



Complaints Procedure

Last Updated: July 2109

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Review Date: July 2021

Version: 4

1. This complaints procedure applies to:
 - Steps to Work
 - Starting Point Recruitment
 - Darlaston JET
 - The Work and Health Programme
 - Outreach based services – BRIDGES and Evolve (in conjunction with their Standard Operating Procedures)

Complaints can be made in relation to many aspects of the services you have received, including:

- Mistakes that have been made
- Unreasonable delays
- How you've been treated by an individual
- Not being kept informed
- A failure in service

2. **How to complain**

If you think we have got something wrong, let us know as soon as possible and we will do our best to put things right.

You can contact us by phone, in person or in writing on our complaints form or through the website or via email.

When you contact us, please tell us:

- Your full name, address and contact numbers
- The service, project or individual you are unhappy with
- What happened, when it happened and how it affected you
- What you would like us to do to put things right

3. **Who to contact**

All complaints are administered by our HR and Quality personnel.

We will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 5 working days and provide a complaint reference number so you are able to track the status of the complaint

The Complaint reference number will be used in all correspondence relating to your complaint. We will also send you out the complaints process and timescales for each stage of the complaint.

4. **Informal Resolution**

We would always encourage customers and clients to seek and resolve any issues informally and at the lowest possible level through discussion with staff or the manager of the service.

5. **Stage 1: Formal Complaint (10 working days)**

If you are unable to resolve your issue it will be recorded as a formal complaint. We will record the complaint with a reference number and send you an acknowledgement letter together with a copy of the complaint procedure within 5 working days.

During this time we will appoint the relevant manager of the service or location relating to your complaint. Our aim is to investigate the complaint and write to you with a resolution within 5 working days.

This investigation may include confidential phone calls or meeting with you, our colleagues, partners and witnesses.

The appointed manager will make a judgement on the complaint following this investigation and write to you via the Corporate Team.

If you are happy with the resolution of the appointed Manager we will close the complaint down.

If you are unhappy with the resolution of the appointed Manager you can request to escalate the complaint to stage 2.

6. Stage 2: Formal Stage (10 working days)

If you are dissatisfied following stage 1, you can submit a stage 2 complaint. This means your complaint will remain open and use the same complaint reference number.

We will appoint an independent Manager who will take ownership of the complaint and conduct an impartial investigation which may involve reassessment of confidential phone calls or meetings with you, our colleagues, partners and witnesses.

The appointed independent Manager will aim to investigate the complaint and write to you with a resolution in 10 working days via the Corporate Team.

This written response will incorporate the following;

1. Identification of the complaint
2. How this was investigated, including who was interviewed, system audited etc.
3. The conclusions drawn and reasons why.
4. Any actions taken or recommendations made.
5. The appeal stage of the complaints procedure.

If you are dissatisfied with the resolution of the Independent Manager at stage 2 you can request to escalate the complaint to stage 3 of the complaints procedure.

7. Stage 3: Appeal Stage (15 working Days)

If you are dissatisfied with the response given at stage 2 of the complaints procedure you can request that your complaint is escalated to the Head of Corporate Services.

This appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the response given under stage 2 and should be addressed to the Head of Corporate Services using the complaint reference number.

The Head of Corporate Services will investigate the complaint findings and liaise with all parties involved at Stage 2 of the complaint. This investigation may include confidential phone calls or meeting with you, our colleagues, partners and witnesses.

In some cases, the Head of Corporate Services may appoint an Appeals Panel to assess the findings and reach a judgement. This panel may include other Senior Managers (not involved in the previous stages of the complaint) and or a Trustee of the Board.

The Head of Corporate Services will write to the complainant with the appeal judgement within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal.

This appeal judgement is a final judgement and fully exhausts the STW /SPR complaint procedure.

8. If you're not satisfied

If you've been through all of our complaints stages, received our final response and still not satisfied, or you don't agree with the response from our MD following your appeal you can write independently and [ask your MP](#) (or any other MP) to send your complaint to the [Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman](#).