Central England Trading Standards Authorities

EnTSA

STOP

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GO

Complaints Handling Flowchart

For Used Car Traders

For Used Vehicle Traders

✓ **Based on UK law – including the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and Business Companion guidance.**

This resource gives brief general guidance only and does not cover every circumstance. You are advised to look at Business Companion and all applicable legislation to ensure you are legally compliant. If you have any specific queries on your legal obligations, you should contact your local Trading Standards Service.

Navigate Compliance with Confidence: Your Pathway to Building Customer Trust

Complaint Received

📩 Customer raises a complaint (in person, email, phone, etc.)
➡️ **Log the complaint**: date, issue, vehicle details, and customer contact info.
➡️ Acknowledge receipt within **2 working days** (ideally in writing).

Initial Assessment

🔎 Is the vehicle faulty, misdescribed, or unfit for purpose?
🔹 Within 30 days of sale → Customer may be entitled to a **full refund**.
🔹 After 30 days → Offer a **repair or replacement**.
🔹 After 1 repair → If still faulty, customer can request a **refund** (may be reduced for use).
📖 Refer to: [Consumer Rights Act – Short-term right to reject, Repair/Replace, Final right to reject].

Investigate & Respond

🛠️ Inspect the vehicle (ideally with the customer present).
📋 Review sales records, advert copy, vehicle prep documents.
🗣️ Respond in writing with:

- Your findings
- Any remedy offered
- A clear decision
- ⏱️ Aim to respond within 10 working days of the complaint.

Agree a Remedy

If you're at fault, offer a remedy based on legal obligations:
✔ Repair
✔ Replacement
✔ Refund
✔ Contribution to repair costs (if agreed and proportionate)
Document what was offered and agreed, and set clear timescales

If No Agreement Reached

🤝 Offer Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) if you're a member of an approved scheme (e.g. Motor Ombudsman, RMISC).
📬 Inform the customer in writing about ADR options.
If still unresolved:
📢 Customer can escalate to Citizens Advice or Trading Standards.

Record & Learn

🗂️ Keep records of all complaints, investigations, and outcomes for at least 12 months.
📊 Review complaints regularly to identify repeat issues (e.g. poor prep, misleading ads).
🛠️ Use this to improve customer service and compliance.

Why It Matters:
Poor or misleading adverts could:

- Breach consumer law
- Trigger Trading Standards investigations
- Lead to refunds or legal claims
- Damage your business reputation

📌 **Need More Info?**
Read more on Business Companion:
🔗 businesscompanion.info/selling-used-vehicles
#StopCheckGo | #UsedCarCompliance | #UsedCarAdvertising | #ConsumerProtection

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