

Vexatious, Malicious or Frivolous Correspondence Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS) is an Awarding Body regulated by Ofqual, the qualification regulator for England and Northern Ireland. The Awarding Body is committed to high levels of quality assurance and policies that are open, transparent and free from bias. Customer Service works with the Awarding Body to support learners and study centres and complies with Awarding Body policies and procedures.

Overview

The Awarding Body and Customer Service are committed to offering a high standard of service to all customers, including learners and study centres. We aim to provide a service that is:

- consultative and responsive
- open and informative
- prompt and efficient
- streamlined and manageable
- cost-effective.

The Awarding Body and Customer Service ensure complaints are dealt with quickly and efficiently avoiding the need for a formal written complaint wherever possible. However, should the matter necessitate a formal complaint, the procedures detailed in the CIPS Complaints Policy document should be followed.

Individuals should not be discouraged from making a complaint, on financial or any other grounds, unless it is vexatious, malicious or frivolous. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and in a timely manner, and will be recorded so that analysis is facilitated.

This document sets out the policy adopted by the Awarding Body for dealing with vexatious, malicious or frivolous correspondence. The policy set out below is designed to define what constitutes as unacceptable correspondence and the procedures that will be followed to ensure that such instances are dealt with in a consistent way.

In order to add further clarity to the types of unacceptable correspondence definitions are offered below;

- **Vexatious** – ‘causing or tending to cause annoyance, frustration or worry’
- **Malicious** – ‘characterised by malice; intending to do harm’
- **Frivolous** – ‘not having any serious purpose or value’

Examples of correspondence and consequent procedures

The following types of correspondence or behaviour are deemed as vexatious, malicious or frivolous. In each case the consequent procedure is highlighted in bold.

- Abusive or threatening behaviour either during a telephone conversation, a face to face meeting or in written correspondence.

Procedure: The complaint will be referred to the Head of Awarding Body or Head of Customer Services who will contact the complainant to state that all communication will cease if the complainant continues to communicate in such a manner.

- Making accusatory remarks about CIPS or a CIPS employee.

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- Making complaints which are designed solely to cause disruption or annoyance.

Procedure: A member of the Awarding Body or Customer Service will send a letter or email advising the complainant that no further correspondence can be entered into unless the complainant can identify a valid complaint. The CIPS Complaints Policy and Procedure will also be included in order to indicate to the complainant how they should proceed if they have a valid complaint.

- Making unreasonable demands from CIPS with regard to the complaint investigation.

Procedure: A member of the Awarding Body or Customer Service will send a letter or email reiterating CIPS' remit with regard to the investigation at hand.

- Repeatedly contacting CIPS either via telephone or email without offering new evidence or information.

Procedure: A member of the Awarding Body or Customer Service will send a letter or email advising the complainant that no further correspondence can be entered into without any further evidence or information.

**Kate Tomlinson
Head of Awarding Body**