



Complaints/Compliments Procedure

Making a Complaint About Extern Services/Department or individual

Extern's Complaints Procedure

Extern is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone including those we provide support to, our service users, partners, stakeholders and volunteers. This policy is to inform you about how you can provide feedback or make a complaint and to ensure that that you receive an appropriate response in a timely manner. We positively welcome feedback and any suggestions you may have for how we can improve our services and how they are being delivered by our staff members.

We recognise that sometimes issues, concerns and misunderstandings can arise and in most cases a word with the person at the point of service delivery will be enough to deal with the issue. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when someone may feel that the quality or level of service provided fell short of what they could reasonably expect. We also want to know about these occasions so that we can address the problem, plan to avoid its repetition, improve our services and the overall experience of Extern.

Compliment

A compliment is defined as:

" An expression of praise or positive experience"

Both complaints and compliments are welcome opportunities to learn and improve across all our services.

If you have feedback (compliment) or a complaint about our services, a member of staff or a volunteer, we would like you to tell us about it.

Who can complain?

If you are dissatisfied with any aspects of our work or services, we want to make sure that we investigate your complaint thoroughly and provide you with a timely response. To allow us to do this, please provide as much information as possible when contacting us, including:

- The reason for your complaint
- Where and when it happened
- The name(s) of anyone involved (if known)
- The outcome you are hoping for
- Your contact details (name, address, daytime telephone number and/or email).

Who do I complain to or leave a compliment for, an individual or Project/Department?

You should contact the Head of Quality, Audit

Email: complaints@extern.org

Email: compliments@extern.org



Phone: Northern Ireland 02890840555 or Republic of Ireland 048 90840555

Letter: For the attention of Head of Quality Audit Extern Hydepark House, 3,McKinney Road, Mallusk, Newtownabbey, BT36 4PE.

What happens when I make a complaint?

The Head of Quality Audit will acknowledge your complaint in writing and will contact you to discuss your complaint, usually within 5 days of receipt of your complaint. The Head of Quality Audit shall, in consultation with the relevant manager, make arrangements to investigate your complaint. You will be informed of what steps will be taken to investigate your complaint. Sometimes it may be necessary for the Head of Quality, Audit to delegate the investigation of your complaint to another person employed by Extern. If you are asked to attend a meeting you may bring a companion to provide you with personal support.

Your complaint will be treated confidentially but sometimes we may have to involve other parties, if necessary, to the investigation of your complaint. If you are complaining about an individual member of staff or volunteer, they will need to be told about it and to be given details of your complaint. They will also need to be given information about the outcome of your complaint. A staff member will be advised to seek support from a colleague or trade union representative.

The Complaints Officer will inform you in writing about the outcome of your complaint usually within 21 days of the receipt of your complaint, or if this is not possible within such further reasonable time.

If I'm not satisfied with the outcome, what next?

If you disagree with the decision, you may ask for the matter to be referred to be appealed. You should write to the Chief Executive Officer within 5 working days from receipt of the complaint outcome letter, stating why you disagree with the decision on your complaint.

The Chief Executive may act as or may nominate another person to act as the Appeals Officer. The Appeals Officer will normally contact you within 5 working days from receipt of your appeal letter. You may be invited to a meeting and if you wish, you may bring a companion to provide you with personal support.

You will be informed you in writing about its decision within 5 working days of the meeting and the decision will be final.

Recording of Complaints

All complaints will be recorded clearly and accurately at all stages and arrangements confirmed in writing. All information from the process will be kept in a secure place by the Head of Quality Audit in line with our Data Protection Policy.

Monitoring

The Head of Quality Audit will maintain a register of information about every complaint, how it has been processed and the outcome in accordance with Extern's



Data Protection Policy. An annual report on the Complaints will be collated for submission to the Audit & Risk Committee.