

Complaints Procedure.

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1. Introduction

We aim to provide services of a standard acceptable to all our users

If we fail to do this we want to know about it. This will enable us not only to deal with the specific problem, but also avoid it happening again.

Our complaint procedure sets out how to take up matters you think are unsatisfactory about the service you have received from us.

This policy sets out the procedures we will follow when we receive a complaint from any user of services, trainee, an organisation or a member of the public. It does not address complaints made by staff or volunteers (dealt with through grievance and disciplinary procedures) nor job applicants (recruitment procedure).

This procedure is meant to provide a means to resolve any dispute between the organisation and any complainant. It requires staff and management committee members at every stage to seek to resolve the complaint. Complaints are likely to be in one or more of the following areas:

- Dissatisfaction with our service, such as inadequate work, problems with casework, unacceptable delay or failure to deliver a service, etc.
- Disputes between user and the organisation regarding policy, procedures or activities
- Discouragement or un-helpfulness on the part of staff.

2. The Procedure

When someone wishes to register a complaint, the following procedure should be adopted. We asked people to raise any complaints as soon as possible. We expect people to raise complaints within three months of an incident. In such cases, reserve the right to take the matter to the end of stage 3 i.e. concluded. Nucleus will use discretion before engaging this process depending on the seriousness of the complaint and any extenuating circumstances which may have led to the complainant delaying informing us of the incident.

Where the complaint is against the Manager, the same procedure will be followed, but with the Chair of the Management Committee substituting for the Manager's role at all stages.

Note: with immigration cases users are free to complain to the OISC (Office of Immigration Supervision Commission) should they be unhappy with the service provided. They can be contacted on 020 7211 1500.

Stage 1

The complainant should be invited to speak to the case worker and discuss their complaint with

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them. The caseworker will endeavour to resolve the matter to the client's satisfaction.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied. The line manager should try to meet the complainant within 10 working days. This can be done in person or by phone, whichever is appropriate.

If they deem it appropriate the line manager can look at any notes : AP , e-mails, slack messages etc and interview the case worker.

The manager must keep a record of the decision on the case file.

Copies of correspondence regarding the complaint will be copied to Complaints@nucleus.org.uk

The aim is to resolve the matter where this is not possible to use Stage 1 above then refer to Stage 2 below.

Stage 2

The complainant should be asked to put their complaint in writing to the service manager i.e. complaints@nucleus.org.uk marked Private and Confidential, providing as much detail of the complaint as possible. If there is some reason why they cannot write, the complainant will be offered an interview with the Manager or her/his nominee. The role of the Director or her/his nominee at this meeting will be solely to put details of the complaint in writing, obtain the complainants approval for the contents of this, and ask the complainant to sign it.

Nucleus will then investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve it. The Director will ensure that all complainants receive a response in writing within 10 working days of their letter being received (or of an interview). This letter will summarise what investigations have been carried out and what action, if any, is proposed to resolve the matter. A copy of this letter shall be attached to the complaint form.

If for some reason a response by letter is unsuitable, the complainant will be offered an interview with the Director for the same purpose, to be held within 10 working days as before. A written record of this interview shall be kept and signed by the complainant.

If the complainant is not satisfied at this stage they should ask for the matter to be dealt with under Stage 3 of the complaint procedure.

Stage 3

Where the matter is not resolved by stage 2, then Director should immediately refer the complaint to the Chair . The complaint can be written to the chair at Chair@nucleus.org.uk.

The Chair will then investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve it. The Director will ensure that all complainants receive a response in writing within 10 working days of their letter being received (or of an interview). This letter will summarise what investigations have been carried out and what action, if any, is proposed to resolve the matter. A copy of this letter shall be attached to the complaint form.

Stage 4

The Complaints Panel will comprise the Chair of the Management committee and the designated Complaints Officer. The Complaints officer will be responsible for convening the Panel and one other MC member. (In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will become the convenor).

The complainant will be informed immediately by the Complaints officer (or Chair) that this is being

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done and that the Panel will also be contacting the staff member(s) against whom the complaint has been made, where this is applicable, for their account of the matter.

If the complaint involves a member or members of staff, they will be given an opportunity to put forward their account of the matter, either by written statement or by presentation to the Panel. If a complaint involves a matter of policy or procedure, the Director along with any member of staff responsible for implementing or exercising such policy or procedure should put forward their account of the matter under investigation.

The Complaints Panel will notify the complainant of its reasons and decision within 15 working days of having received notice of the complaint and inform any staff member(s) involved. The Panel's decision will be final. The Complaints Officer is responsible for ensuring records of the meeting are kept and the Complaints monitoring form is completed.

The Complaints Officer will be responsible for reporting the Panel's findings to the next meeting of the Management Committee.

If a client is not happy with the outcome they may then take the matter to the relevant external authority – be that the local authority, the relevant ombudsman or the law society.(SRA).

3. Recording and monitoring complaints

All complaints will be recorded and kept on file, including those, which were resolved without being put in writing. All complaints shall be treated with regard to the Confidentiality policy.

We regard the recording of complaints as good practice to enable us to monitor them. This will help to show up any weaknesses in our systems and procedures or in staff training, which can then be remedied.

The Director will report complaints as a standing item at trustee meetings and also make a report once a year to the MC summarising the nature of complaints received and how they were resolved.

4. Publicising the Procedure.

The Director is responsible for ensuring that posters and leaflets are displayed in the waiting area, interview rooms welcoming complaints from users, and that the posters and leaflets clearly explain the procedure for making a complaint.

The Managers are responsible for ensuring that all workers refer to the complaints procedure in their client care letters.