

## Introduction

We, **Association of Certified Digital Accounting Professionals (ACDAP)** value all Centres delivering our regulated qualifications or units or courses and the learners who undertake them and our aim is to exceed the expectations of our customers. We are confident of providing a high-quality service and would be extremely disappointed if this is not the case.

Therefore, it is important should you feel you have encountered a level of service that is below both your and our expectations that you raise any concerns you may have with us immediately so that we may address them and improve our practice.

## Scope

The complaints policy and procedure is aimed at our Centres, learners and all interested parties who encounter a direct or indirect service from ACDAP.

It is not to be used to cover appeals in relation to decisions made by ACDAP. This is covered by our Appeals Policy. Should a complaint be submitted which is in fact an enquiry or an appeal we will respond to inform the relevant party that the issue is being considered in accordance with our Appeals policy.

If you are unhappy about the way an assessment or examination was delivered and conducted and/or you suspect malpractice may have occurred you should send your concern to us in accordance with the arrangements in our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

## Centre's responsibility

We expect that both your staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our regulated qualifications or units or courses, and your learners, are aware of the contents of the policy and that your Centre has a complaints handling procedure and appeals process in place to deal with complaints from learners about the services provided by your Centre.

## Review arrangements

We will review this policy and its associated procedures annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback (e.g. to align with any appeals and complaints process established by the regulators) and any trends that may emerge in the subject matter of complaints received.

If you would like to provide any feedback regarding this policy, please contact us via the details provided at the end of this document.



## Association of Certified Digital Accounting Professionals

### Complaints Policy and Procedure

## How to make a complaint?

### Stage one

All ACDAP staff are dedicated to supporting all of our customers. All staff are trained in how to deal with any issues and will always seek to find solutions. However, we are aware that sometimes issues cannot be resolved simply and quickly and hence, we welcome feedback from anyone who wishes to make a complaint. The first stage is to try and resolve any problem informally at the earliest opportunity by speaking to a member of staff at ACDAP. If they cannot help, you may wish to speak to another member of the ACDAP team. We will always try to address any concerns as quickly as possible.

### Stage two

If it is not possible to resolve your complaint informally, or if you are not satisfied with the support provided at stage one, you should send a formal written complaint. This can be by email or letter. Emails should be sent to [complaints@acdap.org](mailto:complaints@acdap.org) and letters should be sent to the address listed at the end of this document. Your email/letter should be sent (normally) within one month of the event you wish to raise. Learners and/or members of the public who wish to complain about a level of service provided by a ACDAP centre should initially refer the issue to the centre. Each centre will have a complaints policy and procedure and this should be followed to ensure that the centre is able to address the issue. If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of the centre's investigation, you should then raise the matter with ACDAP. However, learners can make the complaint directly to us in exceptional circumstances where they feel there was a significant breach by the centre.

## Details required for making a complaint

When you contact us, please give us your full name, contact details including a daytime telephone number and email address along with:

- a full description of your complaint (including the subject matter and dates and times if known)
- any names of the people you have dealt with so far
- copies of any emails or letters that refer to the complaint

## Complaints brought to ACDAP by the Regulators

Where the Regulators notify us about failures that have been discovered in the assessment process or other activities of another awarding organisation, these will be reviewed in the same manner as other external complaints in accordance with the procedures below to ascertain if the same issue could affect other qualifications offered by ACDAP.

## Complaints made against ACDAP

In cases where the complaint is against ACDAP as an organisation, the regulators will be informed without delay to determine the appropriate course of action.

**Confidentiality and whistle-blowing** If you wish to remain anonymous, please inform us that you do not wish for us to divulge your identity. ACDAP are not obliged (as recommended by the Regulators) to disclose information if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty. While we are prepared to investigate issues, which are reported to us anonymously and/or by whistle-

1 Concord Business Centre, Concord Road, London, W3 0TJ

Ph: +44 (0) 02036216472 [www.ACDAP.org](http://www.ACDAP.org)

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blowers, we shall always try to confirm the grounds of an allegation by means of a separate investigation, before taking up the matter with those the complaint/allegation relates. ACDAP defines whistle-blowers as being current or ex members of staff (both permanent or contracted) or third-party suppliers of a centre of ACDAP and/or current or previous learners.

## Responsibility for the investigation

All stage two complaints will be acknowledged by ACDAP within 24 hours of receiving the complaint. The information will be passed to the Compliance Manager who will advise the Director of Quality of the complaint.

The Compliance Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the investigation of the complaint is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy. The Compliance Manager will allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and review any supporting evidence received or gathered by ACDAP.

As part of the allocation of the investigation, the Compliance Manager will ensure that those involved in deciding the outcome of the complaint are not involved in the incident or do not have a vested interest in the outcome.

## What will happen to my formal complaint?

ACDAP will acknowledge receipt of your formal complaint within two working days. We aim to investigate the complaint within 10 working days. If your complaint is more complex or involves anyone who is not available at the time, we may extend this as necessary although we would always endeavour to resolve any complaints within 20 working days. We may contact you within this period to seek further information or clarification (in some instances we may recommend a meeting). At the end of the investigation ACDAP will write/email to inform you of our decision. If any part of a complaint against ACDAP is upheld, we will of course respond to the complainant accordingly and give due consideration to how we can improve our service and arrangements. For example, by reviewing our procedures to assess the impact on our qualification development, delivery or awarding arrangements and assessment process (if relevant) or arranging for staff training. In extreme circumstances, internal disciplinary or other relevant procedures may be exercised where the performance or behaviour of our staff is deemed to be inappropriate. In situations where a complaint has been successful, we will give due consideration to the outcome and will take appropriate actions such as: a) identify any other learner who has been affected by that failure b) correct, or where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure

## What if you are unsatisfied with the outcome?

If you disagree with the decision you should contact the Director of Quality, who oversees the complaints procedure. If you are still unhappy with the decision taken by ACDAP in reviewing the complaint you can, where relevant, take the matter through our Appeal arrangements which are outlined in our Appeals Policy.

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## What can I do if I've exhausted the ACDAP complaints procedure?

If you've followed the ACDAP complaints procedure and would still like to take your complaint further, the following options are available:

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## Regulatory Bodies

<b>England</b>	Ofqual public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk QAA enquiries@qaa.ac.uk
<b>Wales</b>	Qualifications Wales enquiries@qualificationswales.org

## Monitoring

ACDAP Quality and Standards and Access to HE Committees will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the complaints process. Summary reports will be submitted to enable the Committees to review the effectiveness of the process and, where appropriate, monitor changes to the policy and procedures, which will be submitted annually to the Board of Trustees for monitoring and appropriate action.

## Contact details

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this policy and/or have a related query please contact:

<b>Telephone</b>	02036216472
<b>Email</b>	enquiries@ACDAP.org
<b>Postal Address</b>	1 Concord Business Centre, Concord Road, London, W3 0TJ