



Complaints Policy

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Owner:	Strategic sub-committee

Introduction

This policy sets out the way in which complaints within the Refugee and Migrant Centre are to be managed. In particular, it is designed to ensure that any questions or problems about the Refugee and Migrant Centre or its services are quickly aired and resolved.

A complaint may cover the standards, performance, decisions or actions of one or more of our employees, or our organisation as a whole.

The purpose of the policy is to improve the quality of services the Refugee and Migrant Centre provides, improve its relationship with the service users and encourage best practice by its employees.

The policy provides a procedure so that service users receive a fair, consistent and structured approach to any complaint they make. It helps to provide a positive process so that the outcome of complaints and any remedial action is used as a positive method of monitoring performance and improving services.

Some complaints concerning quality of advice may lead to a professional indemnity claim. The complaints procedure should be allowed to proceed at the same times as an indemnity claim on the issue. If during the process of investigating complaints legal action is started against the Refugee and Migrant Centre the complaints procedure should be ceased to avoid the confusion of two investigations happening at the same time.

Details of how to complain are clearly displayed on the premises. All complaints are dealt with confidentiality in mind and the Refugee and Migrant Centre has a complaints procedure (**Appendix 1**) and a senior member of staff designated to deal with them.

Scope

The Complaints Policy applies to all employees and volunteers at the Refugee and Migrant Centre.

All complaints must be reported to the relevant line manager, who will consider any further action that may need to be taken; including who else the matter needs to be reported to and any other remedial action that may be necessary. The complainant will be asked to put their complaint in writing to the management

Principles of the policy

The policy is based on a four-stage process;

Stage 1: A system for handling complaints at the service delivery stage

Stage 2: A system for managers to review the outcome of a stage 1 complaint

Stage 3: A system for board members handling stage 2 complaints

Stage 4: A system for stage 3 complaints.

The Refugee and Migrant Centre will inform the complainant in writing about the outcome and finding, and action to be taken to prevent reoccurrences or set out details of further action when/where necessary.

How a complaint can be made:

- in person;
- by telephone;
- by letter
- by e-mail;
- via a representative.

Complaints

Any user of the Refugee and Migrant Centre's service may complain. The word 'service' is used in the broadest sense; a complainant could be any of the following people or persons:

- clients;
- donors/funders;
- volunteers;
- supporters;
- organisations (public & voluntary), which would be represented by an individual;
- friends/colleagues of a service user e.g.; a social worker, a solicitor;
- members of the public.

Complaints can be made about the delivery of any of the Refugee and Migrant Centre's services. It is not intended for complaints about organisational policy; e.g., a complainant may not complain about the decision to close a service but may complain about the way in which the service was closed.

Managing complaints

Many informal complaints can be resolved by staff and managers using good customer care skills; however, we also recognise that there will be times when users wish to make formal complaints.

When dealing with all complaints, informal and formal, the Refugee and Migrant Centre will:

- take the complaint seriously;
- reassure complainants that their complaint will be dealt with;
- investigate the complaint;
- resolve complaints as effectively and quickly as possible;
- reply to the complainant explaining what has been done and what will be done;
- resolve the complaint by apologising and/or changing a service, when appropriate;
- ensure that complainants are informed of how they can further their complaint if they are not satisfied;
- keep all complaints on file;
- monitor complaints made and how they were resolved;
- use the outcome of the complaint to improve services, when and where appropriate.

We aim to ensure that all informal complaints are initially dealt with within 5 working days of the complaint being made.

The role of the designated person is to:

- receive and log all formal complaints;
- advise complainants of their rights;
- ensure time scales are adhered to;
- determine at what level a complaint should be heard;
- allocate or confirm roles and responsibilities;
- ensure meetings are properly convened and serviced;
- monitor complaints and how they are resolved.

Accessibility

The procedure for making a complaint will be published widely on the poster in the waiting/reception area and through the User Feedback Form and in a format appropriate to users.

Client complaints

We recognise that the best people to manage any initial client complaints are the employees and managers of our direct services.

We recognise that clients need to be encouraged to complain and that client complaint procedures must be easily accessible.

We have developed a client complaint procedure that directly links into the Refugee and Migrant Centre's Complaints Procedure. If clients are not happy about the way in

which their complaint has been dealt with, they can complain directly to the Complaints Officer. Clients can also complain directly to the Complaints Officer.

Monitoring complaints

The Refugee and Migrant Centre will monitor complaints, in order to review the issues raised, how these are managed and resolved, and to determine any improvements to services and the organisation that may be required.

Communication and training

All employees and volunteers will be informed of this policy and the procedure to be followed as part of their induction to the Refugee and Migrant Centre.

Related policies

We also have the following related policies: Referral and Signposting policy, Training and Development policy.

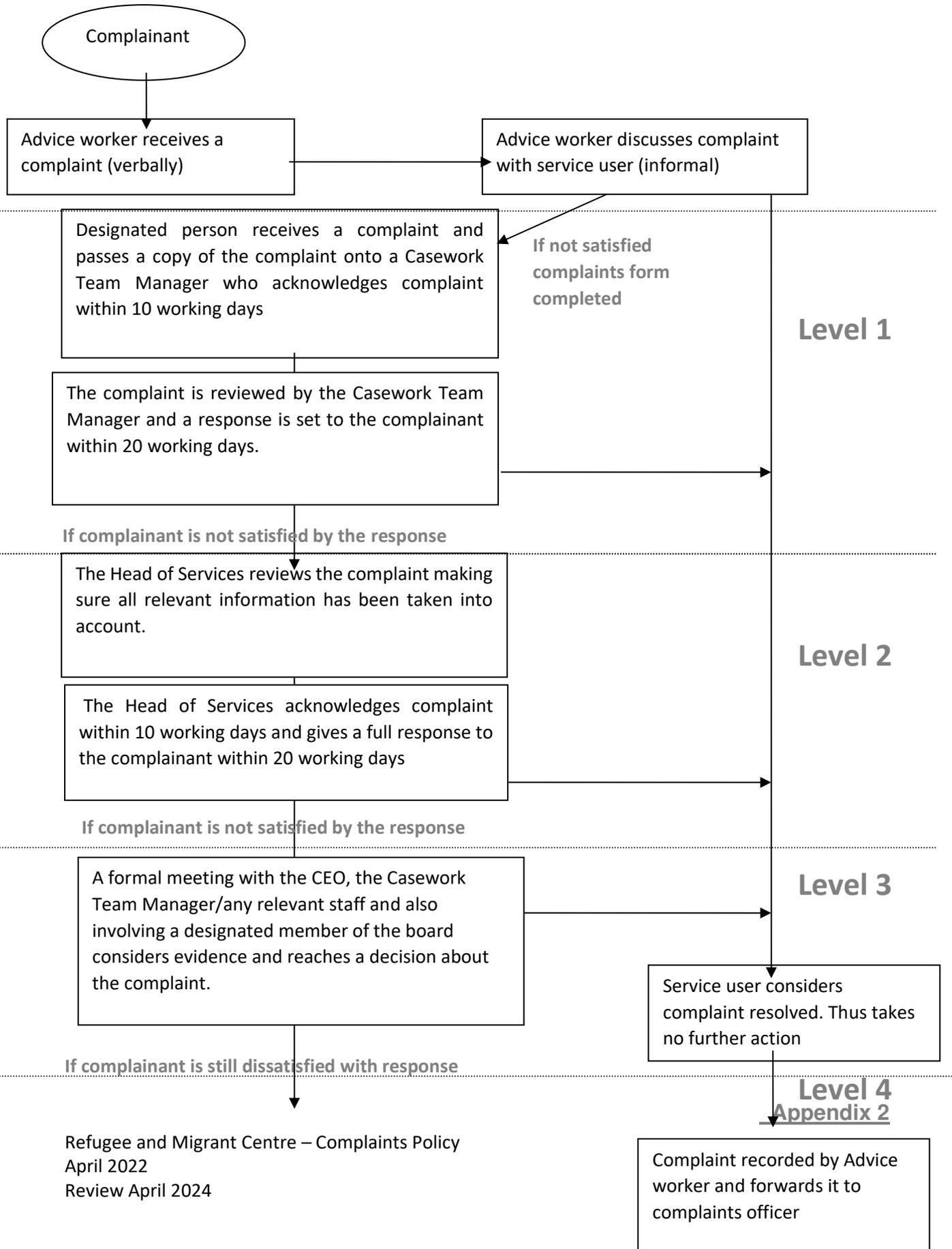
Implementation, monitoring and review of this policy

This policy took effect from 19April 2013. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis following its implementation (at least annually) and additionally whenever there are relevant changes in legislation or to our working practices.

Any questions or concerns about the interpretation or operation of this policy should be taken up in the first instance with the Chief Executive or appropriate member of SMT delegated to by the Chief Executive.

Appendix 1

Flow Chart of the Refugee and Migrant Centre’s Complaints Procedure



The Complainant will be advised of external organisations who regulate to which the complaint may be reported.