COMPLAINTS, FEEDBACK AND COMPLIMENTS POLICY

1. Scope

Beyond the Bark Ltd (BTB hereafter) is committed to providing a high-quality service to all our customers. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve our services to customers as well as an opportunity to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our aim is to ensure complaints are handled sensitively and speedily to enable us to:

- Demonstrate our commitment to clients, learners and other stakeholders
- Demonstrate our commitment to providing the best possible service
- Help to find out about things that have gone wrong so we can fix them
- Help to prevent things going wrong again in future.

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by us whether justified or not.

2. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Director.

3. Policy Principles

Our policy principles are to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use
- Publicise our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us
- Make sure everyone at BTB knows what to do if a complaint is received
- Make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- Ensure complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- Gather information which helps us to improve what we do
- Ensure that all complaint information will be handled confidentially.

4. Complaints Procedure

BTB will not normally investigate complaints which are received more than six months after the incident or occurrence took place.

Complaints can arrive through many different channels and may be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

All complaints are required to be logged by BTB whether informal or formal. Reasonable complaints will be dealt with as below, if more time is needed the complainant will be advised.

If a complaint cannot be resolved immediately and requires to be formally addressed by BTB the complaint process applies.

- **Step 1** - the complaint information will be passed to the individual responsible for managing complaints within 5 working days of receiving the complaint
- **Step 2** - the information will be added to the complaints/opportunities to improve log
- **Step 3** - a letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within 5 days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this policy, a contact name and date of expected reply.
- **Step 4** – the complaint will then be investigated
- **Step 5 -** we will write within 10 working days of receiving a complaint, confirming our final position - whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at this stage, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by a different person at BTB and the following process applies:

- **Step 6 -** a letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within 5 working days of receiving it
- **Step 7 –** the complaint will then be investigated
- **Step 8 -** write within 10 working days of receiving the complaint confirming our final position - Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint

- **Step 9 -** The decision taken at this stage is final, unless it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

The complainant also has the right to raise any complaints to the appropriate Awarding Organisation or Accrediting body and or the regulators such as Ofqual, SQA Accreditation, Qualification Wales, or to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for Scottish provision if they felt that SQA Accreditation had not dealt with their complaint adequately.

Complaints procedure and contact details for a regulator or a regulated Awarding Organisation can be obtained from the following regulators website.

- For Ofqual approved qualifications (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) complaints should be made in writing to Ofqual, Earlsdon Park, 53-55 Butts Road, Coventry, CV1 3BH or emailed to complaints@ofqual.gov.uk.
- For Qualifications Wales approved qualifications (Wales only) complaints should be made in writing to Q2 Building, Pencarn Lane, Coedkernew, Newport, NP10 8AR or emailed to enquiries@qualificationswales.org.
- For SQA Accreditation approved qualifications (Scotland) complaints should be made in writing to The Optima Building, 58, Robertson Street, Glasgow G2 8DQ or emailed to accreditation@sqa.org.uk
- Learners in Scotland may also make a complaint to the **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)** in writing to 4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS. It is recommended that learners make an initial complaint to SQA Accreditation, however, this is not a mandatory requirement.

5. Compliments and Feedback

We define a compliment as an expression of praise concerning a high level of service delivery and/or customer care received.

Acknowledgements will be sent within 5 working days of receipt in respect of all feedback and compliments.

Compliments and feedback which warrant a response will be replied to within 10 working days.

Compliments and feedback may be communicated internally and via social media networks if applicable to external stakeholders and partners and with the customer approval.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

BTB records complaints and reviews these regularly to identify any trends which may have an impact upon other learners. Where a complaint is upheld, the impact on other learners is considered and action is taken to ensure learners are not disadvantaged.

Where it has been established that a complaint is valid, we will take appropriate action that will be proportional to the gravity and scope of the occurrence. This will be documented at the management meeting and added to the risk register.

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated annually or as and when required.