



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

SCC are committed to giving the best service possible. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all formal complaints received by SCC are responded to appropriately, and in a timely and efficient manner.

This policy and procedure will apply to all formal complaints, where an informal resolution has not been successful.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to resolve formal complaints. SCC encourages informal resolution of issues in the first instance. This is best done quickly and directly with the individual(s) involved. If you do not feel comfortable speaking directly to someone, then SCC would encourage an email, setting out clearly the issue you would like to address. If neither of these approaches feels appropriate, please contact the Centre Manager to discuss the issue and options for resolution.

If informal resolution is unsuccessful, then the formal complaints procedure is the next step.

Formal Complaints Procedure

1. Please direct all formal complaints to the Centre Manager.
2. Complaints need to be submitted in writing, detailing the points around the issue(s) experienced. If you have difficulty in writing your complaint, please speak to the Centre Manager. Information to include:
 - Name of the complainant;
 - Date and time of the incident;
 - What happened, including the order of events and were other people involved;
 - How has this event affected you;

- What are your concerns – for example, are you concerned about a situation reoccurring.
3. On receiving the complaint, the Centre Manager will send an acknowledgement in writing to the complainant.
 4. Complaints will be responded to as quickly as possible but could take up to 20 days from receiving the complaint, for example, if the complaint is complex.
 5. The Centre Manager will act as the investigating officer regarding the complaint, and if appropriate, may appoint an alternative member of the administrative team to investigate.
 6. The investigating officer will compile a report for the Directors, including any interviews with individuals involved, emails or other correspondence.
 7. The Directors will decide if the complaint is to be upheld, and next steps will be agreed.
 8. The Centre Manager (or alternative investigating officer if appropriate) will respond to the complainant, giving the response and reasons for this from the Directors. If appropriate, other outcomes such as changes to processes or training will also be outlined in the response.
 9. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their complaint, they can direct their complaint to the Trustees. The Trustees will decide whether to uphold or overturn the decision of the Directors.
 10. Following the decision of the Trustees, if a complainant remains unsatisfied, or if the complaint is regarding the Trustees, safeguarding or clinical concerns, complaints can be directed to the BACP.
 11. SCC will uphold the conclusions and any recommendations made by the BACP. The decision of the BACP is final in the complaint process.

Complaints which become vexatious, or harassing will not be progressed.

Persistent harassment against an individual or the Centre may result in SCC seeking legal or civil action against the complainant.

Procedure

Management Process

The Centre Manager is the first point of contact for all formal complaints and for informal complaints which cannot be resolved locally.

In cases where the Centre Manager is the subject of the complaint or may not be able to remain impartial (for example, is a witness to a complaint), an alternative member of the office team will be appointed as the investigating officer and will become the point of contact for the complaint.

The Directors will be kept informed of any complaints received by the Centre but will not become involved until the investigation has taken place.

Communications

The Centre Manager (or nominated investigating officer) will be the point of contact for receiving and responding to formal complaints.

Reporting

The Centre Manager will report to the Directors.

The Directors will report to the Trustees.