

Complaints Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Charity Commission guidance recommends that all charities have transparent processes for handling complaints that ensure any internal or external complaints are handled constructively, impartially and effectively.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the procedures for making a complaint about matters for which the HEDQF is responsible.

2. Informal procedure

- 2.1 Before a formal complaint is made efforts should be made to resolve the matter informally by discussion with any member of the HEDQF Executive Group.
- 2.2 At the end of any such discussion a note should be made summarising the discussion together with the agreed outcome. This will be kept on file.
- 2.3 If the person bringing the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion, they may submit a formal complaint.

3. Making a formal complaint

- 3.1 Formal complaints must be made within 3 months of the event and should include:
 - complainants full name and address
 - description of the situation
- 3.2 Complaints should be made in writing or by email, marked 'Confidential' to the HEDQF Company Secretary whose name and contact details are given below. They will acknowledge receipt within 10 working days and record receipt in a log.
- 3.3 The complaint will then be considered by the HEDQF Executive Committee which comprises up to five members of the Board of Trustees. If the complaint refers to individuals who are members of the Complaints Committee, it will meet without them being present.
- 3.4 The Executive Committee will investigate the complaint including seeking the views on the matter from any individuals, whether members of HEDQF or otherwise, to which the complaint refers. The Executive Committee may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf, but it will be the Executive Committee that makes any decisions. The Executive Committee and any such appointed persons will treat the matter confidentially. Minutes will be taken of all meetings of the Executive committee.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee may invite the person bringing the complaint to a meeting to discuss it further. If so, the person bringing the complaint may attend with a friend / representative if they wish.
- 3.6 The HEDQF Company Secretary will write to the person bringing the complaint with the conclusions from the Executive Committee's review, and reasons for that outcome, as soon as possible, and no longer than 6 weeks after receipt of the complaint. This will be the HEDQF's final response to the complaint.
- 3.7 Records of the complaint and the outcome will be kept on file.

4. Appeal

- 4.1 If the person bringing the complaint remains dissatisfied, they may wish to consider contacting the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission can be contacted via their website <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.

5. Initial contact for formal complaints

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