

# Candidate Feedback Policy

## Youth Start Limited

Company Number: 16864238

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

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## Effective Date

1 January 2026

## Next Review Date

1 January 2027

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## Introduction and Purpose

Youth Start Limited is committed to providing transparent, constructive, and supportive feedback to all young people who engage with our recruitment services. This Candidate Feedback Policy sets out our approach to providing feedback to young people throughout their journey with Youth Start, from initial contact through to placement and beyond.

Feedback is a crucial part of supporting young people's development and helping them to improve their employment prospects. We believe that constructive feedback helps young people to understand their strengths, identify areas for development, and build confidence and resilience. We are committed to providing feedback that is honest, respectful, and focused on supporting young people to succeed.

This policy applies to all staff members employed by Youth Start Limited who provide feedback to young people, all volunteers engaged by Youth Start to provide feedback, all young people aged 18-24 who receive feedback from Youth Start, and all feedback provided as part of Youth Start's recruitment and mentorship services.

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## Scope

This Candidate Feedback Policy applies to:

- All staff members employed by Youth Start Limited who provide feedback to young people
- All volunteers engaged by Youth Start Limited who provide feedback to young people
- All young people aged 18-24 who receive feedback from Youth Start
- All feedback provided throughout the recruitment process (application, interview, selection)
- All feedback provided during mentorship and placement support
- All feedback provided after placement or at the end of the mentorship programme

This policy does not apply to:

- Feedback provided by employers to young people (although Youth Start may facilitate this feedback)
  - Feedback provided by external parties (unless Youth Start is supervising or facilitating that feedback)
  - Internal staff feedback or performance management (which is covered by Youth Start's Code of Conduct Policy and Disciplinary and Grievance Policy)
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## Legal Framework

Feedback must comply with the following legislation:

### **Equality Act 2010:**

This Act prohibits discrimination and requires that feedback does not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).

### **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR):**

These Acts regulate the processing of personal data, including information about young people's performance and development. Feedback data must be processed fairly, transparently, and securely.

### **Employment Rights Act 1996:**

This Act regulates employment relationships and provides protections for workers. Feedback must be provided in a manner that is consistent with employment law and best practice.

### **Human Rights Act 1998:**

This Act protects individuals' rights to respect for private and family life, and to freedom of expression. Feedback must be provided in a manner that respects young people's dignity and privacy.

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## Youth Start's Approach to Feedback

Youth Start is committed to:

### **Constructive Feedback:**

We are committed to providing feedback that is constructive, specific, and focused on supporting young people's development and improvement.

### **Honesty and Transparency:**

We are committed to providing honest and transparent feedback. We do not shy away from identifying areas for development, but we do so in a respectful and supportive manner.

### **Respect and Dignity:**

We are committed to providing feedback in a manner that respects young people's dignity, privacy, and self-esteem. We recognise that feedback can be difficult to receive and we provide it in a supportive environment.





## **Empowerment:**

We are committed to empowering young people to use feedback to improve and develop. We encourage young people to reflect on feedback, to ask questions, and to work with us to develop action plans.

## **Timeliness:**

We are committed to providing feedback in a timely manner, so that young people can learn from their experiences and make improvements.

## **Consistency:**

We are committed to providing feedback that is consistent, fair, and based on objective criteria. We ensure that feedback is not influenced by bias or personal preferences.

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## Types of Feedback

Youth Start provides different types of feedback at different stages of the young person's journey.

### Application Feedback

#### **When Provided:**

Application feedback is provided after a young person submits an application to Youth Start or applies for a placement through Youth Start.

#### **Content:**

Application feedback covers: - Whether the application was successful or unsuccessful - If unsuccessful, the reasons why the application was not successful - Strengths demonstrated in the application - Areas for improvement - Suggestions for how the young person can strengthen future applications - Next steps (such as reapplication or alternative opportunities)

#### **Format:**

Application feedback is provided in writing (via email or letter) and is also discussed in a telephone or face-to-face conversation if the young person requests this.

### Interview Feedback

#### **When Provided:**

Interview feedback is provided after a young person attends an interview with Youth Start or for a placement through Youth Start.

#### **Content:**

Interview feedback covers: - Whether the interview was successful or unsuccessful - If unsuccessful, the reasons why the young person was not selected - Strengths demonstrated in the interview - Areas for improvement - Specific examples of what the young person did well - Specific suggestions for how the young person can improve for future interviews - Next steps (such as reapplication, interview coaching, or alternative opportunities)

#### **Format:**

Interview feedback is provided in a face-to-face conversation or telephone call as soon as possible after the interview. Written feedback is also provided if the young person requests this.

## Selection Feedback

### When Provided:

Selection feedback is provided after a young person completes the selection process and a final decision has been made about whether they will be placed with an employer.

### Content:

Selection feedback covers: - Whether the young person has been selected for placement - If selected, information about the placement and next steps - If not selected, the reasons why the young person was not selected - Strengths demonstrated throughout the selection process - Areas for development - Suggestions for how the young person can improve for future opportunities - Information about alternative opportunities or support available

### Format:

Selection feedback is provided in a face-to-face conversation or telephone call. Written feedback is also provided.

## Mentorship Feedback

### When Provided:

Mentorship feedback is provided regularly throughout the mentorship programme (at least monthly) and at key milestones (such as the end of each phase of the mentorship programme).

### Content:

Mentorship feedback covers: - Progress towards goals - Strengths and achievements - Areas for development - Feedback on attendance and engagement - Feedback on workplace skills and behaviours - Feedback on personal development - Suggestions for improvement - Celebration of progress and achievements

### Format:

Mentorship feedback is provided in one-to-one conversations during mentorship sessions. Written feedback is also provided (recorded in Youth Start's CRM system, ZohoCRM).

## Placement Feedback

### When Provided:

Placement feedback is provided at key points during the placement (such as at 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, and 12 weeks) and at the end of the placement.

### Content:

Placement feedback covers: - Performance in the role - Attendance and punctuality - Workplace skills and behaviours - Relationships with colleagues and managers - Progress towards goals - Strengths and achievements - Areas for development - Feedback from the employer - Next steps and future opportunities

### Format:

Placement feedback is provided in one-to-one conversations with the mentor. Written feedback is also provided.



## End of Programme Feedback

### When Provided:

End of programme feedback is provided at the end of the 12-week mentorship programme.

### Content:

End of programme feedback covers: - Overall progress and achievements during the programme - Key strengths developed - Key areas of development - Impact on employment prospects and career progression - Feedback on the mentorship programme and Youth Start's support - Recommendations for future employment or career development - Information about ongoing support or opportunities available

### Format:

End of programme feedback is provided in a face-to-face conversation or telephone call. Written feedback is also provided.

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## Principles of Effective Feedback

Youth Start is committed to providing feedback that is effective, constructive, and supportive. Effective feedback is based on the following principles:

### Specific and Concrete

**Effective feedback is specific and concrete, not vague or general.**

**Examples of Specific Feedback:** - "In your interview, you gave a clear example of how you managed a difficult situation with a colleague. This demonstrated good problem-solving skills." - "Your CV could be improved by adding more detail about your work experience and the skills you developed."

**Examples of Vague Feedback (to avoid):** - "You did well in your interview." - "Your CV needs improvement."

### Balanced

**Effective feedback is balanced, acknowledging both strengths and areas for development.**

**Structure:** - Start with a strength or positive observation - Identify an area for development - End with encouragement or a positive statement

**Example:** "You demonstrated excellent communication skills in your interview and gave thoughtful answers to the questions. One area for development would be to provide more specific examples from your experience. With practice, you will become even stronger at this. I would encourage you to prepare some examples before your next interview."

### Focused on Behaviour, Not Character

**Effective feedback focuses on specific behaviours or actions, not on personal characteristics or judgments about character.**

**Examples of Behaviour-Focused Feedback:** - “You arrived 10 minutes late to your appointment.” - “You interrupted the interviewer twice during the interview.” - “You provided a clear and detailed answer to that question.”

**Examples of Character-Focused Feedback (to avoid):** - “You are unreliable.” - “You are rude.” - “You are intelligent.”

### Actionable

**Effective feedback is actionable, providing clear suggestions for how the young person can improve.**

**Example:** “Your interview answers were good, but you could improve by providing more specific examples from your experience. For your next interview, I suggest preparing three or four examples of situations where you have demonstrated key skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, or communication. Practice telling these stories so you can share them confidently in the interview.”

### Timely

**Effective feedback is provided in a timely manner, while the experience is still fresh in the young person’s mind.**

**Timelines:** - Application feedback: within 5 working days of application - Interview feedback: within 2 working days of interview - Mentorship feedback: at least monthly, or within 2 working days of a significant event or concern - Placement feedback: at agreed intervals (typically 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, 12 weeks)

### Respectful and Supportive

**Effective feedback is delivered in a respectful and supportive manner, with consideration for the young person’s feelings and self-esteem.**

**Approach:** - Choose an appropriate time and private setting - Use a calm and respectful tone - Listen to the young person’s perspective - Acknowledge the young person’s feelings - Provide encouragement and support - Offer to discuss the feedback further if needed

### Two-Way Conversation

**Effective feedback is a two-way conversation, not a one-way delivery of information.**

**Approach:** - Invite the young person to ask questions - Listen to the young person’s perspective and response - Discuss the feedback and explore how the young person can use it to improve - Work together to develop an action plan if needed - Follow up to see how the young person is progressing

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## Providing Feedback

### Preparation

**Before providing feedback, staff members and mentors should:** - Review the young person's file and gather relevant information - Reflect on specific examples and observations - Consider the young person's individual circumstances and needs - Plan how to deliver the feedback in a constructive and supportive manner - Prepare suggestions for improvement or next steps

### Delivery

**When delivering feedback, staff members and mentors should:** - Choose an appropriate time and private setting - Start by explaining the purpose of the feedback - Begin with a strength or positive observation - Provide specific examples and observations - Explain the impact or importance of the feedback - Invite the young person to respond and ask questions - Listen actively to the young person's perspective - Provide suggestions for improvement or next steps - End on a positive and encouraging note - Offer ongoing support

### Recording

**All feedback provided to young people should be recorded:** - In Youth Start's CRM system (ZohoCRM) - With a summary of the feedback provided - The date and time of the feedback - The young person's response or reaction - Any action points or next steps agreed

### Follow-Up

**After providing feedback, staff members and mentors should:** - Check in with the young person to see how they are progressing - Provide additional support or coaching if needed - Celebrate progress and improvements - Adjust support or feedback approach if needed - Record follow-up conversations and progress

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## Receiving Feedback from Young People

Youth Start is committed to creating a culture where feedback is valued and where young people feel able to provide feedback about their experience with Youth Start.

### Feedback from Young People

**Youth Start welcomes feedback from young people about:** - The quality of support and mentorship provided - The effectiveness of the recruitment process - The accessibility of Youth Start's services - The professionalism and conduct of staff members and volunteers - Suggestions for improvement - Concerns or complaints

### How to Provide Feedback

**Young people can provide feedback:** - Directly to their mentor or staff member - To the Feedback Lead (Nick Calin, [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk), 07470435603) - Through a feedback form (available on request) - Anonymously (if preferred) - At any time during their journey with Youth Start

## How Feedback Is Used

**Youth Start uses feedback from young people to:** - Evaluate the effectiveness of our services - Identify areas for improvement - Celebrate what is working well - Make changes to our services or practices - Improve staff training and development - Report on our performance and impact

## Responding to Feedback

**Youth Start will:** - Acknowledge receipt of feedback - Take feedback seriously and investigate concerns - Provide a response to the young person (unless they have requested anonymity) - Make changes to our services or practices if needed - Follow up to ensure that improvements have been made

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## Feedback for Young People with Additional Needs

Youth Start recognises that some young people may have additional needs that affect how they receive and process feedback.

### Adjustments for Disabled Young People

**For young people with disabilities or additional needs, Youth Start may:** - Provide feedback in accessible formats (such as large print, audio, or easy read) - Allow additional time for the young person to process and respond to feedback - Provide feedback in a quiet or low-stimulus environment - Break feedback into smaller, more manageable pieces - Use visual aids or written summaries to support understanding - Involve a support person if the young person wishes

### Adjustments for Young People with Learning Difficulties

**For young people with learning difficulties, Youth Start may:** - Use clear, simple language - Avoid jargon or complex terminology - Provide written summaries of feedback - Check understanding by asking the young person to summarise the feedback - Provide feedback in shorter sessions - Repeat feedback if needed

### Adjustments for Young People with Mental Health Conditions

**For young people with mental health conditions, Youth Start may:** - Choose an appropriate time when the young person is feeling well - Provide feedback in a supportive and compassionate manner - Acknowledge the impact of mental health on performance - Focus on progress and strengths as well as areas for development - Provide additional support or signposting to mental health services - Follow up to check on the young person's wellbeing

### Adjustments for Young People with Neurodivergence

**For young people with neurodivergence (such as autism or ADHD), Youth Start may:** - Provide feedback in a structured and predictable manner - Use clear, direct language - Avoid sarcasm or indirect communication - Provide feedback in writing as well as verbally - Allow time for processing - Provide feedback in a calm, low-pressure environment

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# Confidentiality and Data Protection

## Confidentiality

**All feedback provided to young people is treated as confidential.**

**Feedback is only shared:** - With the young person themselves - With Youth Start staff members and mentors who need to know (for professional purposes) - With employers (with the young person's consent and only relevant information) - If required by law or for safeguarding purposes

**Feedback is not shared:** - With other young people - With family members or friends (unless the young person consents) - With external parties (unless the young person consents or disclosure is required by law)

## Data Protection

**All feedback is processed in accordance with data protection law (Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR).**

**Feedback data is:** - Stored securely in Youth Start's CRM system (ZohoCRM) - Kept for a specified retention period (in accordance with Youth Start's Data Retention Policy) - Deleted securely when no longer needed - Only accessed by authorised staff members - Protected by appropriate security measures

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## Complaints and Concerns

### Raising Concerns About Feedback

**Young people who have concerns about feedback can:** - Speak to their mentor or staff member - Speak to the Feedback Lead (Nick Calin, [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk), 07470435603) - Submit a formal complaint under Youth Start's Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy

**Common Concerns:** - Feedback that is inaccurate or unfair - Feedback that is discriminatory or disrespectful - Feedback that is not constructive or supportive - Feedback that is not provided in a timely manner - Concerns about confidentiality

### Responding to Concerns

**Youth Start will:** - Take concerns about feedback seriously - Investigate concerns thoroughly and impartially - Provide an explanation or clarification if needed - Apologise if feedback was inappropriate or inaccurate - Provide revised feedback if needed - Make changes to our feedback practices if needed

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# Staff Training and Development

## Feedback Training

**All staff members and volunteers who provide feedback to young people must complete feedback training.**

**Training covers:** - The importance of feedback - Principles of effective feedback - How to deliver feedback constructively - How to receive feedback from young people - Adjustments for young people with additional needs - Data protection and confidentiality - Handling concerns or complaints about feedback

### **Ongoing Training:**

Staff members and volunteers receive ongoing training and professional development on feedback skills, including workshops, case study discussions, and access to external training.

## Supervision and Support

**All staff members and volunteers receive regular supervision.**

**Supervision includes:** - Discussion of feedback provided to young people - Reflection on feedback practice - Guidance and support on challenging feedback situations - Identification of training needs - Feedback on the quality of feedback provided

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## Responsibilities

### **Staff Members and Mentors:**

Staff members and mentors are responsible for: - Providing constructive, specific, and timely feedback to young people - Following Youth Start's Feedback Policy and principles - Recording feedback in Youth Start's CRM system (ZohoCRM) - Treating feedback as confidential - Receiving feedback from young people and responding constructively - Participating in feedback training and supervision

### **Feedback Lead:**

The Feedback Lead (Nick Calin, [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk), 07470435603) is responsible for: - Overseeing Youth Start's feedback approach and practice - Coordinating feedback training and development - Responding to concerns about feedback - Monitoring the quality of feedback provided - Collecting and analysing feedback from young people - Reporting on feedback and young people's satisfaction - Reviewing and updating the Candidate Feedback Policy

### **Young People:**

Young people are encouraged to: - Receive feedback openly and reflect on it - Ask questions about feedback - Use feedback to improve and develop - Provide feedback to Youth Start about their experience - Raise concerns if they are unhappy with feedback

### **Senior Management:**

Senior management is responsible for: - Demonstrating commitment to a feedback culture - Ensuring that feedback training and development is provided - Allocating resources to support feedback practice - Holding staff members accountable for providing quality feedback

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## Related Policies

This Candidate Feedback Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Code of Conduct Policy
  - Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
  - Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy
  - Recruitment and Selection Policy
  - Candidate Selection Policy
  - Mentorship Standards Policy
  - Equal Opportunities Policy
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## Changes to This Policy

We may update this Candidate Feedback Policy from time to time to reflect changes in best practice, our services, or legal requirements. We will notify relevant staff members and individuals of material changes and provide updated guidance as necessary.

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## Relevant Legislation

This Candidate Feedback Policy is based on the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
  - Data Protection Act 2018
  - UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
  - Employment Rights Act 1996
  - Human Rights Act 1998
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## Contact Information

If you have questions about feedback or this policy, please contact:

**Feedback Lead:**

Nick Calin

Email: [contact@youthstart.co.uk](mailto:contact@youthstart.co.uk)

Telephone: 07470435603

**Youth Start Limited**

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