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| **Insert name of organisation** |
| **Complaints by Clients Policy Template** |

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| Policy number: Date adopted: |
| Authorised by: |
| Date last reviewed: | Reviewed by: **Insert name of officer, position title** | Date of next review: |

Refer to Section 6 below for information on the process for policy review.

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| **Policy context:** This policy relates to: |
| Legislation or other requirements | **Insert legislation that applies** |
| Other standards | **Insert other accreditation systems that apply** |
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***1. Purpose: Why do we have a complaints by clients policy?***

Dealing well with complaints and appeals helps us to maintain and improve our service quality and ensure clients have their issues resolved. Complaints and appeals processes give clients a way of expressing any dissatisfaction with our service and of having their concern dealt with quickly and effectively. It also provides us with the opportunity to improve our service delivery. The procedures guide us in responding appropriately and fairly to complaints and to appeals.

***2. Scope***

This policy will apply to **Indicate which clients and staff the policy will apply to.**

 **Are there any limits or conditions on the way the policy applies to some people?**

***3. Policy statement: Our commitment***

**Insert organisation name** is committed to facilitating our clients’ right to make a complaint about our service, to appeal a decision we have made that directly concerns them, and to ensuring that their complaint or appeal is fairly assessed and responded to promptly.

Specifically, we will:

**What will your organisation do to implement this policy? List your actions below**

***4. Procedures***

*4.1 Information about our complaints and appeals procedure*

We want our clients to feel able to voice their dissatisfaction with any aspect of our service, and to be confident that our organisation will manage their complaints well and respond quickly and appropriately. All clients are informed of their rights and responsibilities and our complaints by clients policy at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with our service. **Refer to your organisation's client feedback policy**

Clients are provided with information about their right to make a complaint or to appeal a decision, and the procedures that will be followed if they do. We provide this information in these ways:

**How will your organisation provide information to clients?**

*4.2 How clients can make a complaint or appeal a decision*

Clients may make a complaint by:

* **What steps do they take?**
* **Whom should they contact?**
* **What external complaints options do they have now and in later stages of the process?**
* **How are written complaints made?**
* **How are verbal complaints made?**

Clients may appeal a decision by:

* ***What steps do they take?***
* ***Whom should they contact?***
* ***What external complaints options do they have now and in later stages of the process?***
* ***How are written complaints made?***
* ***How are verbal complaints made?***

*4.3 How staff and management will respond to a complaint or appeal*

*Step 1: Registering a complaint or appeal*

We will follow this procedure when a complaint or appeal against a decision is received:

* **Who will deal with the matter?**
* **How will a complaint or appeal be recorded?**
* **How quickly will the client be told that their complaint or appeal has been received?**
* **What advice and information will be provided to the client?**

*Step 2: Investigating the complaint or appeal*

Each registered complaint or appeal will be investigated and assessed in the following way:

* **Who will deal with the matter?**
* **What records will be kept?**
* **How long will the process take?**
* **In what ways might the matter be resolved?**
* **When and how will the client be told of the outcome and any options for further action?**

*Step 3: Review*

If the client is not satisfied with theinvestigation and proposed resolution of their complaint or appeal, they can seek a further review of the matter by:

* **Who will deal with the matter?**
* **What records will be kept?**
* **When and how will the client be told of the review outcome?**

*Step 4: Formal external procedure*

A formal external complaints procedure may follow Step 3 if the client is still not satisfied with the outcome. The client will be referred to:

* **What external body will deal with the matter?**
* **Who will make the referral?**
* **What will the timeframes be?**

*4.4 Using complaints and appeals for service improvement*

Information about complaints and appeals will be kept in:

* **Where and how will complaints and appeals and their outcomes be documented?**

We compile and assess information about the types of complaints and appeals we have received and the outcomes, and we use this information to identify issues and to improve our services in this way:

* **How often will complaints and appeals data be assessed?**
* **Who will be responsible for compiling and assessing the data?**

We use information gathered from our complaints and appeals procedure to inform our decision making and planning processes by:

* **How will you make sure complaints and appeals and their outcomes are used to improve services?**

***5. Other related policies and procedures***

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| **Documents related to this policy** |
| Related policies | **List related policies** |
| Forms or other organisational documents | **List other organisational documents** |

***6. Review processes***

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| Policy review frequency: **Indicate how often this policy will be reviewed** | Responsibility for review: **Indicate who will review this policy** |
| Review process: **Describe how the policy will be reviewed** |
| Documentation and communication: **Describe how the policy decisions will be documented and communicated** |