HEATHER GARBUTT
Relationship Coach & Psychotherapist

Complaints Procedure

including how we handle data protection complaints

At Heather Garbutt, every conversation - whether in a coaching session or about how your information is handled — is held with the same care, honesty and respect. If something hasn't felt right, I want to know, and I want to put it right. This document sets out how you can raise a concern or complaint, what will happen next, and how long it should take.

Last reviewed: 20/07/2026

Next review due: 12 months

Owner: Heather Garbutt

Our Commitment to You

Heather Garbutt is a small, independent coaching and psychotherapy practice. I take complaints seriously, whatever they relate to - the quality or conduct of a session, an administrative matter, or how your personal data has been collected, stored or used.

You will never be treated less favourably, or see any change in the support you receive, because you have raised a concern or complaint.

What This Procedure Covers

This procedure applies to any complaint about the service you have received from Heather Garbutt, including:

- **Service complaints -** the standard of coaching, therapy or podcast-related engagement you have received.
- **Data protection complaints -** how your personal data has been collected, used, stored, shared or deleted, including requests you feel were not properly handled (for example, a request to access, correct or delete your data).
- **Conduct complaints -** concerns about confidentiality, boundaries, or professional conduct.

This procedure follows guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on handling complaints fairly, promptly and transparently.

How to Make a Complaint

You can use the template form here: Heather-Garbutt-Complaints-Form.docx

You can raise a complaint in whichever way feels easiest for you:

— **By email -** heather@heathergarbutt.com

— **In writing -** using the separate Complaints Form, sent by email or post — available on request or alongside this procedure.

To help me look into things quickly, please include where possible:

— your name and best contact details;

— whether your complaint relates to a service issue, a data protection matter, or both;

— what happened, and when;

— any previous contact you've already had with me about this; and

— what outcome you are hoping for.

If someone is complaining on your behalf, I will need to confirm they are entitled to act for you before I can discuss or share any personal information with them.

What Happens Next

Every complaint is handled personally by Heather, following the same six steps each time — so you always know where things stand.

Step 1 — Acknowledge

Within 30 working days of receiving your complaint, I will confirm I've received it, let you know I'm looking into it, and explain what will happen next and when you can expect to hear more. This acknowledge typically happens within a few days, but we must respond within 30 days.

Step 2 — Look Into It

I will look into what happened as thoroughly, fairly and accurately as I can - reviewing session records, correspondence or data-handling notes as relevant, and contacting you if I need more information.

Step 3 — Keep You Updated

If my investigation is likely to take longer than 30 working days, I will update you on progress, in plain language, so you are never left wondering what's happening.

Step 4 — Record Everything

I keep a clear, confidential record of your complaint, the date it was received, the response due date, any conversations, and the reasons for the decisions and actions I take. This protects you and helps me learn.

Step 5 — Respond

I will write to you with the outcome of my investigation, explaining clearly what I found and any action I have taken or will take. Where your complaint relates to data protection, I will also confirm your right to complain to the ICO if you remain unhappy.

Step 6 — Learn and Improve

After every complaint is resolved, I reflect honestly on what I can learn or do differently, so the same issue is less likely to happen again.

Our Timescales

Stage	Timescale
Acknowledgement of your complaint	Within 30 working days
Progress update (if investigation is ongoing)	By day 30, and every 14 days after
Full written response	Within 60 days of receipt, wherever possible
Data protection complaints referred to the ICO	You may do this at any time; we recommend giving us the chance to resolve it first

If a complaint is especially complex, I will always tell you if I need longer than 60 days, and give you a revised date.

If You're Not Satisfied - Your Right to Complain to the ICO

For data protection matters, if you remain unhappy after my response, or at any point during the process, you have the right to complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent regulator for data protection.

Website: ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint

Helpline: 0303 123 1113

Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

You do not need to tell me if you contact the ICO - they will let me know if they need any further information from me.

If your complaint is about the standard of coaching or therapy you have received, rather than data protection, please contact me in the first instance using the details above; where relevant, information about any professional accrediting body will be provided to you separately.

Confidentiality and Your Records

Any complaint you raise, and the records I keep about it, will be treated with the same confidentiality as your coaching or therapy records. Information about your complaint will only be shared with a third party (for example, a supervisor, insurer or the ICO) where I am required to by law, or with your consent.

Heather Garbutt · Relationship Coach & Psychotherapist

heather@heathergarbutt.com · heathergarbutt.com