

COMPLAINT & FEEDBACK HANDLING POLICY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that we handle complaints & feedback fairly, efficiently, and effectively. Our complaint management system is intended to:

- enable us to respond to issues raised by people making complaints and or providing feedback in a timely and proactive manner.
- boost customer confidence in our response process, and
- provide information that can be used by us to deliver quality improvements and training across our products, services, staff, and complaint handling. This policy provides guidance for our staff and any key stakeholders who wish to make a complaint or provide constructive feedback on the key principles and concepts of our complaint management system.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff receiving or managing complaints and feedback from customers made to or about us, Ethos regarding our products, services, staff, and complaint handling.

1.3 Organisational commitment

This organisation expects staff at all levels to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling. The following table outlines the nature of the commitment expected from staff and the way that commitment should be implemented.

Who	Commitment	How
Director - Ethos Building	Values a culture that promote the receipt and effective resolution of complaints and constructive feedback complaints and their effective resolution	Provide adequate support and direction to all staff responsible for handling complaints. Regularly review Feedback Register to identify complaints, constructive feedback, and issues arising from complaints. Promote and train all staff on the Complaint & Feedback Handling Policy and the effective and efficient resolution of them. Promote and encourage staff to make identify and make recommendations for system and process improvements. Recognise and reward good complaint handling by staff. Support continuous improvement recommendations for product, service, staff and in response to complaint and feedback handling.

Manager responsible for complaint handling	Oversee and manage our complaint and feedback management system.	Review Complaints and Feedback Register and Provide regular reports to the director on complaints and feedback received. Review feedback received, analyse data and make recommendations for business and customer experience improvements. Canvass with Director and manage implementation of improvement initiatives. Train and empower staff to resolve complaints and feedback promptly and in accordance with Ethos Building's policies and procedures. Encourage staff managing complaints and feedback to provide suggestions and solutions for improvements. Recognise and reward good complaint and feedback handling by staff.
Staff whose duties include complaint handling	Demonstrate exemplary complaint and feedback handling practices	Treat all clients and customers that raise complaints and or provide constructive feedback with respect. Assist and support people when making a complaint, if needed. Comply with this policy and its associated procedures. Apply and keep informed with best practice in complaint handling. Provide feedback to management on issues arising from complaints and constructive feedback for improvements. Provide suggestions to management on ways to improve the organisation's complaints and feedback policy, procedures, systems, and implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis of complaint data as directed by management.

All staff	Understand and comply with Ethos Building's complaint handling practices.	Treat all clients and customers that raise complaints and or provide constructive feedback with respect. Have a good understanding and awareness of Ethos Building's complaint and feedback handling policies and procedures. Assist and support people who wish to make complaints, including redirecting access to the Ethos Building's complaints and feedback process and register. Be alert to complaints and assist staff handling complaints resolve matters promptly. Provide feedback to management on issues arising from complaints and constructive feedback for improvements. Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis and evaluation of complaint data as directed by management.
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Terms and Definitions

Complaint

Expression of dissatisfaction and or feedback made to or about us, our products, quality, services, staff, trades, contractors and or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaint & Feedback management system

All policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware, and software used by all Ethos staffing the management of complaints and or constructive feedback.

Dispute

An unresolved complaint regarding our products, quality, services, staff, trades, contractors and or the handling of a complaint that is escalated either within or outside of our organisation.

Feedback

Constructive opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly, or implicitly, to or about us, about our products, quality, services, staff, trades, contractors and or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Grievance

A clear, formal written statement by an individual staff member about another staff member or a work-related problem.

Policy

A statement of instruction that sets out how we should fulfill our vision, mission, and goals.

Procedure

A statement or instruction that sets out how our policies will be implemented and by whom.

Guiding principles

3.1 Facilitate Complaints & Feedback

We are committed to seeking and receiving constructive feedback and complaints about our services, systems, practices, procedures, products and complaint handling. Any concerns raised in feedback or complaints will be dealt with within a reasonable time frame.

Ethos Building adopts the following expected timeframe for complaint resolution:

Response to initial complaint – 2hours

Review of complaint and Presentation of proposed solution

- If solution possible within initial phone call – within phone call
- If escalation for review to management – within 24hrs
- If time frame is longer than 24hrs – advise complainant within 24hrs with a resolution time frame.

If due to the nature of the complaint these timelines cannot be met, a proposal outlining the next steps in attempt to resolve the matter will be distributed to all relevant parties (for example attendance to site by the director, and or construction manager and the designated project manager)

People making complaints will be:

- provided with information about our complaint handling process & procedures and access to our Complaints and Feedback Register
- listened to, treated with respect by staff and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate, and
- provided with reasons for our decision/s and any options for redress or review.

No detriment to people making complaints.

We will ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

Anonymous complaints

We accept anonymous complaints and will carry out an investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

Accessibility

- We will ensure that our Complaints and Feedback Register systems are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance.

If a person prefers or needs a 3rd party representative to assist or represent them in the making and/ or resolution of their complaint, we will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish.

3. 2 Responding to complaints & feedback

Early resolution

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with Ethos Building

Responsiveness

We will promptly acknowledge receipt of complaints within 24hrs.

We will assess and prioritise complaints in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.

We are committed to managing people's expectations, and will inform them as soon as possible, of the following:

- the complaints process.
- the expected time frames for our actions
- the progress of the complaint, the time frames, and reasons for any delay
- their likely involvement in the process, and
- our recommended outcome of their complaint.

We will advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed (if known and appropriate).

We will also advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to meet our time frames for responding to their complaint and the reason for our delay with a revised time frame.

Objectivity and fairness

We will address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective, and unbiased manner. We will ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member whose conduct or service is being complained about.

Conflicts of interests, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly. In particular, internal reviews of how a complaint was managed will be conducted by a person other than the original decision maker.

Responding flexibly

Our staff are empowered to resolve complaints promptly and with as little formality as possible when appropriate. We will adopt flexible approaches to service delivery and problem solving to enhance accessibility for people making complaints and/or their representatives. We will assess each complaint on its merits and involve people making complaints and/or their representative in the process as far as possible.

Confidentiality

We will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate.

3.3 Manage the parties to a complaint

Complaints involving multiple agencies

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, we will work with the other organisation/s where possible, to ensure that communication with the person making a complaint and/or their representative is clear and coordinated.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between the parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint involves multiple areas within our organisation, responsibility for communicating with the person making the complaint and/or their representative will also be coordinated.

N.B. Under the conditions of the ICA code of conduct, all formal complaints received will be advised to the relevant insurer.

Complaints involving multiple parties

When similar complaints are made by related parties we will try to arrange to communicate with a single representative of the group.

Empowerment of staff

All staff managing complaints are empowered to implement our complaint management system as relevant to their role and responsibilities.

Staff are encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of our complaint management system.

Managing unreasonable conduct by people making complaints

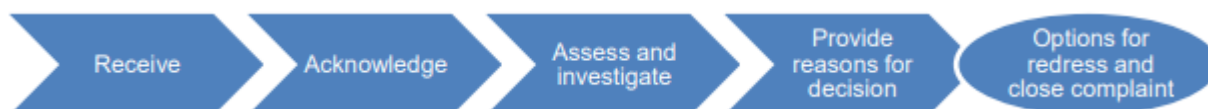
We are committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach us with feedback or complaints.

At the same time our success depends on:

- our ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient way possible.
- the health, safety and security of our staff, and
- our ability to allocate our resources fairly across all the complaints we receive.

When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with us, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of our work. As a result, we will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects us and will support our staff to do the same in accordance with this policy.

Complaint management system



4.1 Introduction

When responding to complaints and or feedback, staff should act in accordance with our complaints and feedback handling procedures as well as any other internal documents providing guidance on the management of complaints.

Staff should also consider any relevant legislation and/or regulations when responding to complaints and feedback. The five key stages in our complaint management system are set out below.

4.2 Receipt of complaints

Unless the complaint has been resolved at the outset, we will record the complaint and its supporting information.

We will also assign a unique identifier to the complaint file.

The record of the complaint will document:

- the contact information of the person making a complaint.
- issues raised by the person making a complaint and their expected outcome/s
- any other relevant information or details regarding the complaint and
- any additional support the person making a complaint requires.

4.3 Acknowledgement of complaints

We will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly, and preferably within 24hrs. Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g., email, letter) for communicating with the person making a complaint.

4.4 Initial assessment and addressing of complaints

Initial assessment

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, we will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint is/are within our control. We will also consider the outcome/s sought by the person making a complaint and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed.

When determining how a complaint will be managed, we will consider:

- How serious, complicated, or urgent the complaint is.
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety
- How the person making the complaint is being affected
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations or escalation to management

Addressing complaints

After assessing the complaint, we will consider how to manage it. To manage a complaint, we may:

- Give the person making a complaint information or an explanation that may be relevant and explains the situation.
- Gather information from the product, person, or area that the complaint is about, or
- Investigate the claims made in the complaint.

We will keep the person making the complaint up to date on our progress, and provide time frames, particularly if there may be any delays. We will also communicate the outcome of the complaint using the most appropriate medium. Which actions we decide to take will be tailored to each case and will take into account any statutory or regulatory requirements.

4.5 Providing reasons for decisions

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, we will contact the person making the complaint and advise them:

- the outcome of the complaint and any action we took.
- the reason/s for our decision
- the remedy or resolution/s that we have proposed or put in place, and
- any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review, or appeal.

4.6 Closing the complaint, record keeping, redress and review

We will keep comprehensive records about:

- the complaint and information received.
- How we managed the complaint
- The outcome/s of the complaint (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated, any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations, and
- Any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

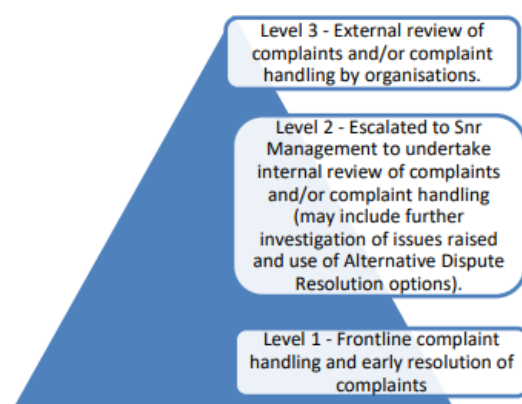
We will ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored, and reported to the complaint handling manager and/or senior management.

4.7 Alternative avenues for dealing with complaints

We will inform people who raise complaints to or about us about any internal or external review options available to them.

4.8 The three levels of complaint handling

We will inform people who raise complaints to or about us about any internal or external review options available to them.



We aim to resolve complaints at the first level, the front line. Wherever possible staff will be adequately equipped and trained to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, support, and supervision. Where applicable, we may decide to escalate the complaint to a more senior officer within Ethos Building. This second level of complaint handling will provide for the following internal mechanisms:

- assessment and investigation approach of the complaint and any recommendations made, decision/s already made, and/or
- facilitated resolution (where a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties).

Where a person making a complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome of Ethos Building review of their complaint, they may seek to have the complaint escalated to Snr Management and or recommend an external review.

Accountability and learning

5.1 Analysis and evaluation of complaints

We will ensure that complaints are recorded and stored in our Complaints & Feedback Register system and ensure that all information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis.

5.2 Monitoring of the complaint management system

We will actively monitor our complaint management system to:

- ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaints, and
- identify and correct deficiencies in the operation of the system.
- Monitoring may include the use of audits and/or complaint and feedback satisfaction surveys.

5.3 Continuous improvement

We are committed to continuous improvement across our organisation and in particular, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our complaint and feedback management system. To this end, we will:

- support the making and appropriate resolution of complaints.
- implement best practices in complaint and feedback handling.
- recognise and reward exemplary complaint handling by staff.
- regularly review the complaints and feedback management system, including all data collated, and
- implement continuous improvements across processes and system arising out of our analysis of complaints and feedback data.

The Process

Refer to Appendix 1 to Complaints Policy – The Process