

Complaints policy



**Chartered
Institute of
Housing**
Approved assessment
organisation

Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. CIH is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation.

We are an approved End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) for the end point assessment of the Housing Apprenticeship Standards. We are dedicated to providing the highest quality, relevant and up-to-date end point assessment (EPA) for every apprentice.

Complaints information

CIH EPAO aims to provide efficient and effective services and whilst every care will be taken to ensure that these are of good quality, CIH EPAO accepts that, on occasions, complaints will be made.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the CIH EPAO, our staff or contractors affecting an apprentice, apprenticeship training provider or external partner, such as an employer.

If you are dissatisfied with any element of our service, you have the right to complain. However, before you make a formal complaint, we would suggest that you talk to us informally in the first instance to see if your concerns can be resolved straightaway. You can e-mail epao@cih.org or telephone 02476 851 798. If your complaint cannot be informally resolved a more formal process is detailed below.

CIH EPAO will treat complaints positively and recognises that they are a means of identifying improvements which can be made to our standards and ways of working. CIH EPAO will deal with complaints quickly, take prompt action to resolve the complaint and take steps to ensure that complaints of a similar nature do not arise in the future.

Training providers must have a policy and procedure for dealing with complaints. Apprentices must follow the training provider policy on complaints before referring to CIH EPAO. If the complaint is not resolved this can be escalated to CIH EPAO.

CIH EPAO will not consider complaints about Independent End Point Assessor (IEPA) decisions; these should be treated as an appeal using the CIH EPAO appeals policy. If there is an allegation of malpractice or maladministration refer to the CIH EPAO procedure.



External contractors appointed by CIH EPAO must aim to resolve their complaint with their CIH contact in the first instance, before referring to the CIH EPAO complaints policy.

Confidentiality

CIH will aim to ensure that your complaint remains confidential, but some circumstances may not allow us to maintain this confidentiality. In these situations we will discuss this with you.

Making a formal complaint

There are two stages to our complaints process:

Stage 1

Formal complaints can be submitted via email to epao@cih.org, telephone 02476 851 798 and should include:

- The full name, address and contact details of the person making the complaint.
- The detail of the complaint i.e. the specific reason for the complaint and any supporting information.

In making a complaint, we advise that you:

- demonstrate your attempt to seek resolution informally first,
- are clear, accurate and truthful in your explanation,
- indicate what might be a satisfactory resolution for you,
- respect the legal, regulatory and other constraints, such as data protection, placed on CIH
- submit the complaint within 3 months of identifying the issue.

CIH EPAO will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **3 working days**. The complaint will be formally logged and allocated to an appropriate member of staff to investigate.

The member of staff will:

- commence an investigation into your complaint,
- maintain a case file and auditable records,
- aim to resolve your complaint within 14 working days,
- inform you if the complaint is going to take longer than 14 working days to resolve, detailing why it is taking longer to resolve and providing an indication of the date by which a resolution will be provided.

The outcome of the investigation will detail the findings of our investigations, actions taken, and resolutions required where appropriate.



Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you should direct the next stage of your complaint to the Education Manager in writing, within 3 weeks.

The Education Manager will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within **3 working days** and give an initial explanation of how your complaint will be dealt with.
- review the investigation and processes that have undertaken in relation to your complaint.
- maintain a case file and auditable records.
- aim to respond within **10 working days**.
- inform you if the complaint is going to take longer than **10 working days** to resolve, detailing why it is taking longer to resolve and providing an indication of the date by which a resolution will be provided.

Please note that the decision of the Education Manager is final.

Continuous improvement

Where a complaint is upheld CIH EPAO will take corrective action to prevent a reoccurrence of the issue. All complaints are reported monthly and reviewed internally by CIH EPAO to ensure standards and ways of working are subject to continuous improvement. Complaints will also be reported to the CIH Audit and Risk Board.

Further information

Ofqual

If your complaint relates to an apprenticeship which is externally quality assured by Ofqual you may complain directly to Ofqual if you have exhausted CIH AO complaints policy. Please refer to the following link which will explain how you can do this
<http://ofqual.gov.uk/complaints-and-appeals/>