

Complaints and Compliments Policy

Policy Statement

Salmon Club aims to provide the best possible quality of service. As part of this process, we will listen and act on the views and concerns of our users, whether complaining or simply commenting on the service they receive. Salmon Club is also committed to listening to the views of other people such as relatives, parents, advocates, friends or representatives or authorities who wish to complain about services provided. Salmon Club acknowledges that instances of poor practice can and do occur and should be rectified speedily, effectively and as locally as possible. Therefore time and resources must be put into training and into informing users in understanding and using the Procedure. Salmon Club upholds the rights of members to:-

- Make complaints about the quality or nature of the service they receive;
- Be supported and/or represented by someone of their choice when making a complaint;
- Know that their complaint will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner, as quickly and as close to the point of service delivery as is acceptable and appropriate.

Salmon Club is committed to listening to the views of users in order to enable them to participate in decision-making and to involve them in improving and developing services to meet their needs. Salmon Club also welcomes feedback as compliments, suggestions or concerns. Such feedback can be used to develop and share good practice as well as recognising the quality of service provided by our volunteers. Such feedback will be recorded and reviewed. This Policy has been agreed by Salmon Club committee. This Policy operates in conjunction with the following – Health & Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy and POVA Policy.

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Some users may feel vulnerable and therefore fear the consequences of making a complaint. Feelings of vulnerability and anxiety will be more likely where a user wishing to complain is largely dependent on the service provided by Salmon Club. Implementation of the Procedure therefore should be sensitive to such feelings and should enable those who use it to exercise control and self-direction in their lives whilst using our services. It should be publicised in a variety of ways taking account people with different needs, e.g. those who are hearing or visually impaired or who have difficulty communicating. Complaints must be dealt with as speedily as possible. Those involved must be kept informed of the status of the investigation which must be undertaken in line with the requirements of the Salmon Club “Conducting Investigations Guidelines”. As far as possible an anonymous feedback will be investigated. Because of potential legal issues which may arise, allegations which if proved may constitute gross misconduct, must be reported immediately to the Club Chair.

Making a Complaint

Complaints will usually be made in writing to the Club Chair but may be made to another committee member. In situations of CP or POVA it may be made via Club’s CP/POVA Officers. In the event of complaint against the Club Chair to the Club President.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

Complainants retain the right to withdraw their complaint at any stage during the process. This does not preclude the right or responsibility of Salmon Club to conduct a managerial investigation. The withdrawal of a complaint should always be recorded and agreed in writing with the complainant.

Exceptions

There may be times when a decision is taken to deal with a complaint in a different way. Any such decision will be an exception and must be made by the Club Chair following discussion with interested parties. The reason for the decision and the action taken must be recorded and held by Club Admin Secretary.

Recording

Once it has been agreed that an issue raised is a complaint and will therefore be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure, records must be kept by Club Admin Secretary, keeping a record of complaints and how they are handled is important for the following reasons:-

- To confirm and clarify the details of complaints;
- To show that complaints have been handled in line with this Procedure and good practice;
- To provide information that can be used when changing and developing our services;
- To achieve compliance with legislative requirements;
- To provide information used to prepare an annual report regarding the Complaints Procedure.

Monitoring

The effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure will be monitored in a number of ways:-

- Through statistical information;
- Through supervision and training;
- By consulting people who have used the Complaints Procedure to gain their views.

Complaints

Potentially complaints could be against:

- An individual Salmon Club member; this could be a disabled member, associate member, Committee member or Volunteer helper.
- A member's Carer who maybe in their employment or that of a supporting organisation but is not as such a member of the club.
- The body of the Club i.e. the Salmon Club Committee.
- An individual member of Everyone Active staff or the corporate body SLM Ltd.

Members and Volunteers

To ensure that our members and volunteers are committed to upholding the Complaints Policy. There should be adequate protection of their interests, particularly in the event of unfounded or malicious allegations. In recognising this, Salmon Club upholds the following rights of members or volunteers:-

- Members/Volunteers who are the subject of a complaint or are involved, must be informed of the details and their rights within seven days of receipt of the complaint or as soon as possible. They must also be kept appropriately informed throughout the process.

- In exceptional circumstances, the person carrying out the investigation may not be considered appropriate by the member or volunteer concerned. In this case, the decision to offer an alternative rests with the person commissioning the investigation.
- Salmon Club members and volunteers have the same legal rights as any citizen concerning any civil or criminal act against them. They have the right to independent advice at any stage during the process such as from their professional organisation or trade union.
- Time should be allowed for people to prepare their case. When interviewed, they should be given every opportunity to state their case, either orally or in writing. Members and Volunteers should be aware of their right to be accompanied by a representative, who is not directly involved in the complaint.

Everyone Active:

Complaints about members of Everyone Active (SLM Ltd) Staff (or their contractors) or their services will be directed to the Duty or Deputy Centre Manager for them to investigate and take appropriate action. Where possible the outcome and actions taken will be feedback to Committee via Club Chair.

Disciplinary Action

Any disciplinary action arising from an investigation into a complaint will be carried out in accordance with this Salmon Club policy and procedure.

During Investigation (from first complaint until disciplinary is concluded) they should be supervised or suspended at discretion of Club Chair. This is considered a neutral act for the protection of all parties and as such is not a disciplinary act. Contact with complainants or witnesses should be avoided.

Following an investigation the details and recommendations of the investigating officer will be heard by Committee who shall sanction appropriate disciplinary action, this may include:-

- a) No further action.
- b) A verbal warning of conduct
- c) Written warning
- d) Final written warning
- e) Removal of a responsibility or from a certain role within the Salmon Club
- f) Suspension of membership for a period of up to six months
- g) Termination of membership of the Salmon Club

Obviously any external investigations (e.g. Police, Social Services or employment) and actions would be a matter for the relevant parties.

Procedure Stage One

It is anticipated that the majority of complaints will be resolved satisfactorily at this stage. This will normally be through discussion and negotiation and will not always require the complainant to put the complaint in writing, all complaints however will be acknowledged within seven days.

Complaints should be referred to Club Chair, who have responsibility for deciding what action should be taken and by whom and for contacting the Club Admin Secretary to register the complaint and obtain a complaints number, recording details of the complaint and for monitoring the progress of the investigation and outcome.

When the complaint relates to one of our volunteers, it should be referred to the Club Chair for action.

If a complaint about the service Salmon Club provides, it must be referred to the Club Chair. An acknowledgement must be sent to the complainant explaining this action within seven days.

Correspondence with complainants will always include the complaint numbers as part of the file reference.

The investigation must be carried out within twenty-one days. If this is not possible the Club Chair must send a progress report to the complainant.

Within seven days of the completion of the investigation, the chair/another dealing with the complaint will notify the complainant of the outcome. Appropriate information will be shared with the complainant about action that will be taken as a result of the investigation. It will sometimes (but not always) be appropriate to confirm this in writing.

The response must also inform the complainant of their right to request that the complaint is dealt with at Stage Two of the procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome and that such a request must be sent to the Club Admin Secretary within twenty-one days of receiving the response.

The complainant must be made aware that the next stage:-

- May involve other individuals.
- Will require the complaint to be put in writing (if this has not already been done).
- Means that where a volunteer is the subject of a complaint, that person may wish to defend their interests with or without professional advice.
- The complainant must be informed that a record of the complaint will be kept. Access to this information will be strictly on a need-to-know basis.

Complaints Procedure Flowchart Stage One

Complaint received by Club Chair.
Club Admin Secretary contacted for complaint number
which must be included on all correspondence and documentation.
Complaints Record Section One completed.



Complaint acknowledged, in writing if appropriate, within 7 days of receipt of the complaint.
Complaints Record Section Two completed.
Sent to the chair/another and Club Admin Secretary.
Salmon Club Complaints procedure letter issued to complainant.



Volunteer to be informed within 7 days if subject of complaint.



Investigation undertaken in line with the requirements of Salmon Club Conducting
Investigations Guidelines completed within 21 days of receipt of complaint
(if this is not possible a progress report must be sent to complainant).



Complainant informed of outcome and as appropriate, action to be taken as a result of the
investigation (including information detailing next stage).



Complaints Record Section Three completed, sent to Club Admin Secretary.



Complaints Record Section Four completed 21 days after informing complainant of
outcome, sent to Club Admin Secretary.



Quarterly Complaints Record completed and signed by Club Chair.
Sent to Club Admin Secretary by 5th day after quarter end at latest,
plus any outstanding Complaints Records Sections Two and Three and Four.



Ongoing complaints carried forward onto the next Quarterly Complaints Record.

Stage Two (Appeal Stage)

A complainant may chose to appeal against the outcome of the Stage one investigation. Where an appeal is made the Club Admin Secretary will be responsible for arranging and facilitating all aspects of Stage Two.

- This will include convening the Salmon Complaints Panel.
- The appeal against must be sent by the complainant to the Club Admin Secretary within twenty-one days of receipt of the outcome of Stage One.
- The Club Admin Secretary will acknowledge the request within ten days, outlining the process including timescales, the name and status of members of the Complaints Panel and explaining the complainant's right to be represented.
- The Complaints Panel must meet within twenty-eight days of receipt of the appeal and their decision recorded within one working day by the Club Admin Secretary.
- Complainants and/or their representatives have the right to submit written reports as an alternative to attending the meeting of a Complaints Panel.
- Having heard from the interested parties, the Complaints Panel will reach its decision in private. The outcome will be sent to the club Chair. The decision of the Panel is final but any recommendations from it indicating that the procedure was not properly followed should trigger a recommencement of the process by different investigators.
- The Club Admin Secretary following discussion with the chair, will inform the complainant within three days, in writing of the outcome and as appropriate, any actions to be taken.
- A record of proceedings of a Complaints Panel will be kept, together with the documented outcome.

Complaints Panel

The purpose of a Complaints Panel is to look at four areas:-

1. Whether or not the complaints process was carried out properly and fairly.
2. Whether or not the conclusions reached on the basis of the material available were reasonable and fair.
3. Whether or not action taken on the basis of any conclusions reached was appropriate, having regard to all the circumstances.
4. Whether or not more can be done to help achieve a complainant's expectations.

The purpose of a Complaints Panel is not to:-

1. Conduct a new investigation or a re-hearing of the complaint. Where new evidence is available the process must be repeated from Stage One.
2. Deal with any new matters raised by a complainant which were not part of the original complaint or investigation.

A Complaints Panel will be made up of:-

1. The Club President (as Chair)
2. Two Salmon Club committee members not involved in the investigation.

Complaints Procedure Flowchart Stage Two (Appeal)

Complainant informs Club Admin Secretary that they wish to appeal
(maximum 21 days from receipt of outcome).
Club Admin Secretary briefs Chair and others dealing with the complaint.



Complaints Panel set up by Club Admin Secretary.



Club Admin Secretary informs complainant in writing at least 10 days before Complaints Panel meeting, of name and status of members, date of meeting and the right to request changes plus the opportunity to have a representative present.



Complaints Panel meets within 28 days after the receipt of the appeal.



Complaints Panel's decision recorded in writing by the Club Admin Secretary
(within 1 working day of the decision).



Outcome sent within 3 working days to the complainant,
Correspondence to complainant to be checked with Chair.



Quarterly Complaints Record to be completed signed by the Chair and sent
to Club Admin Secretary by 5th day after quarter end at latest.

Feedback Record

Feedback may be in form of compliments, suggestions or concerns.

Date	Source of Comment	Nature of Feedback	Details of Action Taken	Signature

Available to member at front desk. Reviewed regularly by Club Chair and quarterly at committee meetings.

Complaints Records

	Complaint Ref number
Section One: Source of Complaint	
In writing/by telephone/specify other (delete as appropriate)	
User/representative/specify other (delete as appropriate)	
Date and time received	
1. Complainant/person involved in the complaint	2. Representative or third party relationship to complainant
Name	Name
Address	Address
Telephone	Telephone
To which address should correspondence be sent?	1 2 Both
Has the complaint been made to any other agency?	Yes /No (If yes, give details)
Details of complaint	
Form passed for action to	Designation
Section One completed by	Designation

Complaints Record (Appeal)

Ref no	
Details actions taken including people involved and dates (attach reports as necessary)	
Signature	Designation
Section two Outcome	
Date complainant informed of outcome	Was the complaint upheld? Yes/No In-part
Matter resolved Yes/No	Signature Date
Details forwarded by	Designation Date

Key to Column Headings of Quarterly Complaints Record

A	Date complaint received
B	Reference number allocated by Club Admin Secretary (CC); CC must be contacted by individual who has the details of the complaint. More than one number will be needed if complaint has separate issues.
C	Who has made the complaint i.e. user, parent, relative, third party etc. There should be no names in this column.
D	Nature of the complaint e.g. staff attitude, building environment, quality of care/support. NOTE:- Where a complaint relates to POVA/POCA it should be documented as such in the usual way. The process detailed in the POVA/POCA policy should be followed thereafter.
E	Complaint to be acknowledged in writing within 7 days of receipt of the complaint.
F	Investigation to be completed within 21 days of the receipt of the complaint and outcome or progress report to be sent to complainant.
G	Actual date outcome (or update) sent to complainant.
H	Decision: Whether complaint was upheld or not or in part.
I	Resolved: Whether complaint was resolved to complainant's satisfaction.

To be held and completed by Club Secretary.

Deleted

Stage Two

A complainant may choose to appeal against the outcome of the investigation into their original complaint.

- Requests for investigations at Stage Two of the process must be sent by the complainant to the relevant Club Admin Secretary within twenty-one days of the completion of Stage One.
- The Club Admin Secretary will acknowledge the request in writing within seven days, outlining the proposed action including the name of the person undertaking the investigation and the proposed timescale.
- The right of the complainant to request a different person from the one nominated to carry out the investigation must be recognised and considered. The Club Admin Secretary and Commissioning Officer will decide if this is appropriate, record their decision and inform the complainant.
- The investigation must be completed within twenty-one days. If this is not possible then the Club Admin Secretary must send a progress report to the complainant.
- The person carrying out the investigation will produce a final report for the person commissioning the investigation who will then agree with the chair the response to the complainant.
- The Commissioning Officer will notify the complainant of the outcome and as appropriate, information about action that will be taken as a result. The response must also inform the complainant of the right to request that the complaint is dealt with at Stage Three of the procedure, if they are not satisfied with the outcome and that such a request must be sent to the Club Admin Secretary within twenty-one days of receiving the response.
- If complainants are satisfied with the outcome at Stage Two, the matter will be closed. This will be recorded in the appropriate Complaints Record.

Complaints Procedure Flowchart Stage Two

Complainant informs Club Admin Secretary that complaint not resolved (maximum 21 days from receipt of outcome).

Club Admin Secretary briefs chair/another.

The relevant section of Complaints Record Section Four completed.

Sent to Club Admin Secretary.

Appeal acknowledged by Club Admin Secretary, outlining proposed action including name of Investigating Officer and proposed timescale for resolution (in writing within 7 days of receipt of the appeal).

Member of staff or volunteer involved informed that the complaint is not resolved.

Investigation completed within 21 days of receipt of appeal (if this is not possible a progress report must be sent to complainant by the Club Admin Secretary).

Letter sent to complainant by the Commissioning Officer detailing whether or not the appeal was upheld and as appropriate, action to be taken as a result (including information detailing the next Stage).

Quarterly Complaints Record completed and signed by Manager.

Sent to Club Admin Secretary by 5th day after quarter end at latest plus any outstanding Complaints Records Section Four.

Ongoing appeals to be carried forward onto the next Quarterly Complaints Record ready for submission at the end of the next quarter.

Complaints and Compliments