

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

Policy Context

A&DCWT aims to provide high quality services and is committed to continuous improvement by welcoming and acting upon the views and opinions of its customers.

This policy covers A&DCWT's commitments and procedures in relation to managing comments, compliments and complaints.

This policy is informed by:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Definitions

- A customer is defined as: any client, tenant, donor, partner, visitor, or other stakeholder that comes into contact with A&DCWT
- A comment is defined as: any feedback by any customer
- A compliment is defined as: any expression of satisfaction by any customer
- A complaint is defined as: any expression of dissatisfaction by any customer, whether justified or not

Aims and Purpose

A&DCWT actively involves and listens to its customers and welcomes comments, compliments and complaints as an opportunity to improve the quality of its work.

This policy outlines the procedures for a customer to follow to make a comment, compliment or complaint and the internal procedures A&DCWT will follow to manage the process.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Customers may legitimately express satisfaction or dissatisfaction about A&DCWT and be assured that they will be listened to
- Complaints are resolved quickly and smoothly and as close to their source as possible
- Customers' views are used as an opportunity to reflect on and to improve A&DCWT's work, policy and practice

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Responsibilities for A&DCWT

A&DCWT will ensure:

- Implementation of A&DCWT's Governance Framework to enable customers to comment on or compliment A&DCWT's work
- The procedures in this policy are implemented to enable customers to complain about A&DCWT's work
- Customers are made aware of this policy
- Complaints are investigated at the most appropriate level and are resolved as quickly as possible, keeping customers informed at all times
- Appropriate records are maintained regarding complaints
- Comments, compliments and complaints are monitored and evaluated and reported to the Board of Trustees in accordance with A&DCWT's Governance Framework
- Action is taken in response to comments and compliments and any recommendations made following investigation of complaints
- Staff and volunteers receive training on A&DCWT's Governance Framework and complaints handling

Responsibilities for All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and Volunteers will ensure that they:

- Are aware of this policy and adhere to it
- Understand the value of comments, compliments and complaints
- Are able to explain this policy to A&DCWT's customers
- Reflect on their actions and approaches, based on customers' comments, compliments and complaints

Comments and Compliments

A&DCWT will encourage customers' comments and compliments on its work in a variety of ways, through its Governance Framework.

Staff and Volunteers will use the comments and compliments received from customers to make improvements to their work and report to its customers, the Board of Trustees, funders and other stakeholders.

Complaints

A&DCWT will follow three stages when handling complaints to ensure that customers' concerns are dealt with at the most appropriate level.

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Staff, Volunteer and the Board of Trustees will follow the procedure below:

Stage One

- A customer can raise a complaint with any member of staff or volunteer and should speak to the person that they feel is most appropriate
- The member of staff or volunteer will listen to the customer and be courteous
- The member of staff or volunteer will refer the customer to the Centre Manager within one working day
- The Centre Manager will aim to resolve the complaint as quickly as possible by acknowledging the customer's dissatisfaction, talking through their concerns, offering any appropriate redress and recognise that the customer is dissatisfied
- The whole process will take no more than five working days from the date that the complaint is first received by the Centre Manager
- The Centre Manager will inform the customer that if they remain dissatisfied, they can take their complaint to Stage Two of the procedure within a maximum of two months of completing Stage One of the procedure
- The Centre Manager will make a copy of this policy and any necessary contact details available to the customer
- The Centre Manager will keep a record of the complaint and their handling of the matter

Stage Two

- A customer who has completed Stage One of the procedure and remains dissatisfied can make a written complaint to the Centre Manager ('the Head')
- The written complaint should include:
 - The name and contact details of the customer
 - Specific details of the complaint raised at Stage One
 - Specific details of any concerns about the handling of the complaint at Stage One
 - The redress the complainant would like to see
- The Centre Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days and recognise that the customer remains dissatisfied
- Where appropriate, the Centre Manager will arrange to meet with the customer to discuss their concerns
- The Centre Manager will investigate the complaint by speaking to any relevant staff and considering the Stage One handling of the complaint
- The Centre Manager will respond in writing to the customer with their findings and any details of redress or improvements to be made
- The whole process will take no more than ten working days from the date the Stage Two complaint is first received

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- The Centre Manager will inform the customer that if they remain dissatisfied, they can take their complaint to Stage Three of the procedure, within a maximum of two months of completing Stage Two of the procedure
- The Centre Manager will make a copy of this policy and any necessary contact details available to the customer
- The Centre Manager will ensure that any recommendations for improvements are implemented as soon as possible and will write to the customer to confirm that improvements have been made
- The Centre Manager will keep a record of the complaint and their handling of the matter

Stage Three

- A customer who has completed both Stages One and Two of the procedure and remains dissatisfied can make a written complaint to the Chair of the Board of Trustees
- The written complaint should include:
 - The name and contact details of the customer
 - Specific details of the complaint
 - Specific details of any concerns about the handling of the complaint at Stages One and Two
 - The redress the complainant would like to see
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days and recognise that the customer remains dissatisfied
- Where appropriate, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will arrange to meet with the customer to discuss their concerns and two trustees with Gender Balance where possible
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will investigate the complaint by speaking to any relevant staff and considering the Stage One and Two handling of the complaint
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will respond in writing to the customer with their findings and any details of redress or improvements to be made
- The whole process will take no more than twenty working days from the date the Stage Three complaint is first received
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will ensure that any recommendations for improvements are implemented as soon as possible and will write to the customer to confirm the improvements have been made
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will inform the customer that Stage Three is the final stage of this procedure
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will keep a record of the complaint and their handling of the matter

In certain circumstances, A&DCWT may deem it appropriate for a complaint to be handled at Stages Two or Three, without completion of Stage One. A&DCWT may also deem it appropriate for other staff, or trustees to handle the complaint. A&DCWT will advise the customer of the reasons for this.

Policy Implementation

- The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy and that regular reviews take place
- All staff have a responsibility to adhere to this policy and will be made aware of this policy as part of their induction, supervision and training

Policy Release and Arrangements for Review

- This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on 29th October 2018
- This policy will be reviewed in two years, but may be reviewed earlier if deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees or Centre Manager
- This policy will be due for review in November 2020