

Complaints Management Policy

Regional Studies Association

Updated November 2020

This document contains information about:

- Complaint management at the RSA
- Responsibility for policy implementation
- Complaint procedure
- Monitoring complaints
- Publication of this policy

The Regional Studies Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee

Company Number 04116288, Registered Charity Number 1084165.

Complaints Management Policy

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Association is committed to providing a quality service, which meets the needs of our members. However, sometimes things go wrong and when this happens we need to know about it to help us to improve our service.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a member about the standard of service provided by the Association, whether justified or not. It is the aim of the Association to resolve complaints effectively and as quickly as possible.

The Association recognises that complaints can provide valuable information about service delivery and will use this information to continuously improve services and also to improve the procedure for dealing with complaints.

1. Responsibility

The Chief Executive is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

2. Procedure

The Association is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and reasonably. Below is the Association's procedure for dealing with complaints and staff will work within the procedure.

- All complaints will be treated confidentially and taken seriously. Making a complaint will not affect the way a member/client is treated or the service that they receive.
- Complaints may be received verbally or in writing from the complainant or someone acting on their behalf. A complaint may also be anonymous.
- Every complaint will be recorded and acknowledged where appropriate.
- Every complaint will be investigated (anonymous complaints will be investigated to determine whether the complaint is justified and should be investigated further).
- Complainants will be kept informed of progress and the outcome of any investigations.
- The Association will try to resolve the complaint at the initial point of contact with the member or at the earliest possible stage of the complaints procedure.

- If a member is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint after dealing with the office team the complaint may be escalated up through the Chief Executive to the Chair of the RSA Board or to the whole Board.
- There may be some complaints that the Association cannot deal with but will direct the member to the right organisation. For example, complaints that relate to charity law or governance would be directed to the Charity Commission.
- If a member makes numerous complaints about matters that have already been dealt with, the Association may deem the member to be a vexatious complainant. All complaints made by such a member will be considered by a senior member of staff who will determine whether or not it should be dealt with as a new complaint or dismissed.

3. Monitoring

Complaints will be monitored in order to establish the scale and type of the problem, develop effective strategies, target resources, assess the impact of the Association's guidelines, and develop effective performance measures. Complaints will be monitored by category, ethnicity, and outcome. The information will be used to improve services and to improve the procedure for dealing with complaints.

Reports may be made to the Board of Trustees about complaints at the Chief Executive's discretion.

The Association may publish its performance against any standards and/or targets, and any changes that have been made to policies and/or procedures as a result of complaints.

4. Copies of the policy

Copies of these complaints guidelines and procedure are freely available from the office and are published on the RSA website at www.regionalstudies.org.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.
