

## Concerns

A **concern** refers to correspondence sent to us by our customers or members of the public, who are expressing concern about the conduct of, or procedures used by, the **learning organisations whose provision we inspect**, rather than the work of ETI.

The issues that are expressed in a concern may relate to the behaviour, policies and practices of other organisations. **Resolving fully these concerns often falls outside our statutory remit.** We do not investigate or follow up complaints about the activities of individual schools or providers, unless specifically requested to do so by the Department of Education.

The customer may be advised to raise the matter with the organisation that the concern is about, in the first instance. We may also refer individuals to additional sources of help and support to help the customer to get access to appropriate support bodies to help resolve their concern. In these instances, we will write back explaining our remit, taking any action we may need to and, at times, suggesting a more appropriate route that helps the customer raise their concern with the appropriate person, group, or organisation.

Other organisations may have more statutory powers to act on the information provided. These include:

- the chair or any other member of the board of governors/management committee of the organisation;
- the relevant employing authority or body;
- the Department of Education (or relevant Department);
- the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman;
- the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and/or
- the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

This list is not exhaustive.

All concerns will be handled fairly, thoroughly and in confidence, however, the needs and interests of learners have paramountcy. We reserve the right to pass on information we receive about an organisation to the relevant bodies. For example, in matters where there is a concern relating to the health and safety of children or where there is a child protection or safeguarding concern. We will, however, **take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the customer raising the concern**, including not sharing personal data to personnel within the learning organisation, unless legally required to provide it or if we have the permission of the customer to do so. [See section on whistleblowing.]

## Raising a concern

### Who do I contact

- ETI's Inspection Services Team.

### How

- By telephoning: 028 9127 9726.
- By email: [eti@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:eti@education-ni.gov.uk)
- By writing to: ETI, Rathgael House, 43 Balloo Road, Rathgill, Bangor, BT19 7PR.

### When

- Office hours: 8 am to 5 pm.
- We will endeavour to resolve your concern at the point of contact and, if not possible to do so, will acknowledge receipt of your concern within 3 days and issue you with a response within ten working days.