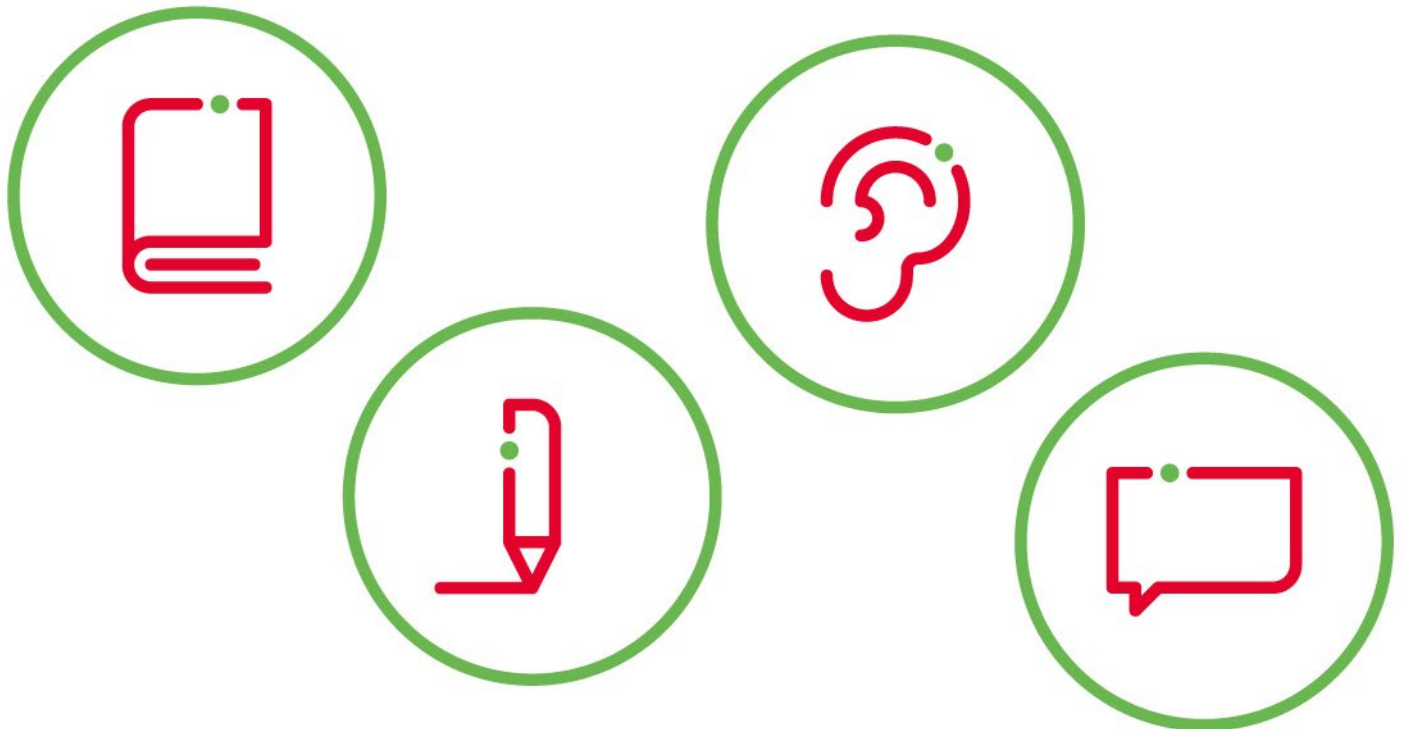


Aptis ESOL

Complaints policy

June 2024



Aptis ESOL Complaints policy

General approach to complaints

This document describes the process and procedure for Aptis ESOL complaints.

This Aptis ESOL complaints process has been developed in line with global British Council standards.

All Aptis ESOL complaints received by the British Council are handled in accordance with the British Council's internal complaint handling guidelines and customer service standards.

Investigation of complaints should be completed in accordance with the Aptis ESOL escalation model outlined below.

Each test centre should have a complaints policy available to you as a British Council customer.

The general complaints guidelines are normally available publicly on British Council country websites.

How Aptis ESOL complaints are handled

If you have a complaint or concern as an Aptis ESOL test taker, you can raise your concerns about your pre-test, test day or post-test experience either directly with your test centre or by contacting the British Council customer contact team based in Manchester in the United Kingdom, by following the [global complaint process](#).

The Aptis ESOL complaints process is as follows:

1. You can submit your complaint to a test centre staff member or a local British Council customer service team.
2. The test centre / customer service team determines the level of complaint and follows the Aptis ESOL escalation model for complaint investigation. Most complaints will be received at Level one* in the British Council's complaints escalation model.
3. Your complaint will normally be investigated and resolved by a British Council customer service team member or test centre representative within **ten working days**. The decision will be communicated to you through your preferred communication channel.

The investigation will consist of a revision of all communications between you and the Aptis ESOL test centre and will review all test administration to identify service failures or other operational issues that might have occurred. Any service failures or other issues will be investigated, including the reason for them and what steps were taken to fix the issues.

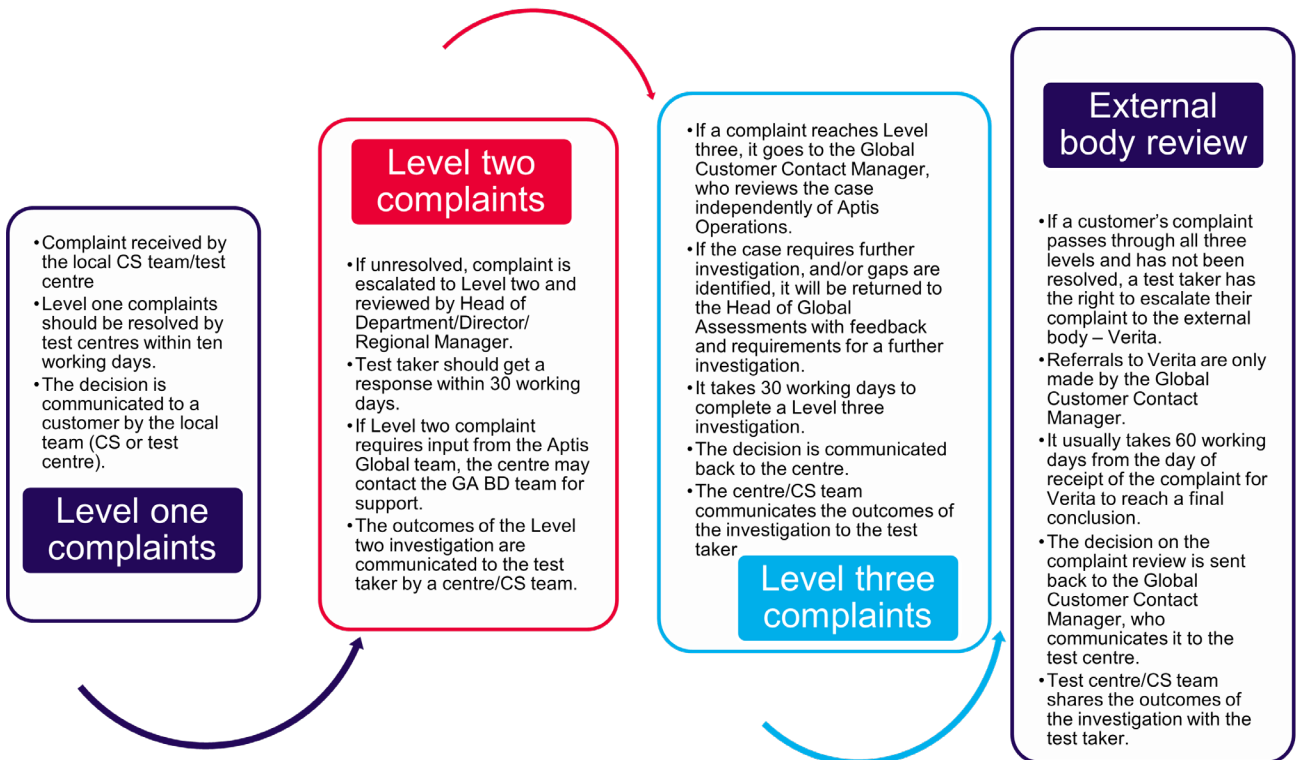
If we identify that issues have not been fixed or have caused you as the test taker problems, we will put remedies in place wherever possible and communicate these to you.

If the complaint is escalated to Level two*, further investigation into the issues raised by your complaint will be managed by a British Council senior manager, for example a Country Director or Regional Manager, independently of the operations or customer service team. They will take the necessary authority to determine whether the issues have indeed been resolved comprehensively and conclusively or, if failures still exist, revisit the complaint conclusion and provide an alternative. At this level, you should receive a reply within **30 working days** of the date that the complaint was escalated.

4. If the complaint is still unresolved or requires input from the Aptis ESOL global team, it will be escalated to the Global Assessments Business Development Team. Further input may be required from the Head of Global Assessments. These complaints relate to more serious and complex unresolved problems which are likely to be an intrinsic issue with test delivery or another matter and may require a full review of Aptis ESOL operations. As such, these teams will need to investigate the complaint at a high level to determine potential strategic changes to the Aptis ESOL test. Such changes should be put in place promptly and communicated to you.
5. If the complaint is escalated to Level three*, it will be handled by the Global Customer Contact Manager, who will review the case independently of Aptis ESOL Operations. If the case requires further investigation, and/or gaps are identified, it will be returned to the Head of Global Assessments with feedback and recommendations for a further investigation. It normally takes **30 working days** to review and resolve the complaint from the date of escalation.
6. In exceptional circumstances, if a complaint is not resolved at Level three, it may go to an independent review body. For further details, please see the Escalation model below.

* *For more information about Level one, two and three complaints see **Aptis ESOL Complaints escalation model**.*

Complaints handling process



Timeline for complaints

If you have a complaint about your experience before or after your Aptis ESOL exam, this should be made within 90 days of your test date, or the date when the issue that you wish to complain about came to your attention.

Complaints relating to the conduct of the test, for example complaints about noise interference at any time during the test, should be made on the test day, before you leave the test venue.

Complaints fee

There is no fee for registering a complaint with the British Council.

Aptis ESOL Complaints escalation model

There are three levels of complaint, which are dealt with by independent departments of the British Council.

Level one

Level one complaints are those received by the British Council about a specific service, which require investigation and resolution, for example, if you participated in a British Council event and did not have a satisfactory experience.

At this level, the British Council needs to acknowledge your complaint, if submitted in writing, or explain what steps we will take to manage your complaint, if received over the telephone or in person.

Complaints at this level should be investigated and resolved within **ten working days** and may require involvement from the relevant British Council customer service manager, exams manager or project manager to reach a resolution. All complaints are recorded, and their progress is tracked.

Level two

Complaints that are escalated to Level two are those which have not been or cannot be concluded satisfactorily at Level one, despite having been investigated by the British Council, and where there is evidence that the issues highlighted in the complaint are considerably more complex or serious.

Level two complaints are normally managed by a British Council Senior manager, for example a Country or Regional Director.

These complaints should be investigated and resolved within **3 working days** from the date of escalation, unless you receive notice that this timescale is unworkable due to particular circumstances.

Level three

Level three is the final stage of British Council complaints escalation. Only complaints that have been through a comprehensive Level two investigation will be escalated to Level three, when you, as a complainant, remain dissatisfied and have highlighted new evidence to support your dissatisfaction.

Depending upon the nature of the case, complaints that reach this level will be handled as follows:

All complaints related to Aptis ESOL will be reviewed by the Global Customer Contact Manager, who will advise whether the investigation into the complaint is full and complete, or whether further investigation needs to take place.

Where the investigation is full and complete, and nothing further can be added, you will be referred to the British Council's independent complaints review body. Where there are gaps in an investigation, or where it is deemed that there may be an alternative solution, the Global Customer Contact Manager will collaborate with the relevant department to carry out a further investigation and reach a potentially different conclusion.

The total time taken for these investigations should not normally exceed **30 working days** from the date of escalation. However, where this is not possible, you will receive notice that further time is required.

If you remain unsatisfied with the response, we can guide you to the British Council UK Contact Centre, who will independently review the complaint and our response to you. This is the final stage of the internal process for complaints management. At this stage you may highlight new evidence to support your dissatisfaction.

External review

If your complaint has passed through all three escalation levels and has not been resolved, you have the right to escalate your complaint to an external body.

The British Council's corporate external review body is an independent consultancy, [Verita LLP](#), which specialises in conducting and managing investigations, reviews and inquiries for public sector and statutory organisations.

Referrals to Verita are only made by the Global Customer Contact Manager, and Verita will only accept complaints once they have been through this stage and a valid Verita reference number has been assigned.

This usually takes 60 working days from the day of receipt of the complaint for Verita to reach a final conclusion.