



## Complaints Procedure (Membership)

### Introduction

The Staffordshire Centre strives to ensure membership is a positive experience for everyone whilst acknowledging that sometimes things can go wrong.

There may be instances where a member has a complaint about a fellow member or the organisation itself.

Although the Staffordshire Centre does not have a formal contractual relationship with its members, this Complaint Procedure will ensure that members know how to deal with problems in a consistent manner should they arise.

### Definition

A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.

### Procedure

The Staffordshire Centre has a collaborative approach to complaint handling and will work closely with parties to resolve complaints openly, fairly and quickly while minimising any disruption to members and protecting the reputation of the Staffordshire Centre.

- Sometimes issues may arise which may be quite easy to resolve without resorting to formal procedures, where possible this should be done as first response to any complaint / issue being raised.

However, if this is not possible / resolution is not reached, the formal process is:

- If a member makes a complaint (orally or in writing), it will first be discussed with the member informally by a member of the committee designated by the Chair
- The discussion will be followed up with a written summary to briefly outline the date / circumstances / outcome of the conversation
- If the issue cannot be resolved at this stage, the member should escalate the complaint to the Chair in writing within one month of them receiving the summary
- The Chair will review the complaint and written summary and, taking appropriate advice where necessary, will respond in writing to the complainant within three weeks of receipt of the escalation
- All complaints are treated confidentially and will only be discussed between those directly involved in trying to resolve the issue
- Records of the complaint / issue and associated records, communications and any subsequent sanctions will be stored confidentially by the Staffordshire Centre secretariat
- The decision of the Chair is final

## Associated Documents

- Members may access Staffordshire Centre policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct via the website. If a member does not have access to the website, a printed copy of a policy will be given to them within three weeks of a request being received. Requests should be directed to the Secretary. The committee reserves the right to levy a fee to cover any costs of printing and postage if deemed appropriate to do so.
- A copy of this procedure and signposting to policies on the website will be provided to members upon joining the Staffordshire Centre. Members will be reminded of location of policies and procedures annually as part of the AGM minutes.

## Monitoring

The number of complaints raised each year will be recorded and reported as a statistic at the AGM. Details of any complaints raised **will not** be shared although any trends identified will be discussed as part of the resolution process.

## Review

This procedure will be reviewed every two years by the Staffordshire Centre committee.