

Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

This Policy Sets out the process to be followed in dealing with complaints from:

- Members of the public
- Staff in partner agencies/Customers Business
- Clients
- Consumers
- Students

All complaints must be handled in an open and honest manner and seen as an opportunity for the Company to learn from past mistakes and to see the company from an external perspective.

Objective and purpose of the Complaints Policy

We seek to maintain its reputation as a firm delivering high quality professional services. We are also committed to maintaining its responsiveness to the needs and concerns of our clients.

The Policy is designed to provide guidance on the manner in which we receive and handle complaints made against the company, and its employees.

The objective of the Policy is to assist the company and employees in resolving complaints in an efficient, effective and professional manner.

Background

In preparing this Policy, we have endeavoured to align our procedures with the relevant legal requirements and current best practice. In particular, this Policy is designed to satisfy the requirements of AS ISO 10002 – Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations.

What is a complaint?

The Policy is intended to address complaints made to us in accordance with BS ISO 10002, a complaint under this Policy is defined as follows:

- An expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Any person or organisation (the complainant) who is dissatisfied with a product or service provided by the firm, for any reason, may contact us to complain. A complaint may be oral or written. At times, complaints can be by way of negative feedback, which may not require a resolution or formal follow-up.

While this type of feedback is valuable, the Policy does not apply to feedback of this nature.

Purpose

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The purpose of this procedure is to detail the requirements of ISO 10002 specifically in respect of Complaints Handling Process.

Scope

This procedure will cover the aspects of handling a Complaint from receipt to closing.

As outlined in AS ISO 10002, employees should consider the following guiding principles of effective complaints handling:

Visibility

Our Complaints Handling Policy is available internally, via request and is provided to clients.

Accessibility

Our Complaints Handling Policy is readily accessible to all employees, students and clients. The Policy is easy to understand and includes details on making and resolving complaints.

Responsiveness

Receipt of each complaint is acknowledged to the complainant immediately. Complaints will be handled in an efficient and effective manner. Complainants will be treated courteously and kept informed of the progress of their complaint throughout the complaint-handling process.

Objectivity

Each complaint is addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner through the complaints-handling process.

Charges

There will be no charge to the complainant for making a complaint.

Confidentiality

Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant is actively protected from disclosure unless the complainant expressly consents to its disclosure.

Customer focused approach

All employees, including the directors, and the management team, are committed to efficient and fair resolution of complaints. We actively solicit feedback from our clients on a regular basis and acknowledge a client's right to complain.

Accountability

All employees accept responsibility for effective complaints handling. The Director will ensure that, where appropriate, issues raised in the complaints handling process are reflected in employee performance evaluation.

Continual Improvement

Our complaints handling process will be reviewed periodically, and at least annually, to aim to enhance its efficient delivery of effective outcomes.

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Responsibilities

The Management Team ultimately has the responsibility of ensuring that all its Complaints are satisfied and with the services provided to the expected standard.

Communication – Information on how complaints can be made

Clients are advised that complaints can be made in writing or by telephone. Complaints are recorded via a complaints log.

Where a complaint is about a particular service, contract or employee you may wish to address your complaint to the Director either orally, by letter, email or fax.

Where possible, complaints should be made in writing so that the details of the complaint are clear and complete.

If you are not sure to whom to refer your complaint, or feel it is inappropriate to address your complaint to Managing Director, please write to:

The Director
TCMC Crowded Space Ltd
Head Office
Unit D5 Inspire Business Park
Belfast
BT16 1QT

What information is required when making a complaint?

When making a complaint, please provide the following information:

- Your name, position and contact details
- Your relationship with us (i.e. the nature of your engagement such; are you a client or student for example)
- Your contact person within our company
- The nature of the complaint (including when the conduct giving rise to the complaint occurred)
- Details of any of our employees involved (if applicable)
- Copies of any documentation supporting the complaint.

Assistance with making a complaint

If you need assistance in formulating or lodging a complaint, please contact the Managing Director. If this is not appropriate, please contact the Human Resources Manager.

Acknowledgement of complaints

We are committed to acknowledging all complaints immediately upon receipt. Once a complaint has been received, we will undertake an initial review of the complaint. We will endeavour to resolve complaints within ten working days of receiving the complaint, but this will not be possible on all occasions.

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Where our review exceeds ten working days, we will contact you to inform you of the reasons for the delay, and indicate to you when we expect to be in a position to complete our review of the complaint.

Your rights during the complaint process

You have the right to enquire as to the status of your complaint by contacting the employee who has been identified to you as handling your complaint.

Response to a complaint

Once we have reviewed your complaint, we will provide you with a written response. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have the right to ask for reconsideration of the response by the Human Resources Manager. Such a request should be made in writing and forwarded by post to the address provided above.

Our quality controls

Complaints will be analysed by the Quality Manager on a quarterly basis for the identification of systemic or recurring problems. If such problems are identified, we will consider what actions it may need to take to address these problems.

The complaints handling process will be reviewed periodically, and at least annually, to aim to enhance its delivery of efficient and effective outcomes.

This review will be performed by the Quality Manager or an appropriate appointee. The firm will consider what actions it may need to take to address any deficiencies identified in the review.

Where appropriate, issues that arise as a result of the complaints handling process may be incorporated in the process for monitoring and evaluating employee performance.

Please contact the Quality Manager if you have any comments or suggestions in respect of the contents of this Policy.

Conflicts

To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, personnel (including those acting in a management capacity) who have provides services to a client, or been employed by a client shall not be used to review or approve the resolution of a complain tor appeal for that client. This will last for a period of two years following their work on services for the client.

The decision resolving the complaint, or appeal shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, person(s) not involved in the contract management, or other aspects of the service, related to the complaint or appeal.

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Levels of Complaint

There will normally be three levels of complaint:

Verbal Complaints about Relatively Minor Matters

The member of staff receiving such a complaint should normally try to immediately resolve it with the complainant. If it concerns the conduct of another member of staff it should immediately be referred to a supervisor.

Care should be taken to listen to the concerns and respond to these in an open and positive manner. If the matter is resolved then the member dealing with it should simply make a note with the brief details, name of the complainant and how the matter was settled.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved it will be escalated to a supervisor who will again attempt to resolve it. If this is impossible it will be referred to a manager who will decide if a formal investigation is necessary.

Written Complaints about Minor Matters

These should be dealt with in a similar way to verbal complaints. The complainant should immediately be contacted by telephone and an attempt made to resolve the issue. This should be confirmed to them in writing and a full note made on the file of how the matter was dealt with. If it cannot be resolved it should be referred to a manager who will decide if a formal investigation is necessary.

Serious Complaints

Serious complaints are those, which allege serious misconduct by a member of our staff. Examples of such allegations might include:

- Assault
- Any other criminal conduct
- Dishonesty
- Harassment
- Behaviour which, if proved, might amount to gross misconduct

Serious Complaints will always immediately be referred to a manager who will arrange for the complaint to be seen immediately. Full details of the matters alleged will be recorded and a complaint form completed.

The matter will then be referred to a Manager who will review the evidence and decide if an investigation is warranted. If so, such an investigation will be carried out in line with the Company Misconduct Policy. Such investigations should normally be completed within 10 days

At every stage the complainant must be kept advised of what steps the company is taking to investigate their complaint and what progress is being made.

In all appropriate cases the Managing Director will arrange for a formal apology to be made by the company to persons whose complaints are upheld.