

POL40 - Expected Behaviour Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how APM staff will communicate and behave with our customers, how we expect people to behave towards and communicate with our staff and how customers communicate with and behave towards each other. We use the term customers to include all of our members, training providers, corporate partners and non-members who use APM resources and services.

2. Expected behaviour

We take pride in the way in which we support our customers. We welcome people raising concerns and providing feedback and we also know that sometimes customers will have to contact us with requests for reasonable adjustments, complaints and appeals (<https://www.apm.org.uk/apm-complaints-process/>). We will respond to all communication professionally and in line with our policies. In addition to this, our contact with you will reflect our values:

- Warm – we will treat all our customers kindly, respectfully and with consideration for their individual circumstances.
- Excellent – we will offer the best support we are able to in order to manage queries, complaints and issues.
- Thoughtful – we will think carefully about each case and consider how we can best support the individual.
- Progressive – we will be open to new ways of managing situations and solving problems whilst working within the guidance and regulations which support our qualifications and standards.

In return, we expect all customers to communicate with us and each other in a polite, respectful and reasonable manner.

3. Unacceptable behaviour

We know that there will be occasions which people find frustrating and decisions which are difficult to accept. We expect all customers, regardless of the situation, to treat our staff and each other politely and with respect.

Customers who will not accept a decision taken in relation to their query, or who persistently contact us about the same issue, can generate unreasonable demands - taking up a disproportionate amount of time and resources. This can affect our ability to provide a service to other customers.

This policy enables us to deal with unacceptable customer behaviour professionally and consistently.

We will not tolerate any of the following behaviour:

- Any language or behaviour discriminating against or insulting a person in relation to any of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. their race, gender, sexuality, religion, political or cultural beliefs
- Using rude, aggressive or patronising language to try and achieve a desired outcome.
- Persistent emailing and / or calling and not allowing time for staff to respond.
- Any kind of threatening or intimidating language or behaviour
- Making unreasonable demands with regard to expected outcomes of complaints or appeals
- Making unreasonable demands which may impact negatively on other customers.
- Making false, frivolous or vexatious statements against staff or the organisation

4. What we will do in cases of unacceptable behaviour

Demonstrating unacceptable behaviour will make it difficult for us to deal with your query or complaint effectively. Where we experience unacceptable behaviour, we will first advise you that the behaviour is unacceptable, and we will ask you to desist. Depending on the method of communication in use at the time, we will do this either on the call or by email. Unacceptable behaviour experienced by any of our customers can also be raised initially via the complaints process.

5. What we will do next

After we have emailed or spoken to you, if the behaviour does not stop, we may take one or more of the following actions to prevent it happening again. This list is not exhaustive; additional and proportional action may be taken depending on the nature of the behaviour:

- Ask you to enter into an agreement about the manner in which you communicate with our staff and/or customers and we will expect you to adhere to this. We will do this on the phone or in an email.
- Restrict your access to one member of staff. This means we will give you the name of one person you can contact and no one else will respond to your communication.
- Restrict when you can contact the member of staff by allocating a specific day and time at which you can contact them. This means that if you try to contact us outside of the agreed time, we will not be able to respond.
- Close the matter and refuse to enter into any further correspondence about it.

In rare cases, where the behaviour continues and / or the actions above are not adhered to, we may:

- Insist you step down from a role or position that you hold as part of your work with APM if your behaviour has a negative impact on, or the potential to negatively impact the reputation of the organisation.
- In the case of individual customers who are members, consider if behaviours have breached the APM Code of Professional Conduct
- Take legal advice and relevant proceedings in order bring an end to the matter.

Before we take any of the actions above, we will write to you and advise you about the action we are taking and when it will start.

6. Policy application

This policy is effective from 1 August 2021 and will be reviewed annually.

Version control

Author	Reason for revision	Version number	Date
Jackie Martin	Document creation	1	01/08/2021
Jackie Martin	Update to include member to member behaviour	2	11/07/2022
Sarah Slater	Rebrand	3	18/11/2022
Jackie Martin	Annual review and update to sections 3 and 4	4	07/08/2023