenticeships will appoint a senior academic or an appropriate manager from another school or service who has been trained for the role and has had no previous involvement in the matter to act as the Investigating Officer.

19. The Investigating Officer will consider the complaint and may talk to relevant staff and/or apprentices, as well as considering relevant documents and other written evidence. A meeting may also be arranged with the employer to discuss the purpose and scope of the complaint and consider options for a mutually acceptable resolution.

20. If the complaint is against a member of staff, the Apprenticeships Hub will inform the People and Organisational Development team on receipt of the complaint. The People and Organisational Development team will arrange to meet with the Apprenticeships Hub and the Investigating Officer to discuss the scope and purpose of the investigation and any potential link to other procedures should further action be taken (for example under staff disciplinary

Apprenticeships or nominee will determine whether a late form can be accepted, and this decision will be final.

25. The employer must state the grounds on which they wish to proceed to review stage and must include all necessary supporting evidence and documentation. The employer must also clearly define the resolution they are seeking.

26. The grounds on which a review stage complaint can be considered are:

- a) There is new information put forward by the employer that was not known to the Investigating Officer dealing with the original complaint and which could not have reasonably been made known to the Investigating Officer before they made their decision.
- b) Evidence put forward at the formal stage was not fully and properly considered and/or the outcome was not reasonable in the circumstances.
- c) There was procedural irregularity, prejudice and/or bias, or the appearance of prejudice and/or bias in the conduct of the formal stage.

27. The Apprenticeships Hub will take into account all documentary evidence supplied by the employer, including the original complaints form, investigation report and outcome letter, the complaints review f

