



Complaints Policy & Procedure

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Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our policy is to respond swiftly to complaints through open dialogue, a professional approach and a commitment to good quality customer service. Complaints can be made and resolved informally. However, there will be occasions when a member of the public, partner or sub contractor wishes to make a formal complaint. We take all complaints seriously. Our response should bring resolution for the complainant, appropriate action regarding capability or safeguarding and highlight areas for ongoing improvement.
- 1.2 This policy and procedure sets out how Adviza deals with complaints, and aims to support both the complainant, in having complaints addressed fairly and impartially, and staff in responding appropriately, and valuing complaints as an improvement/ learning exercise.
- 1.3 Adviza's senior leadership team takes all complaints seriously and reviews a summary of complaints on a quarterly basis to ensure appropriate action and improvements to future delivery.
- 1.4 We will ensure that the confidentiality of the complainant's relationship with Adviza is respected throughout the complaints procedure.
- 1.5 Adviza aims to handle all complaints fairly and honestly regardless of their origin. Adviza treats all members of the community equitably and will not show bias to any particular individual or group. Information can be made available in alternative formats on request. Our communication methods will be appropriate to the needs of the complainant, and we will always offer the opportunity for a face to face meeting to discuss the issues.

Complaints Procedure

1. How to complain

Many complaints can be resolved informally by discussing the issue with a member of Adviza staff. All Adviza delivery staff report to a line manager who you can ask to speak to regarding your complaint. However, if you are still dissatisfied you can make a formal complaint.

Formal complaints must be made by letter, fax or e-mail to a Director or the Chief Executive. You should send it to: Complaints, Adviza, 11th Floor, Ocean House, The Ring, Bracknell, RG12 1AX. Fax: 0845 408 5003. E-mail: info@adviza.org.uk

Once we have received your complaint it will be dealt with in accordance with the following procedure:

Step One: You will be sent an acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt of your complaint. We will always offer a face to face meeting to discuss the issues. If we are unclear on any point you will also be contacted for clarification in order to give full consideration to all the points you wish to make.

Step Two: Complaints will initially be investigated by a Director, or another senior member of staff, at the discretion of the organisation, depending on the nature of the complaint. There will be liaison with any other parties involved, e.g. school, Commissioners and discussions with the staff involved. The lead manager for the investigation will meet with another senior manager or Director to review the results of the investigation and agree response.

Step Three: The response will be formally signed off by a Director or the Chief Executive and a full reply sent to you within 20 working days.

Step Four: If you are unhappy with the initial response you can ask for it to be reviewed by the Chief Executive or another senior manager designated by her. All aspects of the complaint will be reviewed and a response sent to you within a further 20 working days.

Step Five: If you remain unhappy with the response the complaint can be reviewed by a panel of two non-executive Directors. They will send a final response within a further 20 working days.

Adviza is a registered charity (No. 1132201) and in some cases it is possible to refer complaints to the Charity Commission. It is unlikely that the Charity Commission will consider complaints about the standard of service a charity has provided in an individual case. Complaints must be made in writing, quoting the Registered Charity Number, using the on-line form available at www.charity-commission.gov.uk .

2. Adviza response and timeframe

We will send an initial acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint. Adviza aims to send a full response within 20 working days. In circumstances where the issues are particularly complex it may take longer, and if Adviza thinks this is likely we will write to the complainant with a revised timescale at the earliest opportunity.

During the initial 20 day period the Director or senior manager leading the investigation will meet with staff involved, and liaise with any other parties involved; e.g. school, Commissioners.

Before the response is sent it must be reviewed by another Director or senior manager. The response must be formally signed off by a Director or senior manager before it is sent.

Guidance for Adviza staff on the initial acknowledgement and final response are in Appendix 2.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the response it can be referred to the Chief Executive, or a senior manager of her choosing, with a further response time of 20 working days.

If the complaint continues it will be referred to two non-executive Directors for consideration with a further 20 working day response time.

Beyond this the complainant may be able to take the complaint to the Charity Commission within their guidelines.

3. Improvements

When a complaint occurs the Director, or approved senior manager, will initiate an improvement plan. This document is used to record the details of the complaint, and outline the actions that will be taken. This supports the review process by SLT. Directors should liaise with the Quality Manager to agree appropriate filing of the paperwork for the purposes of ISO.