



Scottish Refugee Council

COMPLAINTS/USER FEEDBACK POLICY

**The Chief Executive will assume the responsibility
except where specifically identified**

Reviewed by:	Senior Management Team
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1. Introduction

Scottish Refugee Council aims to provide high quality services and professional engagement. We welcome comments on our standard of service and conduct, and suggestions for improvement. If our services do not meet your expectations or you feel you have been unfairly treated, then please let us know.

Scottish Refugee Council has an External Complaints Procedure and all formal complaints received from clients and external stakeholders will be directed to the Chief Executive's office. Complaints are an important form of feedback which enables us to deal with the specific problem and avoid it happening again.

2. Definitions

Any user of a Scottish Refugee Council service may provide us with feedback or make a complaint.

Users are identified as clients, trainees, donors, volunteers, supporters, organisations (which would be represented by an individual), a friend/colleague of a user (e.g. the family of a client, a social worker, a SRC representative), members of the public.

External stakeholders of Scottish Refugee Council are welcome to provide feedback or make a complaint.

External Stakeholders are identified as any person, group or organisation that has an interest or concern in Scottish Refugee Council.

For the purpose of the External Complaints/User Feedback Policy and the External Complaints Procedure users and stakeholders are referred to as 'complainants'.

3. Feedback

Both positive and negative feedback are welcomed. All feedback and suggestions received will be considered, and where appropriate, action taken.

4. Principles of the External Complaints/User Feedback Policy

The principles on which the External Complaints/User Feedback Policy and External Complaints Procedure are based are as follows:

- The External Complaints Procedure will be part of the process of monitoring the quality, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of Scottish Refugee Council's services and dealings.
- We will publicise our External Complaints/User Feedback Policy and External Complaints Procedure to users of our services¹ and on our website and ensure that it is easy to use.
- We will ensure our External Complaints/User Feedback Policy and External Complaints Procedure are available to all external stakeholders of the organisation.
- We will aim to respond to all complaints within the time limits stated within the complaints procedure.
- Complaints will be dealt with confidentially and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Staff will be able to put across their point of view about any complaint made about them.
- No member of staff will be involved in investigating a complaint relating to his/her own behaviour.
- All complainants will be given written feedback on their complaint. The feedback will identify if their complaint is upheld or not and what action Scottish Refugee Council will take where appropriate
- Scottish Refugee Council will keep a record of all complaints and the Board of Directors will review this record on an annual basis.

5. Dealing with Complaints

- 5.1. SRC welcomes the opportunity to discuss with complainants any difficulties that have arisen, prior to a formal complaint being made. We will endeavour to listen and resolve the issue at this stage. However, we also recognise that there will be times when complainants wish to make formal complaints.

Please note that complaints will be directed through the Chief Executive's office, however, the Chief Executive will not normally in the first instance deal directly with complaints.

- 5.2. When dealing with all complaints, informal and formal, we will:

- Ensure the complainant is aware of the SRC External Complaints/User Feedback Policy and External Complaints Procedure.
- Take the complaint seriously and follow the appropriate stages within the procedure.
- Reassure complainants that their complaint will be dealt with.
- Investigate the complaint.

¹ The word 'service' is used in the broadest sense.

- Where the complaint is made by a third party, e.g. a friend, on behalf of a complainant, the complainant will be interviewed as part of any investigation.
- Resolve complaints as effectively and quickly as possible, and where appropriate, apologise.
- Reply to the complainant explaining whether their complaint is upheld or not, what has been done and what will be done.
- Ensure that complainants are informed of how they can further their complaint if they are not satisfied.
- Monitor complaints made and how they were resolved.
- Use the outcome of the complaint to improve services and other processes in the organisation, where appropriate.

5.3 We aim to ensure that all informal complaints are initially dealt with within 10 working days of the complaint being made.

5.4 There are no statutory requirements about how quickly the organisation should respond to complaints. The time limits referred to are regarded as targets that the board expects its management team to achieve under normal circumstances. The Board does however recognise that in a small organisation with fluctuating demands, the timescales outlined in this procedure may at times prove difficult.

5.5 The role of the Chief Executive's office in relation to the complaints process is to:

- Receive and log all written complaints
- Advise complainants of their rights
- Determine at what level a complaint should be heard
- Explain what will happen and when
- Allocate or confirm roles
- Ensure meetings are properly convened and serviced
- Ensure timescales are adhered to
- Monitor complaints and how they are resolved
- Provide an annual report to the Board on all complaints received at the first board meeting after the end of the previous financial year
- Act as "complaints officer" (see Section 6.2)

6. Publicity and Monitoring

6.1 Summary details of the Scottish Refugee Council External Complaints Procedure together with the complaints form will be uploaded onto our website. A poster will also be put up in the reception area advising complainants of the process on how they can make a complaint. Complaint forms are also available in the reception area.

- 6.2. The Scottish Refugee Council External Complaints/User Feedback Policy is available on the SRC website for all complainants and can be forwarded electronically or by post as appropriate by the complaints officer upon request.

- 6.3. Complaints will be monitored and analysed to ascertain who is making complaints, what is being complained about and how complaints are being resolved. The results and analyses of feedback and complaints will be monitored in the appropriate teams and a summary considered by the Board on an annual basis.

Reference – Internal Policies and Procedures
Complaints Procedure

